



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 255

1st Session

35th Legislature

HANSARD

Thursday, May 1, 2025 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Jeremy Harper

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2025 Spring 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
Hon. Ranj Pillai	Porter Creek South	Premier Minister of the Executive Council Office; Economic Development; Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation
Hon. Jeanie McLean	Mountainview	Deputy Premier Minister of Education; Minister responsible for the Women and Gender Equity Directorate
Hon. Nils Clarke	Riverdale North	Minister of Environment; Highways and Public Works
Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee	Riverdale South	Minister of Health and Social Services; Justice
Hon. Richard Mostyn	Whitehorse West	Minister of Community Services; Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board
Hon. John Streicker	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
Hon. Sandy Silver	Klondike	Minister of Finance; Public Service Commission; Minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation and the Yukon Lottery Commission

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Takhini-Kopper King
Lane Tredger	Third Party House Leader Whitehorse Centre
Annie Blake	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
Thursday, May 1, 2025 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

In remembrance of Rudy Couture, former Sergeant-at-Arms

Speaker: Before proceeding with the Order Paper, I would like to take this moment to remember a former Sergeant-at-Arms, Rudy Couture, who passed away earlier this week.

Joining us in the gallery from Rudy's family are his daughters, Judy Couture and Glenda Power, his son-in-law, Bill Power, and his granddaughter, Jody Power. Also joining them is his good friend and former senator of the Northwest Territories Nick Sibbeston. Please join me in welcoming them to the Assembly today.

Joseph Rudolphe Couture, known to everyone as Rudy, began his service with the Yukon Legislative Assembly as Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms on October 24, 2001. He was appointed Sergeant-at-Arms on March 3, 2003 and served in the role until May 26, 2016. His tenure made him the longest serving Yukon Sergeant-at-Arms since G.I. Cameron, who retired in 1987.

Rudy and his late wife, Janet, arrived in the Yukon in 1954 when he moved here to start working with his uncle and aunt at the Watson Lake Trading Post. He later opened his own store, Yukon Self-Serve, in Watson Lake. Rudy and Janet moved to Whitehorse in 1967, where Rudy worked briefly for Whitehorse Copper. He then worked for the Government of Yukon from 1968 to 1972 as a labour relations officer and a liquor inspector.

In 1972, they moved to Faro, where Rudy served as the town manager from 1972 to 1985. They moved back to Whitehorse in 1986 and Rudy became the executive director of the Association of Yukon Communities, a position he served in until his retirement in 1994.

Rudy had a long-standing commitment to the public service. He served as a coroner and a Justice of the Peace while living in Watson Lake and, after retiring from AYC, Rudy sat on the Yukon Housing Corporation Board of Directors for several years. Alongside his wife, Janet, Rudy designed and created the Yukon tartan, a symbol of the Yukon's dignity and heritage.

In December 2024, Rudy was awarded the Order of Yukon in recognition of his community service and dedication to the Yukon Order of Pioneers and the Knights of Columbus. He wore a Yukon tartan tie when the Commissioner presented him with the medal this past January.

Many current members will remember him leading the Speaker's parade into the House, but Rudy came very close to having another role in the Assembly. Back in 1967, he was 15 votes shy of winning the seat for Watson Lake in the territorial general election.

While he witnessed many interesting events in the Chamber as Sergeant-at-Arms, perhaps one of the most surprising was when the Mace fell apart one day as he placed it on the Table.

Rudy Couture was a dedicated and dignified officer of this House. Please join me in remembering him for his services and his commitment to the Yukon. To the family and friends of Rudy, we offer our sincere condolences.

Applause

Speaker: I didn't think it would get this hot in the Chamber here with all the body heat flowing around in the Legislative Assembly. Good day to you all.

DAILY ROUTINE

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

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Speaker: Under Introduction of Visitors, the Chair would like to introduce visitors.

Visitors introduced

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors?

Visitors introduced

Speaker: This is the fullest I have seen the Legislative Assembly in all my Sittings. It is good to see you all here.

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Red Dress Day

Hon. Ms. McLean: Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of our Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to Red Dress Day, also known as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two-spirit People, which takes place on May 5.

This day began in 2010 when Métis artist Jaimie Black began her REDress Project, an art installation where Black hung hundreds of red dresses to honour missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

On Monday, May 5, Canadians across Canada will hang red dresses outside their homes and businesses in solidarity with Indigenous women and girls, while others will march or hold events to demand change. Red Dress Day has become a powerful reminder of the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and two-spirit+ people across Canada and the work that we must all do to change the story.

I am incredibly grateful for the work of the families and survivors of MMIWG2S+ people in the Yukon. Their involvement, as well as the involvement of Yukon's Indigenous women's organizations, is central to the work of Yukon's missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit+ people strategy and implementation plan. This strategy is a whole-of-Yukon approach founded on the advocacy of MMIWG2S+ families and survivors and involving multiple signatories on its implementation, including the Yukon

Aboriginal Women's Council, the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle, the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society, as well as all 14 Yukon First Nation governments, all municipal governments, the Government of Yukon, the Government of Canada, and the RCMP.

The strategy includes 32 actions, 12 of which are priority action items with multiple milestones. I am pleased to share that, according to the annual progress reports that we have received from our signatories, work is either in process, completed, or ongoing on each of these 12 priority areas. As of October 2024, 52 percent of the overall milestones in this strategy and implementation plan are in process, 11 percent are ongoing, and four percent have been completed.

I would like to acknowledge the local activities happening across Yukon communities on May 5 to mark Red Dress Day and to create awareness of the crisis of MMIWG2S+. In Whitehorse, there will be a march coordinated by the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle. It is scheduled to start at 11:00 a.m. at the Department of Education building. There will be activities to follow. In Teslin, there will be an afternoon of reflection and remembrance.

I encourage Yukoners, wherever they may live, to find out what is happening in their community and participate in solidarity. While we still have much work to do, I remain inspired by the progress that is being made and I am proud of the collective efforts of all of those involved.

Applause

Ms. Van Bibber: Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to tribute Red Dress Day, which will be held on May 5, 2025. This day is to recognize the national remembrance day honouring missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit+ people.

On May 5 across Canada, there will be various activities and events focused on violence and neglect of MMIWG2S+, and it's a powerful reminder for us to never forget. There will be art presentations, educational displays, and activities for youth to learn about this issue that continues today.

One of the many moving displays that I have seen is the red dress display at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg. As you move through the museum from early history to modern times of many human rights issues, there is the red dress display, a prominent piece that cannot be ignored or passed by without some emotion. The red hand painted over the mouth is a startling symbol. Our missing sisters' voices will never be heard again. It also says that the silence about the plight must stop now.

There will be a gathering as mentioned, and we encourage everyone to take part here and in the rural communities. It is a time to show your support and be part of the recognition of tragedies that happen daily. We honour the memory of the loss. They have been taken but not forgotten. A thank you to the families that live and relive the pain and grief. You have shown us strength and courage as you seek justice.

Premier Wab Kinew has set the bar high. His campaign promise to search the Winnipeg landfill to find missing loved

ones was honoured, and they were found — amazing courage shown by this leader.

Several years ago, I heard Minister McLean speak at the May 5 opening and she said — quote: "If I go missing, please come look for me." Thank you for that, as it struck me that our women have to continue saying this. We don't just up and leave our comfort zone. We don't just decide one day to leave our families. We don't.

As we go forward, learn, listen, and be considerate of others. The stories we think we know may not be so. So, Mr. Speaker, if I go missing, come look for me.

Applause

Ms. Blake: Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP to pay tribute to Red Dress Day. Across the Yukon, we remember our Indigenous sisters, daughters, mothers, aunties, cousins, and two-spirit relatives who are missing or who have been taken from us far too soon. In every Yukon community from Whitehorse to Old Crow, from the banks of the Yukon River to the deep heart of the land, we feel their absence. We see their red dresses hanging in the trees, swaying in the wind, reminding us that their spirits are still with us, calling for justice, for change, and for healing.

We honour the families across our territory who wake each morning with the weight of unanswered questions. We stand beside them in grief, in strength, and in fierce love. We honour the women who never made it home, whose laughter once echoed through our homes and communities and whose footsteps once danced across our lands. They are not forgotten.

In the Yukon, where community and land are deeply woven together, every loss is felt across generations. Our sacred responsibility is to remember, to speak their names, and to create a future where Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people are safe, celebrated, and protected no matter what path they walk in life. We raise our hands to the families, the advocates, the grandmothers, and the youth who carry this work forward. We lift up the spirits of our stolen loved ones. They walk with us in spirit and we will never forget them.

Mahsi' cho.

Applause

In recognition of Wildfire Community Preparedness Day and Emergency Preparedness Week

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Mr. Speaker, I rise to tribute Wildfire Community Preparedness Day. This Saturday, let's celebrate all Yukoners employing FireSmart techniques to protect their homes.

Wildfires are often unpredictable. While fire crews are highly successful at catching new fires igniting near communities, we as individuals have a responsibility to prepare for the worst. We need you to be engaged, educated, and united.

Climate change is intensifying fire seasons. Wildfire Community Preparedness Day reminds us how the community works together in the face of these events. To keep neighbourhoods and community spaces safe, local governments, non-profits, community associations, and school councils are doing FireSmart projects across the Yukon. In

partnership with our government, Yukon communities are developing community wildfire protection plans. They know their communities best, and their plans identify areas that need to be managed or protected. This has led to nation-leading projects like the Whitehorse south fuel break. Municipal and First Nation governments are educating their communities about FireSmart concepts. There is always more to be done, so I would encourage local citizens to continue stepping up to support this work. Home builders and landscapers can also contribute by knowing how to recommend FireSmart projects and services for their clients, and individuals have a responsibility to learn about how to firesmart their properties and reduce risk on or about their homes. Such risk-reduction work has the biggest impact in saving your home from wildfire risk, and it helps firefighters to concentrate on the fire itself.

Yukoners should read and use the homeowner's FireSmart manual. Look for it in your mailbox next week. It has been updated for 2025 and will help you to reduce your wildfire risk. People can also attend FireSmart events in your communities to learn more about reducing the risk. Through FireSmart Canada, we have partnered with local First Nation governments to promote FireSmart work. Please join me on Saturday doing something meaningful like spring yard-work, cleaning up all of those middens around your house, or attending a FireSmart event.

Together, we will make our communities more wildfire-resilient.

Applause

Ms. McLeod: Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to recognize emergency preparedness in the Yukon as we near a couple of awareness-related events ahead of the summer season.

Saturday, May 3 is Wildfire Community Preparedness Day, which focuses on raising public awareness around the proven methods for preparing our properties for withstanding the potential devastation of wildfire.

This leads to Emergency Preparedness Week, which takes place from May 4 to 10 in Canada. The theme this year for Emergency Preparedness Week is: "Be prepared. Know your risks." This goes for all areas of the Yukon, as we do live in a remote area of Canada with each community surrounded by forests, rivers, and wilderness.

The potential for emergency threats is very real as we have seen throughout our history here in the Yukon. We have seen and felt the effects of avalanches, extreme temperatures, floods, landslides, permafrost degradation, wildfires, and winter storms. We have faced other emergencies, such as power and Internet outages. In preparation for these events, we recognize the staff working throughout the year from the emergency measures organizations. They work with other departments at levels of government to anticipate the risks to different regions and prepare for emergency events.

Likewise, we would like to recognize the Yukon's broad network of emergency services personnel: police, fire, EMS, dispatchers, and all others who respond, assist, and dedicate their lives to and in the service of their communities. We are

happy to see some folks here today from Da Daghay Development Corporation. Their initial attack Charlie Crew was instrumental in the creation, support, and operation of Yukon First Nations Wildfire. The Yukon Party was proud to support that vision in 2015 and continues to support the incredible work that this group does for our territory year after year.

Thank you again to all, and please take the time to review information about possible risks in order to be prepared should an emergency happen.

Applause

MLA Tredger: I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP to mark Emergency Preparedness Week and Wildfire Community Preparedness Day.

Wildfire Community Preparedness Day is meant to encourage people, organizations, and communities to come together and take action to raise awareness and reduce wildfire risks. It encourages everyone to increase resilience to wildfire for their homes, neighbourhoods, and communities. Every year, there is a theme, and this year it is "Zone Zero". Zone zero focuses on the first five feet immediately around the perimeter of a home. In a wildfire, the majority of homes ignite from embers and small flames, so the goal this year is to remove or reduce those fire hazards. That could include clearing leaves and debris from gutters, keeping lawns mowed, and removing anything under decks or porches that could burn.

For anyone who is living in the City of Whitehorse, you can call and book a free FireSmart home assessment. A member of the city's FireSmart team will come and assess your property for specific wildfire exposure hazards. They will analyze the ways that wildfire could affect your home and give you a report that outlines actions you can take to reduce the impact of a wildfire on your property.

Emergency Preparedness Week also has a theme and this year; it is: "Be Prepared. Know Your Risks." This means learning about the risks in your area and learning what actions you can take to protect yourself and your household. It might be making up an emergency kit with all the items that you need to be self-sufficient for 72 hours. It might be getting your yard firesmarter, or maybe it is volunteering to raise awareness about risks in your neighbourhood. Whatever path you choose, I hope that everyone here considers taking an active role in community safety.

I want to give a special thanks to all the people who are thinking about community safety year-round, all the people who respond to emergencies, and all the people behind the scenes who make that possible. I'm thinking in particular today of our wildland firefighters and all the folks supporting them as well as many, many others.

So, thank you for the work you're doing all year-round.

Applause

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Speaker: Under Tabling Returns and Documents, the Chair has for tabling the 2023-24 and 2024-25 annual reports of the Yukon Human Rights Panel of Adjudicators.

In addition, the Chair has for tabling a report entitled *I Am Not Okay, It's Not Okay: A review of the Yukon government's response to the use of restraints and isolation spaces at Jack Hulland Elementary School*.

The Chair also has for tabling a report entitled *Close To Home — A Yukon Approach to Supporting Children with Complex Needs: Summary of Findings*.

Finally, the Chair has for tabling a report entitled *For Our Children — A review of systemic racism in Yukon education*.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: I have for tabling two legislative returns.

Hon. Ms. McLean: I have for tabling a response to one of those reports that you tabled today — the systemic advocacy report entitled *Close To Home*. This is dated March 31, 2025.

Further, I have for tabling two legislative returns regarding questions that arose during Committee of the Whole.

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

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House recognizes the start of Active Commute Month today and celebrates the transformational impact of active transportation in creating healthier, safer, and more connected Yukon communities;

Further notes that the Robert Campbell bridge and its dual separated paths continue to serve as a vital link for cyclists and pedestrians between downtown Whitehorse and Riverdale, demonstrating the lasting benefits of investing in active transportation infrastructure;

Acknowledges the important contributions of local organizations, volunteers, and advocates who help plan, maintain, and promote active transportation throughout the Yukon;

And commends the Cycling Association of Yukon and the Whitehorse Urban Cycling Coalition for their leadership and dedication in advancing active transportation for all Yukoners.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House reaffirms its steadfast support for the people of Ukraine as they continue to defend their sovereignty, freedom, and democratic values in the face of ongoing illegal and unjust Russian aggression;

And that this House welcomes the recent signing of the United States-Ukraine bilateral economic partnership agreement on April 30, 2025 as a sign of enduring international solidarity and commitment to Ukraine's recovery and future prosperity;

And that this House recognizes the courage and resilience of the Ukrainian people, who continue to resist aggression and pursue peace despite ongoing attacks;

And that this House commends the international community, including Canada, for its continued humanitarian, military, and economic support to Ukraine and expresses hope for a future where Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity are fully restored.

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to introduce a 911 text service.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to repair the primary access road between the *George Black* ferry terminal and Sunnydale.

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

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Economic outlook

Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, this morning, the Yukon Bureau of Statistics released their annual preliminary assessments of Yukon's economy in 2024. This report has blown a hole in the Liberal's narrative about our economy.

Here are the numbers according to statistics Yukon. Last year, our economy shrunk by 3.3 percent, driven by a 32-percent decrease in mining and a 12-percent decrease in construction. What's even worse is that this massive decline is entirely unique to the Yukon. Yukon's real GDP decline was the worst in the country and 4.9 percent below the national average.

Do the Liberals recognize that they are leading the worst performing economy in the country?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, the report that came out today did leave us a little bit flummoxed as far as the numbers on construction. We do agree — our numbers agree — with the obvious contraction when it comes to the heap leach failure that happened at Eagle Gold and, of course, the economic consideration there. Our numbers are very similar, but it's the retail side of the construction side that has us scratching our heads a little bit, because we have numbers of construction growing in 2025 — increased by 2.5 percent, or \$61.3 million.

We are working with the folks from Statistics Canada to reconcile these numbers. We also note that the mining numbers are not just in Yukon but also in the Northwest Territories. The member opposite didn't mention that part, but that's also part of the statistical analysis.

Notable growth is seen in all of the other sectors, I will say, including remarkable growth in Aboriginal public administration; 8.4 percent was reported. That is First Nation governance becoming an increasing part of Yukon's community and that is representing a five-percent increase of the overall economy in 2024.

I have other numbers when it comes to other parts of the sector, but I will wait for the member opposite's other

questions. Again, we are going to be looking at the numbers that came out that are vastly different from our report or from the Conference Board's report which came out earlier this month.

Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, I remind the minister that this report comes from the Yukon Bureau of Statistics under the Department of Finance, his own department.

Today's report isn't the first alarm bell of our disastrous economic state. Last week, statistics Yukon also released their new retail trade numbers. From February 2024 to February 2025, retail sales were down five percent; that's the worst decline in a generation. Then there are the details in today's report. Goods-producing industries are down 20 percent. Wholesale trade was down three percent. The list goes on, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it was just yesterday that the Minister of Community Services told the Legislature that our economy was — quote — "roaring". So, does the Premier agree with statistics Yukon that our economy is in a mess or does he agree with the Minister of Community Services?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, these are statistics that are published on the federal government's websites. We have presented our presentations for Statistics Canada in our fiscal and economic outlook. We also have the Conference Board of Canada numbers. The members opposite weren't concerned about those numbers; they didn't ask any questions about any of those things during the whole session. Now they see a number that they can champion where it looks like things are down and they seem to be full of glee that our construction numbers are low.

We are still a little bit, again, concerned about those numbers, because our numbers don't match up with those numbers and the analysis of them, so we are working on making sure that we have the most up-to-date forecast.

We obviously have a situation when it comes tariffs that we really have to be vigilant with. We have to work with our partners in the private sector to make sure that we are preparing for the worst and hoping for the best.

But to say that in the Yukon right now, the economy is suffering — I think that we've done a lot of explaining over the couple of years that we've been in here about how we've diversified the economy — taking a look at the rebounding tourism sector, for example, and helping to push up activities, accommodation, food services, amusement, gambling, and recreation industries — all up. Other indicators also indicate that this decline is mostly contained to the mining sector and that the unemployment rate — lowest in Canada — employment growth surged to six percent — great numbers other than what the Yukon Party is focusing —

Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, I remind the minister that this report that came out has the government's logo on the top of it and it's published by the Department of Finance, his own department.

Here is another telling statistic from today's report from statistics Yukon, Mr. Speaker — and I'll quote: "The sector of Yukon's economy that experienced the largest increase in real

GDP was Public administration ... followed by Health care and social assistance..." So, Mr. Speaker, as a result of two terms of Liberal government, we see the mining industry collapsing, we see construction down 10 percent, we see both wholesale and retail trades shrinking, and the worst performing economy in the country, but the sector that's leading the way under the Liberals is the growth of government.

Will the Premier acknowledge the disastrous state that he has put this economy in?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to rise on this. I think that some of the things we think about are: First of all, are we still a territory that has the best employment numbers if not number 1 or number 2 in the country? Yes. Are we in a position where we are seeing growth in our residential — in construction? Yes, I think that we're up over 200 percent in February — 200 percent in growth. Are we seeing record-breaking retail year over year? Yes, we are. We have a one-month stat where —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Pillai: — a one-month stat where the leader of the opposition is standing up —

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order, please.

When a member has the floor, please be respectful.

Hon. Premier, please continue.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Look, I know that the leader of the opposition wants to get up and cheer against Yukoners. We know what happened in 2024; we know that we had a mine disaster. But what I want Yukoners to look at is: leading the country when it comes to a rebound in tourism coming out of what we had; continuing to have record-breaking construction, both residential and in the commercial state; again, having the best statistics when it comes to employment over the entire time that we have been in government.

I ask Yukoners to watch and see what happens in the mining sector. I know what the situation was in 2016, and I would ask the member opposite or any of the members opposite: Were we in good shape when they had their hands on the wheel? Were we in good shape in this economy when they had their hands on the wheel? We know what that answer is.

Question re: Health care services

Ms. McLeod: Mr. Speaker, the state of Yukon's health care system has been steadily deteriorating under this Liberal government. Over the past six months alone, we've seen letter after letter and story after story about doctors leaving the Yukon or closing their family practices. The letters and e-mails from Yukoners who have had surgeries delayed or cancelled or who are on a long wait-list keep rolling in.

There are thousands of Yukoners without access to primary care or a family doctor, and that number is going in the wrong direction. Despite all this, just a few weeks ago, the Premier said — and I quote: "... I think we're on a great track" and — quote: "... it's going in the right direction."

Does the Premier think that Yukoners agree with him, or does he realize that so many Yukoners are looking for a change?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Speaker, you can certainly see today that the questions are campaigning, but the truth is that the Yukon's health care system has been addressed by this government in a very strong and principled way with strong and principled leadership. With respect to primary care, I can list the accomplishments and I'm happy to do so for Yukoners.

We have worked to modernize health care cards; we have opened a walk-in medical clinic here in Whitehorse; we have opened the Centre de Santé Constellation Health Centre. Those two clinics alone have given thousands of Yukoners access to medical care and diverted individuals from our emergency room.

We have opened a managed alcohol program; we have changed opportunities for medication and protocol at withdrawal management that reduce hospital visits to Whitehorse General Hospital; we have worked with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and their programs to address youth-led treatment in Dawson City in response to the substance use health emergency; we have expanded access to opioid treatment services; we have worked with continuing care and seniors and with the Alzheimer Society of British Columbia to expand dementia services.

We have done a number of additional things, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to be able to continue telling Yukoners about them.

Ms. McLeod: Mr. Speaker, back in 2019, the Yukon Hospital Corporation presented this government with plans to expand and improve the surgical services infrastructure at Whitehorse General Hospital. In the 2021 election, the Yukon Medical Association called it an urgent need. The Liberals sat on this report, allowing it to collect dust, and ignored it for six years.

They have come to realize what a mistake that was, as capacity of the OR at the Whitehorse General Hospital has become a driver of increased surgery wait times and more and more Yukoners suffering on wait-lists. While the Liberals have started to make promises about changes in the future, Yukoners realize that when it comes to hospital infrastructure, the Liberals have squandered the past two terms.

Does the Premier recognize that Yukoners are concerned about the state of our hospitals and that so many Yukoners want to see a change?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Again, Mr. Speaker, the opposition is keen to present a picture that is certainly just one note: that all things here in the territory are terrible. It is simply not the case. We have worked with our partners at Whitehorse General Hospital; we have increased the budget for Whitehorse General Hospital extensively. During the 2025-26 fiscal year, we budgeted \$135.3 million for Yukon Hospital Services O&M as well as \$5.4 million in capital expenditures, for a total budget of \$140.7 million.

The budget responds to the growth in the hospital and surgical services, the cost, the higher costs associated with responding to the *Health Human Resources Strategy*, and

responding to an aging population with more complex medical issues. We are continuing to work with the Hospital Corporation on additional impacts related to their work. We are continuing to work with them.

The expansion of the hospital has budget money in this year's budget, which no doubt the members opposite will vote against. I can indicate that we will be opening the new mental wellness unit this year. We have changed emergency room access — it goes on.

Ms. McLeod: Mr. Speaker, in the 2016 election, the Liberals campaigned against the Whistle Bend continuing care facility. After they won, they promptly cancelled any plans for expanding it. Despite communities like Watson Lake pleading with this minister to come to their community and hear their voices about the need for more long-term care options, the Liberals refused to send her down to speak to them.

Now for the first time in years, we have wait-lists for continuing care, and given our demographics, those lists are only going to grow. Does the Premier recognize that the Liberals have ignored the need for investment in continuing care for too long now and, as a result, so many Yukoners want to see a change?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I have heard the member opposite ask that question before. At one point, it talks about the investment in Whistle Bend. The other part is that the people that the member opposite represents in Watson Lake are saying: Please ensure that we have the ability to stay in our community — and that was what we challenged. What happened under the Yukon Party was — and I sat with the member opposite's constituents — they were put on a plane, they were flown to Haines Junction, and they were promised that this is what they would get in their community, something that never happened. And the member opposite, at what point — when the member opposite was in government, why didn't anything get done in Watson Lake then at that point?

What we want to do is we want to build in Watson Lake, we want to be able to build in Dawson City, and we want people to stay in their communities. That's what her constituents are asking of her, and that's what they asked when Whistle Bend was being built, and that's what we wanted to do for Yukoners, and that's what we can do for Yukoners.

Question re: Non-confidence in government

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, for years, Yukoners, health care workers, doctors, and the Yukon NDP have been raising alarm bells about the state of our health care system, but every time we ask, the minister says that everything is fine. Yukoners know things are not fine. The minister says that this government has spent more than ever before, but money can only go so far when this government refuses to follow the advice or plans of health care workers and experts.

The Yukon NDP has worked with and listened to health care workers and experts. In this Sitting alone, we've brought forward solutions from doctors about surgical services; we've brought forward solutions like government-owned health care clinics; we brought forward the need for medical travel lodges or hotel blocks. There have been so many solutions brought

forward, but Yukoners are still waiting for this government to act. When will this government act on the health care solutions that have been brought to the forefront?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, the member opposite is joining the bandwagon of “all things are terrible”. I don’t stand here in this Legislature Assembly and not recognize the challenges we have. They face me and my team and our team every single day, but we have a plan, and we come and action that plan, and we meet the challenges that are brought before us.

There are additional budgetary allotments in the 2025-26 budget for health care like never before. There is \$684 million allotted to health care, \$684 million that the members opposite from the Yukon Party will vote against later today. It is absolutely amazing to me that they can stand here — all members opposite — and talk about the importance of health care and not recognize the importance of the budgetary aspects that are created for this business.

We have worked with health professionals on the *Health Human Resources Strategy* to implement innovative solutions here in the territory that have been solely criticized by the member opposite. We are working very hard to provide for Yukoners and listening to what they want.

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, I was asking about solutions that could be acted on in health care.

So, health care isn’t the only area where solutions from experts are being ignored. Every spring, like clockwork, there are Yukoners who are left without housing and who are forced to camp. Already this year, NGOs are doing camping gear drives.

Safe at Home has issued a social media statement calling for camping gear and saying — and I quote: “... the continuing housing crisis in our community leaves many sleeping outside...”

During the winter, people are often housed in hotels, but in the spring, they are evicted to make room for tourists. NGOs, other experts, and people with lived experience have all offered solutions. Every year, this government has time to plan ahead so that people do not end up sleeping rough, yet here we are again.

If everything is fine and there is housing for everyone, why are NGOs again asking for camping gear?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, look, I think that the member opposite knows full well that Yukon Housing Corporation and Health and Social Services have worked closely with many of the organizations that are helping our most vulnerable — whether that be the Anti-Poverty Coalition, Safe at Home — and making sure that we have the ability to get folks into appropriate housing.

That’s why this budget and the budget before have the largest single investments in affordable housing that the Yukon has ever seen. That’s why, right now, you are seeing the most affordable housing.

Members can again jeer at me, but the truth and the facts are that this is the most affordable housing that has ever been built in Yukon history. I want to thank those from Da Daghay

who are making sure that we have the single largest project that has ever been built for affordable housing that is in place.

Again, we’re going to ensure that we work with folks.

Last year, we had this discussion — we did — and last year, I was told that the situation — I’ll just say that it was identified by the opposition — and it might have been identified with some inaccuracies. What I will say is that we will always make sure that we are working with non-profits and NGOs to help our most vulnerable and making sure that we have short-term solutions if needed, but it was really about making sure that you had a long-term view and you got behind those investments, and that’s what we’ve done.

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, yet again, NGOs are seeking camping gear.

So, everywhere you look, solutions are being provided. Our education system is no exception. This Sitting alone, red flag after red flag has been raised to this government. Schools have had to fill teaching positions with EAs for the entire year because of staffing shortages. Rural teachers were promised housing, yet at the end of the school year, they’re still waiting. Rural schools are in shocking states of disrepair, homophobic textbooks are still in circulation, and there are over 50 teacher vacancies for the next school year across the territory, but it doesn’t have to be that way.

Teachers, school councils, communities, the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, and other experts have solutions to get education back on track, and all it takes is a government willing to listen.

When is this government going to start acting on the innovative solutions that teachers, communities, and school councils are trying to bring forward?

Hon. Ms. McLean: Mr. Speaker, hard to know where to start. We have worked so hard to re-shape our education system. This did not happen overnight; it took generations to get where we are today. I will stand behind our government’s track record on the innovation, reconciliation, and implementation of policies — you know — to go on — the legislation that we have passed in this House over this mandate and the mandate before; I will stand by that track record all day. We have worked very hard. The Department of Education has worked very hard to meet the reports of the Auditor General, to meet the reports of Dr. Nikki Yee and the review of inclusive and special education, and there were three reports tabled today.

Mr. Speaker, those things don’t happen overnight. We are going to continue to work to address them so that we can change the story for our children. I stand in this House every day to answer questions, and I still get that criticism that somehow I am homophobic or trans — no. I don’t accept that, and I will never accept it.

Question re: Affordable housing and land development

Ms. Clarke: Salamat, Mr. Speaker. We continue to hear from Yukoners who are concerned about the price of housing in the Yukon. At current prices, there are many Yukoners, especially young Yukoners or folks who are new to the

territory, who have been priced out of home ownership entirely. The main driver of these sky-high prices is the lack of supply of housing and the lack of available residential lots. It is simple: The government hasn't released enough lots. While we know that there will be some lots coming later this year, we are worried about the ongoing supply.

Does the Liberal government think that they have released enough lots to meet the demand of the Yukon housing market?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, I will talk about lots for a moment so that Yukoners hear this point. During the last election, we made a platform commitment that we would release 1,000 lots over the following five years. We haven't hit that five-year mark yet, but over the last five years, we have released 1,000 lots. The members opposite, for that whole time, kept sort of joking and jeering that it wasn't happening, but it has happened.

Then at the same time, we always look back to try to see — because I was on city council during the time when the members were in government, and I remember us going after them because they removed funding for housing. Now that I'm in government, I have the ability to look back at the budgets during that time — what was spent on lot development.

What I can say for Yukoners is that, this year alone, we will spend more than the Yukon Party spent in its last three or four years combined. So, yes, we are investing in lots. Do I think that it should be more than that? Yes, I do. I think that's because this territory is growing so much.

Ms. Clarke: The inability of the Liberal government to meet the demand of lots is only part of the problem. On top of limiting the number of lots available, the Liberal government has also introduced several policies that have targeted Yukon home builders, the people we need to be successful in order to get more Yukoners into homes. They have introduced policies that are making it harder, more expensive, and unnecessarily bureaucratic for the people and businesses that build the houses to do their work.

Will the Liberal government agree to abandon policies — like the requirement to pay out lots 30 days prior to title transfer policy — that are adding red tape, increasing the cost, and making the business of building and selling homes more expensive so that Yukoners can finally see the cost of housing come down?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, I know that this gets raised here on the last day of the Sitting as though it is a political thing, but what I want to say for colleagues in the House is that usually I'm just taking the advice straight from the branch. They're coming and talking to me about what's going on and I ask them for that advice, but I always say to them: Please go and talk with the city; please go and talk with the building community.

If there are other groups, I look for that. I end up often in calls with, for example, other city councillors.

What I have instructed all along is to look for ways to try to make it as simple and as easy as possible. That doesn't mean that there aren't challenges with it; there are.

One of the challenges that they came to me recently with — and the one that's being raised here — has to do with when

a house hits a moment so that we can get it — the way it used to be termed — “clad to weather”. But the problem was that we had some home builders — most of them are great, but some of them — were calling things “clad to weather” and we were getting homeowners stepping in and the house was deficient. We needed to get to a stage where there was an actual inspection. I know that the branch has worked with the city to find that point.

I am happy to take other suggestions from folks in the community.

Ms. Clarke: Mr. Speaker, like so many of the policies implemented by the Liberals, the recent changes to the lottery system for lots was driven by the confidence and supply agreement. The change that stands out to many home builders is the ban on successful candidates who got a lot in the lottery for a period of five years. This change was apparently done to fulfill a CASA commitment, but now that the CASA is done, will the Liberals agree to scrap this policy change that will make it even harder for the people who build homes in this territory to get access to a residential lot?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, speaking of that policy, what we heard from lots of Yukoners was that they couldn't get a lot. Individuals were coming back to the Yukon and they couldn't get a lot, because the majority of lots were just going to builders. We know that builders need to have lots, but because of things like our new homeowner program — this is an exact response to what we're hearing.

The member opposite said that lots of Yukoners want to come back. Of course, they want to come back. We have seen record growth in the economy. People know that they can come back and there are opportunities here in the Yukon that they may not find in other parts of the country. That's one of the reasons why we launched this program.

Again, I am happy that, over the next year, we are going to have a chance to have up to 80 people — 80 families. For the first time, we have seen a program where they can come in and we can cover half of their down payment. We are going to prioritize Yukoners whom we have invested in already — individuals whom we have provided a Yukon grant to. They have gone to get their education, they want to come home, they want to be around their families, and we want them back home. We don't want them going anywhere else. We know that there are opportunities here.

So, it's important that they have lots. It's important that we continue to refine our policies. But people want to be able to come home, and when they do come home, it's good that we now have programs like this so that they can build a home and a life here.

Question re: Rural communities funding and support

Mr. Hassard: Mr. Speaker, over the course of the Liberals' time in office, Yukoners living in rural communities continue to feel ignored and neglected by this Liberal government. We have seen a steady cutback in services to rural Yukon and those living there.

While it may seem like a small cut to the Liberals, the decision to close several rural solid-waste transfer stations continues to be a concern to many Yukoners. What has been worse is the Liberal government's unwillingness to communicate with and respond to concerns that have been legitimately raised by those affected Yukoners.

Does the Liberal government recognize that many Yukoners have reached the point where they know that they won't get a response unless there is a change in government?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's great to talk about the incredible solid-waste regionalization initiative that this government has launched at the behest of the Association of Yukon Communities. My colleague did a lot of the groundwork, and I'm happy to be in this place where we're actually seeing the regionalization plans happen.

I'm also proud to talk about the incredible — the hundreds of millions of dollars that we have invested in rural Yukon. Since 2022, rural employment in the Yukon has grown by approximately five percent, keeping pace with job growth in Whitehorse. That has never happened before, Mr. Speaker. We have built more lots for Yukoners than ever before. We have invested across the Yukon in every community, from Old Crow to Burwash to Ross River to Watson Lake, and all points in between have seen nothing but investment. The comprehensive municipal grant just went up higher than it ever has.

We have done more for rural Yukon than rural Yukon has seen in decades, and we're going to continue that work, because every community matters, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Hassard: Mr. Speaker, for many Yukoners in rural Yukon, another significant change that they have seen has been the deterioration of health care services. From health care centre closures and service reductions to massive gaps in EMS coverage, residents of rural Yukon feel that they have been ignored by this government, and it's easy to see why. There have never been as many gaps in EMS or ongoing cutbacks and reduction of health services as we have seen in the past few years.

Again, does the Liberal government recognize that Yukoners from our rural communities understand now that the only way to reverse this trend is to change the government?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, first of all, we haven't cut back anything; we've actually invested more in health care year over year than we have ever seen. We've heard this narrative and we've sat for the last four years hearing that there is a lack of investment —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Pillai: You know what? It's always interesting, because when you hit the nerve, it's lots of off-mic, and I can tell you that there is not a person on the other side of the floor who can challenge the investment that has gone into every one of our communities in the Yukon.

I can still remember sitting with the previous Mayor of Mayo and him saying to me: I have never seen investment into our community like this; I have never seen a government come in and do horizontal services and fire halls and water, rinks — you name it. It's all communities. You can go from Beaver Creek right to Watson Lake and in between.

And you know what? This isn't like the days of old when, if you didn't have a person of the right stripe elected in your community, you wouldn't get anything. That's not how we have operated. Every one of these folks across the way knows that we have ensured —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Pillai: No, no. We have ensured that we have done this in a balanced way. It doesn't matter what shirt or what jersey somebody is wearing in those communities, because every one of those communities matters, and that's how we have invested in the communities.

Think about the days before when Watson Lake's population was decreasing — and Haines Junction's and Dawson City's. Now that has turned around, because those communities are vibrant, people are there, and there is good life there.

Mr. Hassard: Mr. Speaker, that's an interesting narrative from the Premier who is not from rural Yukon.

From the closure of rest stops and outhouses to the decline in maintenance and attention to roads outside of Whitehorse, this has been a steady trend from this Liberal government.

In just the past week, we have seen the results of the inattention to rural roads, whether it is the washouts on Hunker Creek Road or the washout between Sunnydale and the ferry landing or whether it is the reduction in O&M budgets for the Alaska Highway. The trend is obvious to just about every person living in rural Yukon.

The complete absence of any rural representation in this Liberal Cabinet is glaring. So, does the Liberal government realize that rural Yukoners have caught on and the only way to fix this trend is for there to be a change in government?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I know that I am not from rural Yukon, but I can tell you that this government was investing in the members opposite's community. When he was representing rural Yukon, nothing was getting done. The bridge that is being built now, which was all set — his whole community came together to ensure that there was a way to benefit his community. That didn't get done. The same thing with the investments that we have continuously made.

I think, this summer, we will go have conversations, but I think that if people can reflect back to when the Yukon Party was in government and the members opposite were representing those communities, why didn't anything get done then and why is it getting done now?

That's the same thing. We will sit down with mayors and councils and First Nation governments. We will build the platform that represents the priorities that they have, just like we have over the last nine years. That will be the work that gets done.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has elapsed.

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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): Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter now before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 53, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, in Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*.

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources — *continued*

Chair: Is there any further general debate?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Madam Chair, I have a few things I would like to talk about with Energy, Mines and Resources. I note that colleagues from across the way let me know that they weren't going to ask questions, so I'm just going to put a few pieces of information on the record for everybody's information.

I would like to begin by noting that this, then, may be my last time rising, and so I will also at the close of that just say some thank-yous to folks around here.

The first thing is that, yesterday, I got a great question from the Member for Kluane asking about a placer mining decision document. Unfortunately, I had just — the deputy minister texted me at 12:58, and I missed the text, but just to let colleagues know that the decision document has been issued. That doesn't mean that there aren't other issues with respect to those decision documents. There is a lot of work that is happening. As I said earlier — whenever that was, a couple of days ago — the department is putting a lot of focus on that.

More information for colleagues in the House — just while we're talking about placer, I should note that gold production from April of last year to mid-January of this year — that's the latest reporting that I have — we had roughly 100,000 crude ounces, worth more than \$250 million. This is up from 2023 by quite a bit. It's not quite double, but it's getting close.

The affordable heat pump program — I just want to let colleagues know and Yukoners know that we secured additional funding from the Government of Canada for our affordable heat pump program. We've re-opened applications for this program. So, the new combined funding for the program is \$8.6 million; that's up from \$2.3 million — it's way up. We'll be processing those applications that have been on the wait-list. So, when the program shut down, there were a lot of people who came forward to apply, and I know that, in that period, we had pre-approved 80-plus households to receive funding, so that's flowing.

Also, another fund that we had that there had been a little bit of a hiatus on was the low carbon economy fund. This is used to support the suite of residential and commercial retrofit programs, including insulation upgrades, air sealing, and

biomass heating, among other initiatives. We now have a new four-year agreement in place with Canada totalling over \$16 million under the low carbon economy fund. So, that is important news for Yukoners.

I know that I asked for some statistics from the Energy group — that we've done over 500 energy efficient new home rebates over the last several years; we hit our target five years ahead of schedule. We've issued 219 rebates for residential and commercial smart electric heating systems and over 500 rebates for high energy efficient new homes. Generally, our builders are doing great work in this area.

Just on the electrification for electric vehicles, we installed two more remote community chargers — look at that, investing in our communities — one was at the junction of the Canol Road in the riding of Pelly-Nisutlin, and a second one is a level 2 charger at Swift River. I know that, as of January this year, we were up to 600 zero-emission vehicles registered in the territory, and I always like to note that we have issued rebates for 1,500 electric bicycles.

Just following quite a few years of targeted geothermal studies, we just recently released a compendium of all geothermal data for the Yukon to increase opportunities for folks to look at geothermal as a renewable energy resource.

I wanted to give one more update about new minerals legislation — successor legislation; I will talk about both very quickly. When it comes to successor lands legislation, I just signed off on the “what we heard” document. I am not sure if it is up yet on our website, but I will let colleagues know that it should be coming shortly.

Second of all, with respect to new minerals legislation, the Premier and I met with the chiefs committee on mining. We agreed that we would ask our technical folks to continue to work to refine toward the framework agreement. That framework agreement, I think — they asked for a couple more months to do that work, so we will get together after that and connect again. I look forward to talking to Yukoners about that over this summer.

I wanted to let folks know that we recently transferred the administration and control for parcel C16B, for my colleague from Kluane. This is in Beaver Creek, and we transferred it to the White River First Nation so that they can invest more in housing.

I think that those are my updates.

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

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

Mr. Kent: 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

Chair: The Member for Copperbelt South 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, clear or carried, as required.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$223,087,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$592,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$223,679,000 agreed to

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources agreed to

Chair: The matter now before the Committee is general debate on Vote 8, Department of Justice, in Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

The matter now before the Committee is general debate on Vote 8, Department of Justice, in Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*.

Department of Justice

Deputy Chair: Is there any general debate?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I would like to take this opportunity to welcome officials from the Department of Justice who are here to support our budget debate today. Joining me are Deputy Minister Mark Radke and the director of finance, Luda Ayzenberg. Luda's leadership, Deputy Chair, is truly incredible, and we could not bring forward this year's fiscal budget without her and her team at Justice.

I am very pleased to rise today to speak to the Department of Justice main operation and maintenance and capital budgets for the 2025-26 fiscal year. Justice estimates outlined in the 2025-26 budget consist of capital investments of \$6.5 million and operation and maintenance expenditures of \$104.2 million. Specifically, I would like to take the opportunity to note expenditures that are in this main budget for this fiscal year, which include: the *National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence*; investments in addressing safety in downtown Whitehorse; Yukon Legal Services Society, commonly known as Legal Aid; RCMP increases to their funding; audiovisual enhancement funding; capital funding for a new building for the Coroner's Services; capital investments for upgrades at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre; upgrades to the Old Crow RCMP detachment; and renovations to the Haines Junction detachment likely as well.

Before I present more information about this year's budget, I want to take time to recognize that much of the work that we do is in partnership with Yukon First Nation governments, with the RCMP, in collaboration with independent agencies and with Yukon communities.

This work across governments and organizations helps us to make Yukon a safer and healthier place to live. We look forward to carrying on this work to create a justice system that is easier to navigate and more accessible to all people of the Yukon.

The Government of Yukon strategically invests in ways that enable us to build relationships with our partners to foster safer communities, to support culturally relevant services, and to encourage innovation and good governance. In July of 2023, the governments of Yukon and Canada signed an agreement to advance the *National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence*. It allocates \$16.4 million over four years to 16 initiatives that are designed to prevent violence in the territory and to support survivors of such crimes.

I think it is particularly important on this day when we had a tribute to Red Dress Day that we turn our minds to the importance of this kind of investment. The Department of Justice will receive over \$6 million between 2023 and 2027 for seven new initiatives that address gender-based violence from multiple angles, including prevention, breaking the cycle of violence in families, intervention, specialized care, court support, trauma healing for justice-involved Yukoners, and First Nation models of justice.

I am pleased to announce funding of \$1,858,000 for the 2025-26 budget for work at the Department of Justice to address gender-based violence in the Yukon. The Government of Yukon is committed to working across government and with partners to advance a downtown Whitehorse safety response action plan. The action plan is a road map aimed at enhancing the safety, health, and well-being of downtown Whitehorse and all aspects thereof.

In this 2025-26 fiscal year, the Department of Justice will continue to implement actions in the plan, including supporting officers in downtown Whitehorse and enhancing security measures for business owners and non-governmental organizations.

I am pleased to announce that the two RCMP positions with the Whitehorse detachment funded in the supplementary budget last fall will continue to support downtown safety initiatives and specialized policing activities. \$354,000 in ongoing funding has been allocated to sustain those positions. An additional safer communities and neighbourhoods investigator is also being funded on a permanent and ongoing basis, representing an allocation of \$125,000 for the 2025-26 fiscal year.

The Department of Justice is contributing \$100,000 to implement SafeBiz, a crime-prevention funding program administered by the Department of Economic Development and the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce. This program's intention is to support businesses and non-governmental organizations to improve their security measures and respond to crime downtown.

In the 2025-26 fiscal year, the department has allocated \$3,474,820 this year to the Yukon Legal Services Society. This allocation reflects our government's dedication to the continued stability and predictability of legal aid services as a cornerstone of our justice system. The Yukon Legal Services Society provides access to legal aid services for some of our territory's most vulnerable populations during criminal, civil, and family law proceedings. Additionally, they can advise and provide representation for proceedings related to the Canada Pension Plan, employment insurance, or income assistance to help individuals.

The Yukon Legal Services Society has three Whitehorse-based clinics and a new justice support centre that operates in partnership with the Kwanlin Dün First Nation.

Deputy Chair, public safety is, of course, a top priority for our government and for Yukoners. We recognize that the RCMP provides the front-line response that supports public safety. This fiscal year, there is an increase of \$5.2 million to the *Territorial Police Service Agreement*, the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program, and the 911 budget to support additional policing services.

Through the *Territorial Police Service Agreement*, the cost of territorial policing is cost-shared between the governments of Yukon and Canada, with 70 percent coming from the Government of Yukon and 30 percent provided by the Government of Canada.

We heard Chief Superintendent Lindsay Ellis in local media today speak about how the RCMP is well-resourced here in the territory and that our work together with the RCMP and the communities, our focus on reconciliation, and our focus on safety and community safety are top priorities for her and the work that she directs of the RCMP here in the territory.

The First Nations and Inuit Policing Program is cost-shared with Canada also. Yukon government pays 48 percent and the Government of Canada pays 52 percent. The 911 program here in the territory is 100-percent funded by Yukon government.

\$1.82 million of the \$5.2 million that I've noted has been allocated to support eight new RCMP regular member positions and one public service employee position that provides administrative support to Yukon's police service. \$1.39 million will support critical operation and maintenance, including essential equipment. These increases will also support the emergency response team and the Whitehorse detachment. This includes the costs to roll out body-worn cameras here in the territory.

An ongoing increase of \$1.51 million for RCMP pay raises, as per the collective bargaining agreement, has also been allocated in the 2025-26 fiscal year. There is an additional \$483,000 allocated in anticipation of the RCMP pay increases negotiated in the third round of collective bargaining. The Government of Yukon has this responsibility and recognizes the importance of the collective bargaining process and in ensuring that the members of the RCMP receive pay that reflects the increasing demands of their jobs.

The Department of Justice recognizes the importance and utility of modernizing its audiovisual technology to enhance the

accessibility and reliability of the justice system, with special attention paid to enabling the participation of vulnerable witnesses, remote witnesses, and observers. It is investments like this that allow our justice system to operate more smoothly and effectively on behalf of Yukoners navigating a very complex system. \$108,000 has been allocated in the 2025-26 fiscal year to update videoconferencing and audio equipment.

This capital budget includes an increase of \$1 million for the construction and planning of a new building for the coroner's office and morgue facility. This is something that is long overdue and work that the Department of Justice has maintained a focus on to provide an appropriate place for the chief coroner and her coroners to do their work and for families who often must be in the company of the coroner and have questions for her and do work with her in the very worst time of their lives. An appropriate and properly maintained facility for the coroner's operations is critical.

The target completion date of the project is the winter of 2027, with a total target cost of \$14.8 million.

This capital investment will provide a safe workspace for the Yukon Coroner's Services staff and provide a respectful and culturally appropriate space to serve Yukon families in their time of grief.

With respect to the capital expenditure projects that are related to Whitehorse Correctional Centre, the department is providing one-time funding of \$127,000 to replace equipment in food services, upgrade medical equipment, and replace some security equipment. The replacement and modernization of security infrastructure and technologies within the Whitehorse Correctional Centre will focus on systems that have exceeded or are nearing the end of their operational lifespan. These funds will improve equipment functionality and system reliability to support the safety and well-being of staff, visitors, and those in custody.

The Department of Justice works with the RCMP and Public Safety Canada to ensure that our policing infrastructure receives scheduled maintenance as well as renovation and eventual replacement of detachments. In the 2025-26 fiscal year, \$3,149,000 is allocated to support renovations to Old Crow's detachment building, with concurrent exploratory work being done on potential renovations for the Haines Junction detachment. It is also projected that a portion of this funding will be shared across Yukon RCMP infrastructure for maintenance purposes. This could include repairs, building upgrades, or upgrades to the living quarters used by RCMP personnel.

The Department of Justice will continue to work with the RCMP to make sure that policing facilities meet the needs of the RCMP and the communities that they serve. The Department of Justice is looking forward to implementing the operation and maintenance budget of \$104.2 million and a capital budget, as I have noted, of \$6.5 million for this fiscal year.

This budget advances important initiatives, including RCMP staffing, enhanced service options for vulnerable populations, safety planning, delivery of legal services, and

infrastructure build funding. The work of this budget will enable us to provide crucial services important to all Yukoners.

It has been my profound honour to have worked in this Legislative Assembly to pass more than 60 pieces — the number might be higher than that and I need to get a copy of the specific number, but more than 60 — of substantial, complex pieces of legislation to serve the people of this territory.

We recently lost a notorious politician from Nova Scotia named Billy Joe MacLean who sought advice from Robert Stanfield, also a well-known political figure here in Canada. When Billy Joe MacLean was thinking about joining politics and following that path, the advice that Mr. Stanfield gave to Mr. McLean was: You must never forget who you work for.

Every time we bring a piece of legislation to this House, every time we work to debate it, every time we end up passing that piece of legislation, it is in all of our teams' minds that we are doing that for Yukoners and that we work for Yukoners. That is not something that we forget. It has certainly been an attempt to modernize pieces of legislation and to encourage our legislation to go in a way that serves Yukoners.

We have listened to Yukoners. Through plans like *Putting People First*, the climate change action plan, the LGBTQ2S+ action plan, and our seniors plans, we have worked to engage with Yukoners. We have worked to publicize those plans to show that they are what Yukoners are asking for and to meet the demands of implementing those plans. That is an opportunity that I would say that we have all appreciated, and at every step of the way, we have remembered that this is on behalf of Yukoners.

Thank you for this opportunity. I look forward to answering questions that are budget-related for the Department of Justice.

Mr. Cathers: I would like to thank the officials for appearing here today.

Beginning with the first questions that I have here, recognizing that the time left before the end of this sitting day and this Spring Sitting is growing short, I am going to begin by asking about violent crime and property crime. It's something that Yukoners are increasingly worried about. They have seen the increase. The number and types from the RCMP just over the last several weeks have been extremely concerning to Yukoners. They include — and again, this is just based on the reports from the RCMP — a shooting in Riverdale, a person appearing to pull a gun on Main Street in broad daylight, charges for pointing firearms, assault and kidnapping using a firearm in Porter Creek, and another armed person in a restaurant on Main Street this week. Then just last night, there was an incident that — to quote from how the *Yukon News* described it: "Businesses and residences within a two-block radius of Blood Ties Four Directions Centre were evacuated due to an incident that police posted a notice on social media about..."

Then: "Whitehorse RCMP have released limited details about the 'situation' that they resolved overnight in downtown Whitehorse.

"RCMP had been asking the public to avoid the area around 6th Avenue and Cook Street until further notice as police responded to an 'incident' there."

Of course, as the minister knows, the RCMP had also responded with quite the show of response, including the emergency response team, to that situation. Those incidents are just from the last several weeks.

Moving on to one of the potential solutions, last fall, the Premier and the Minister of Justice both indicated that the government was looking at reinstating a repeat offender management program. The minister did confirm in discussions that it was going to be similar to the previous prolific offender management program.

Can the minister please tell us the status of that? Are they still working on re-establishing it, and if so, when do they expect that program to be re-established?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: The Department of Justice is actively working with Legal Aid, the Public Prosecution Service of Canada, and the RCMP to discuss improvements on the Yukon's approach to repeat offender management. We are also reaching out to work actively with the Yukon judiciary. The deputy minister and I as minister will meet with the judiciary in the next number of weeks. Interventions through Corrections at the Department of Justice are just one part of a multi-pronged approach to reducing and breaking patterns of repeat offending. We have to, of course, consider recent improvements. They include: enhanced case management practices and increased information-sharing between the Yukon community corrections and the Public Prosecution Service of Canada prior to bail hearings, and community corrections has improved access to services for clients who are engaged in the behaviour-change processes and the need to stop cycles of offending behaviour. This work is supported in part by the creation of the in-house outreach support worker and a clinical counsellor, which are funded under the *Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy*. These programs are intertwined, of course, with respect to addressing these issues on behalf of Yukoners.

There are different approaches needed for what you might consider to be a repeat offender, perhaps in shoplifting — someone who has that activity as a regular part of their weekly or monthly life — or, in fact, when the repeat offences are of a relatively minor nature. We, of course, have an approach there where we are trying to address and serve the root causes of crime to make sure: Does the individual need housing or food security or these kinds of things that can be addressed through the work with the clinical counsellor and in-house outreach support worker?

There is a different strategy, of course, that must be taken with respect to repeat offenders and the bail provisions that have been a focus of the premiers and the ministers of Justice approaching the Prime Minister. We now have a new Prime Minister, we will soon have a new Minister of Justice, and we look forward to continuing to actively advocate for changes to the *Criminal Code* and to address bail and repeat offenders for serious violent crime.

Mr. Cathers: I don't think the minister indicated the date when what they characterized as the "repeat offender management program" would be established. Perhaps I missed that, but I would appreciate it if she could provide a timeline.

In a release dated September 27, 2024, Yukon RCMP said — quote: "Property crime can be driven by a number of factors, including a handful of prolific offenders..."

In another release dated August 13, 2024, Yukon RCMP stated — quote: "The calls for service to police related to property crime in the same quarter have increased." They further stated in that same release — quote: "Over half of the total police calls for service occurred in the downtown area in this time frame." So again, we know that the RCMP agree that prolific offenders are a big part of the problem and specifically stated that in at least one press release from last year.

The minister had previously described the former prolific offender management program to me in a letter dated February 10, 2017 in this manner — just for the reference of Hansard, that was also filed as part of a legislative return in the 2017 Spring Sitting — and I quote under "Prolific Offender Management": "The Department of Justice, in collaboration with the RCMP and other partners, established the Prolific Offender Management program in 2011. The program focusses on 15-20 offenders who are responsible for a large percentage of crime, and often the most serious crime, in Whitehorse."

So, again, we heard the minister, the RCMP, and the Premier indicating that re-establishment of a program of this type would be positive. I would appreciate it if the minister could elaborate on the expected dates of when things will be up and running as well as how many offenders will be managed under the program when re-established. Will it be similar to the structure that was in the program as she described it then, or will there be significant differences, and when can we expect the program to be in full operation?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Deputy Chair, thank you for the question. If I have been unclear, I will try to clear that up. The repeat offender program that I've described — a collaboration between the important partners with respect to the criminal justice system, including the RCMP, the public prosecution service, Legal Aid, and the judiciary — is in fact already up and running, already happening. Those meetings are happening and the work together is happening.

I also noted in my last answer that there are increased responsibilities, increased supervision, and increased information-sharing. That is also the same thing as the prolific offender program — "repeat offender" being a better descriptor of individuals who find themselves coming before the courts on a regular basis. Prolific offender program is a previous version of this some number of years ago, and the determination by the parties was made to describe it less intensely, perhaps, as a "repeat offender program". It would therefore encompass both relatively minor crimes that are repeated regularly and, more importantly, the focus that it has been across the country for the ministers of Justice and for the premiers on offenders of serious violent crime.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate that information.

So, the minister made mention of bail reform, which, of course, is an issue that we have raised with the government on multiple occasions and encouraged them to reach out to the RCMP to set priorities in a manner similar to what, for example, provinces such as Ontario and Manitoba — two examples of where a clear list of priorities of what that government would like to see the federal government take action on has been stated by each of those governments.

Again, as I've noted, whether or not the government agrees with the lists stated by any province or has a different perspective or supports some of those items, we believe that it is important, noting that all 13 premiers have agreed and sent multiple letters to the current and the former Prime Minister about the need for bail reform, with one in January of 2023 stating that the time for action is now.

It's clear that there is consensus from provincial and territorial governments that there is a need for urgent action in this area. We believe that an important part of that is for the territorial government to reach out to the RCMP and other partners and to come up with a list of priorities and clearly state that to the federal government.

Will the minister indicate: Has the government done that? If not, do they plan to reach out to the RCMP to ask for their views of which actions the government should include as a priority list of what they would like to see the federal government do in terms of bail reform?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: If I could just have one second for the moment to ask a question of my deputy minister.

I meet more than several times a year with RCMP Chief Superintendent Lindsay Ellis. We are very pleased and lucky to have her appointed, and we look forward to her swearing-in ceremony later this year. She has been doing the job for a number of months and acting in the job before that back into last fall, and we are very well-served by her leadership.

I also note that the deputy minister meets or speaks with her but meets in person with her or virtually at least every few weeks. We have an assistant deputy minister who is in contact with the RCMP at the very highest level of officials on probably a daily basis to talk about policing here in the territory and challenges and issues that arise.

Certainly, we have had, in those conversations, a discussion of planned bail reforms. We certainly worked with them through the conversations and input that we had with respect to Bill C-48 to create the reverse onus and to target serious repeat violent offenders and those involving weapons. That happened a few years ago, and we expanded the list of firearms offences that trigger a reverse onus, and through that law, we broadened the reverse-onus target — repeat offenders for intimate partner violence. I say "we" meaning, of course, just to be clear, the conversations and the work that I did at the ministers table across the country and that the deputy did at the deputy ministers table across the country, because, of course, it was federal legislation to change and amend the *Criminal Code*.

The reverse onus as a result of Bill C-48 shifts the burden of the accused to demonstrate that detention is unwarranted. It is one part of the steps forward with respect to bail reform. We have to know the views of the RCMP. We will continue to work

with them as we work at the ministerial and deputy ministerial tables, and the premiers will continue as they speak with the Prime Minister about changes that will also be collaborative but also continue to make sure that our bail system here in Canada requires individuals to be responsible for their actions and to ultimately address public safety.

Of course, it is a challenging situation. The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* protects individuals, and there are constitutional questions, none of which is to say that they should not be taken into account or that this work, as complex as it is, needs to be done, because it does need to be done — remembering that individuals who are on bail have not yet been convicted of a criminal offence here in the country, so that's just a couple of the challenges at work on those kinds of situations.

That's a bit of a long answer to the question, but yes, we are working with the RCMP to determine what their views are. We will know what those are as we work together going forward, particularly in the Yukon with respect to the concepts of reconciliation as well. Lastly, yes, we will be taking those concerns to the ministerial and deputy ministerial tables, to the deputy ministers working group, which is now working on bail reform here in Canada, and directly to the Prime Minister when we have that opportunity.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the information. I just want to emphasize here that, while we have our views on the importance of this issue, it is not something — let me start that sentence again.

This issue of bail reform is one that, in fact, every provincial and territorial government has had their premier sign at least three letters that I'm aware of on this important issue. Just to briefly recap, the first one was January 13, 2023 to the former Prime Minister of Canada, Prime Minister Trudeau, sent and signed by all 13 premiers, which stated in part: "As premiers, we will continue to do everything in our power to keep the public safe, and it is our hope that the federal government will do the same. With that in mind, we are once again calling on the federal government to make this change and commit to a thorough review of the bail system in Canada."

The letter concludes with the sentence: "The time for action is now."

Going forward from 2023 to last summer following the passage of Bill C-48, to which the minister referred, there is a letter entitled "Bail Reform and Public Safety" to the now former Prime Minister that, again, is signed by every premier in the country and says, "Clearly, in this case, Bill C-48 failed to keep a violent offender from posing a serious risk to public safety."

The letter goes on to state — and I quote: "In Ontario there have been multiple instances where individuals have been arrested for stealing cars multiple times and released on bail the very next day. Police services should not have to chase the same criminal three or four times because of an inadequate bail system."

The letter further goes on to say — and I quote: "This not only represents a drain on policing resources but is a hindrance to public safety. It is yet another example of repeat and violent

offenders being released into our communities without proper considerations."

Further, that July 2024 letter states — and I quote: "We urge the federal government to consider any necessary changes related to both bail and sentencing, including..." — future — "... legislative amendments..."

Flashing forward, then, now to last month, a letter was again signed by every premier in the country to the new Prime Minister, Mr. Carney. There is a reference to the passage of C-48, and in that March 18, 2025 letter, it states in part — and I quote: "Despite these important changes, there remain too many cases where communities are afflicted by the scourge of violence perpetrated by someone who is out on bail." It then goes on to refer to a situation involving a woman who was "... tragically killed by a man allegedly driving impaired, who was out on bail with an active arrest warrant out in his name for repeatedly violating bail conditions from previous offences."

Further, the letter goes on to reference a commitment made by the federal government in 2024 to amend the *Criminal Code* — quote: "... to make bail and sentencing laws stricter to better respond to the severity of a range of violent offences." Then the letter says, "This has yet to occur." It also says — quote: "This delay needs to be rectified at the earliest possible opportunity."

Again, I am pleased to hear that they have had some conversations with the RCMP. I would ask the minister, reiterating the call made by every premier in the country in March, that the delay needs to be rectified at the earliest possible opportunity. I would urge the government to come up with a list, following a consultation with the RCMP, of priorities for action on bail reform. I would ask the minister if she would give us a commitment of when either she or the Premier will write a letter to the federal government laying out the Yukon government's priorities for action on bail reform.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you for the question. I hope that I can instill some reassurance in the member opposite and Yukoners who are listening that this is a top priority not only for ministers but deputy ministers. At the moment, we have a new Cabinet that is going to be named and then appointed in the days to come. I understand that the date that has been noted for Parliament to resume is May 26, which is quite quick, and for a new Cabinet to be appointed. I look forward to the Minister of Justice being named so that we can continue this work going forward. I also note that the deputy ministers of Justice are meeting in person at a meeting in mid-June in New Brunswick. This will be a top-priority item on their agenda.

I do appreciate that the member opposite would work with the RCMP and create a list and put that in a letter. That's not necessarily the way that I will manage this particular issue. It is something that is on our agendas on a regular basis. We are having conversations; the work is being done collectively and otherwise with the ministers and the provinces and territories across the country, and we have and will make the views of the Yukon known on a regular basis and repeatedly. I certainly commit to us continuing to work on this important issue of bail reform here in Canada, and I do very much appreciate the perspective of the member opposite and how that would be managed by their team should they have that responsibility.

Mr. Cathers: In the interest of time, I'm going to move on to some other matters. I do look forward to hearing that and would again suggest that one of the values of stating the government's priorities in a letter is that it allows clarity to Yukoners as well about what the government is saying, while discussions at a meeting are less clear.

So, I want to move on to the issue of the RCMP mandate. Previously during debate on a supplementary budget for the Department of Justice, the minister and I discussed the Trudeau white paper that had been released suggesting very major changes to the mandate of the RCMP. That has been opposed by the union representing RCMP members, which is the National Police Federation. I believe the RCMP leadership federally has also come out against it, and certainly the commanding officer of Yukon RCMP M Division has been quite clear on her views about that, which we applaud her for — that being, of course, that they do not support that move away from contract policing.

What I would note to the minister is that — again, I understood that she was saying that the territorial government also opposes that proposed change, but what we don't at this point have is clarification from the new Prime Minister, Mr. Carney, on whether he supports the changes outlined in the Trudeau white paper proposing major changes to the RCMP or whether he will continue with support for the long-standing relationship of contract policing.

What I would ask the minister is: Now that the federal election is settled, will she confirm that the government — either through herself, the Premier, or both — will very clearly state to incoming Prime Minister Carney their opposition to the Trudeau white paper, their support for the continuation of RCMP contracting relationships with the Yukon and other jurisdictions, and will they ask the Prime Minister to clarify what his own position is on this very important matter?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: In the weeks or maybe several days after the white paper by former Prime Minister Trudeau was released, RCMP Commissioner Mike Duheme subsequently issued a statement saying that the RCMP was not consulted in the development of the white paper and that the RCMP presented their own plan to Public Safety Canada several months prior to that.

I can note that the Government of Yukon is aware of the ongoing conversations about the priorities and the shifting landscape of public safety, threats affecting Canadians, and the need for effective federal policing capacity to respond to those issues, such as cyber security and cross-border crime, but this must be done in a balanced way. The fact that Yukoners and Canadians across the country also need effective models of community policing that respond to day-to-day realities — sometimes that is called “contract policing”.

We will continue our conversations with the Government of Canada and with the Yukon RCMP M Division to continue to ensure that Yukoners receive effective and accountable policing responses and that this policing is responsive to the needs and the priorities of Yukon communities. I think that we heard very clearly in some public media by Chief Superintendent Lindsay Ellis that the RCMP in the territory

were not going anywhere; I think that was her quote. I don't want to quote her, but I'm pretty sure it is something like: We're not going anywhere. To reassure Yukoners that this, in fact, is the case — this conversation has been going on for a number of years, frankly, and I appreciate that the former Prime Minister put his thoughts to a piece of paper and distributed that across Canada, but it does not change the Yukon's commitment, the Yukon RCMP's commitment, and, as I understand it, the commitment of Commissioner Mike Duheme that contract policing will continue to serve communities across the country.

I am certainly committed to making our Yukon views known not only to the commissioner but to the new Minister of Justice, the new minister of community safety, and the Prime Minister of Canada, who has truly only been in the job a couple of days. While I appreciate the question, I am not often asked what the Prime Minister thinks.

That view has not been expressed to us with respect to the future, but I know that none of that approach will change the approach that we understand to be the case right now from RCMP top officials and the commissioner, at that level, as well as the ministers of public safety — the previous one and/or the current one and perhaps soon to be the same one or another. As the Cabinet is named, we will make this a top priority in our conversations with them to make sure that our Yukon views are known.

Mr. Cathers: While I do welcome the confirmation from the minister as well as statements made by Chief Superintendent Ellis and the commanding officer nationally of the RCMP of their opposition to the vision shared in Prime Minister Trudeau's white paper regarding the RCMP, what I do note is that, while they are all opposed to that vision and I join them in opposition to it, there is, of course, the possibility that if the new Prime Minister shares the view that his predecessor had on this, the Prime Minister could set in motion changes that are against the wishes of the RCMP both at the national level and locally as well as the Yukon government. I do welcome the minister's confirmation that they will make the case to the federal government for the importance of the RCMP and continuing the contract relationship.

I will move on to some other matters in the interest of time. There has been a significant amount of concern about the increase in organized crime. On March 13, for the reference of Hansard, the RCMP issued a statement from the commanding officer of RCMP Yukon regarding the second report, *Organized Crime in the Yukon: An Examination of Criminal Networks and the Associated Impacts*, completed by the Criminal Intelligence Service British Columbia and Yukon in December 2024. That was a quote from that document.

I would also — again, quoting from it — note: “... has provided an overarching view of what many Yukoners have experienced over many years: the direct, and tragic impact of organized crime influence in our communities, including loss, violent crime, property crime, and overall sense of safety, shaken.”

Also, moving on to the information shared in that report, in the executive summary, it states — quote: “The illicit drug

market in the Yukon may be more expansive and lucrative than previously reported in 2022 ... While alcohol and tobacco are the largest contributors simply by volume, the illicit products driven by Organized Crime account for more harm per capita..." It further states in that executive summary by the RCMP: "Yukon drug supply lines come from British Columbia and Alberta Organized Crime ... From 2020 until 2024, CISBC/YT identified five Organized Crime Networks operating in the Yukon ... The report concludes that the Yukon's illicit drug market may be more expansive and lucrative than previously assessed with British Columbia and Alberta Organized Crime groups expanding their drug lines into the Yukon."

That, of course, is all very concerning. Since that report was completed in December 2024 — and I'm not sure when the government would have seen a copy of it, but the minister was quoted in that press release. So, clearly, she would have seen it prior to that date of March 13. In response to the information contained in that report, particularly the findings that the drug market is more expansive and lucrative than previously reported and that — quote: "... British Columbia and Alberta Organized Crime groups expanding their drug lines into the Yukon..." is occurring, can the minister indicate what the government is doing in response to that new information contained in the report?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you for the question. The RCMP and our support as a community, as a legislative assembly, and as a government is incredibly important. Our government funds policing. The response to the question: What is the Yukon doing to respond to these issues of organized crime in our community? — first of all, I much appreciated the report that was provided, because when we know what issues are, we can work to respond to them. We can also put out accurate information for Yukoners.

We fund policing through investments with not only the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program, but, of course, the *Territorial Police Service Agreement* here in the territory supports the RCMP.

In this 2025-26 budget, the Government of Yukon is providing an increase of \$5.2 million to the *Territorial Police Service Agreement* budget to support responsive policing services. \$1.8 million of that is an increase of funding that will support eight new RCMP positions and one public service employee to support the RCMP policing services, and \$3.4 million will be used for critical equipment, operational costs, and the RCMP pay raises that are increased as part of the collective bargaining agreement. I did mention that in my opening remarks, but the 2025-26 increases to the RCMP budget are triple the 2024-25 investments, which came in at \$1.7 million.

This demonstrates our commitment to properly resourcing the RCMP so that they may address crime and protect Yukoners from critical threats. In addition, the Government of Yukon is working to staff enhanced RCMP resources in First Nation communities through the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program. These organized crime threats are not just here in Whitehorse but target individuals — those addicted to drugs —

primarily in the — organized crime focuses on the drug trade. We must also not forget about the work that is being done to combat this scourge on society in communities as well as in Whitehorse.

I am very pleased that, through the agreement with the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program, the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, the Kluane First Nation, and the Ross River Dena Council will each receive an additional RCMP position under their respective community tripartite agreements. This is exciting news. We have also established an Indigenous policing liaison position within the RCMP to support First Nation policing across the territory and two RCMP members for the Whitehorse detachment to support the downtown Whitehorse safety response action plan. This is work that has been growing with respect to our responses — work that is a result of our working closely with the RCMP to understand the issues, work that is in response to us working closely with the communities to understand the issues that they are trying to address.

I know that the Yukon RCMP remains committed to action within the Yukon *Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy* by providing effective law enforcement services and working to disrupt efforts of organized crime but, most importantly, to protect the health and safety of all Yukoners.

I know that initiatives such as Car 867 combine the efforts of police officers and nurses, mental health-trained nurses, to deliver prevention strategies, harm-reduction services, and referrals for treatment. Their work every day aims to thwart the deepening entrenchment of organized crime into our communities. We thank them for that. They are working hard to assist individuals. We also know that their work disrupts, absolutely, calls for regular service by the RCMP or service outside of Car 867 approaches.

We also know that they impact the work of that car, and those trained individuals, police officers and mental health nurses in that car, also disrupts absolutely the need for responses from the Whitehorse General Hospital emergency department. This is all amazing work. It is designed to, first, recognize the impact of organized crime here in the territory, to work with our partners across the communities to combat organized crime, and to support the resource of the RCMP to make sure that they have the items, the equipment, the vehicles, the detachments, and the personnel that they need to respond.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the information. I do also welcome that the government has supported the creation of a handful of new RCMP positions. Those positions are a very much-needed addition to the RCMP and their ability to respond to the rise in organized crime, rise in violent crime, and the rise in property crime.

I do have to push back a little at the minister's characterization about the increase when she referred to it as tripling. I know that she was comparing it to the increase for the last fiscal year, and I also do need to remind the minister that, based on the breakdown we were provided by the department, the total numbers that they have included include some amounts for capital and as well, according to the department handout, over \$1.5 million that was "an ongoing increase of \$1,506,000 to cover YG's portion of the funds

awarded to RCMP officers and regular members via a binding arbitration.”

Again, that is forced growth due to arbitration and a collective agreement increase, not something that is directly translating into any more boots on the ground or increased resources in that particular part of it. The amount that I wrote down at the briefing with officials when I asked for a breakdown was that, of the \$3.6-million line item described as “RCMP incremental increases”, \$1.8 million and change was related to the addition of eight new positions. Again, we welcome that, but I would just encourage the minister to not imply that things were larger than they actually were.

I want to go back to another thing related to property crime. Again, I will quote from the RCMP’s own words so that we’re clear about where the source of the information is coming from. In August of last year, the RCMP described the increase in property crime compared to the previous year. They noted — comparing April 1 to June 30 of 2024 to the same period of the previous year, and it states in a release dated August 13, 2024 that: “The calls for service to police related to property crime in the same quarter have increased.” Again, that was for the quarter of April 1 to the end of June of 2024. The release further states: “... 56 reported break and enter compared to 72; 123 reported theft under \$5,000 compared to 144. Vehicle thefts have also increased, 28 reported from April to June in 2023 and 45 reported in the same quarter this year. Thefts from motor vehicle went from 37 to 77; bicycle thefts from 13 to 34. Over half of the total police calls for service occurred in the downtown area in this timeframe.”

So, again, those are the RCMP’s own statements from last year comparing the increase in property crime in comparison to the previous year.

Again, we welcome the increases that have been provided to the RCMP, but considering this spike in organized crime and property crime that they are dealing with, it’s not adequate to the current demand. There continue to be challenges and, as we discussed earlier in the matter of bail reform, it’s clear that there is consensus from premiers across the country that there is the issue of the challenge of police members being forced to arrest the same people again and again and again when they’re out on bail, so bail reform is clearly an absolutely vital component of that.

So, what I would just ask the minister regarding this is: With the positions that are provided here in the budget, what is the expected timeline for when those new RCMP positions will be filled? Are there any new police positions for communities such as Mayo that have made specific requests for increased policing in the past?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I think that I might have misunderstood part of the question, but I can announce that, through the agreement that we have with the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program and First Nation communities, the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun — Mayo — the Kluane First Nation, and the Ross River Dena Council will receive additional RCMP positions under their respective community tripartite agreements. The eight officers expected to be deployed to Whitehorse and assigned to Whitehorse will be

staffed as soon as possible following the approval of this budget, and the FNIPP — the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program — funds are also subject to the passing of this budget. I look forward to that happening.

I can also note that — through several conversations that I’ve had with senior officials at the RCMP — Whitehorse is a chosen spot for officers graduating from the RCMP Depot in Saskatchewan and that the postings here in the Yukon Territory — in Whitehorse and in the communities — are particularly sought after by new officers, and we are very pleased for that to be the case. I understand that the other parts of our staffing here in the Yukon are at a very, very low vacancy rate because of this. I can confirm with a note that I’ve just received that the RCMP can confirm that the positions that were brought forward in the supplemental budget have already been staffed.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the information provided by the minister, and I want to thank the officials, both here in the Assembly and behind the scenes, for their work and for the information that they provided to the minister. In the interest of time and getting on to the Department of Health and Social Services, I will at this point turn the floor over to the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, who I’m sure has questions to ask as well.

Ms. Blake: I would like to thank the officials for being here.

I think I’ll start with my questions on the MNP report on the SHARP. On page 25 of the report, it points out that staff in the SHARP are currently in a room that also serves as a staff washroom for outreach and programming. The photo attached is of a room that is clearly a washroom. I was just wondering if this issue is going to be addressed for the staff who work out of this space that has been identified in the MNP review.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: We are working through the report. I apologize that I don’t have it in front of me, so I am not sure about the exact reference. I am told that the room is used for storage only — if there was a specific question about a room.

Let me say it this way. We are working at the department to look at every detail of the review and the notations of issues that need to be addressed as a result of that, including those of infrastructure. I look forward to that work being completed. I can also note that the recommendations of the evaluation will inform decisions around the structure of the men’s and women’s supervised housing programs.

Ms. Blake: The review also points to the significant operational and security concerns that the SHARP raises for Whitehorse Correctional Centre. What is being done by the department to address these concerns?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I think that the response that I have will be the same — that we are taking the review very seriously. We were very pleased to have the review done by the individual corporation that did the work to review the men’s supervised housing program and to make recommendations about the women’s supervised housing program. We will take all of that information in hand as we look to make sure that the supervised housing program for men is responding to the needs of those members of the community who are justice-involved but trying to be reintegrated into their own home communities or home lifestyle. We are working with them to do that to make sure that

they are supported, supervised, properly housed, and provided with programming and supervision, including the infrastructure concerns that were noted in that report.

I know that the member opposite raised this question prior to the review being done. We now have the information from the review and we can work to support changes, including those that might be necessary for infrastructure changes.

Ms. Blake: One of the issues that was identified in this report is the issue of contraband making its way from the men's SHARP and also possibly making its way into the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. It is an issue that I raised in the House previously and that came to me from folks whom I had been visiting at Whitehorse Correctional Centre. It's a concern that I have heard from guys who have been or are staying in the men's SHARP, and the challenge that causes is for the guys who have been through a treatment facility, they are coming back to the Yukon, and they return to the SHARP. They are trying to maintain sobriety and stay off drugs, but the issue is that it's all around them in the halfway house at the jail. What has been indicated to me numerous times is that these guys are choosing to go back to being reincarcerated at Whitehorse Correctional Centre to avoid being exposed to the drugs at the SHARP, so I'm just wondering: What is the department doing to address this issue?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you for the question. With respect to the allegations of contraband, I certainly have spoken with officials before when this was raised by the member opposite. I encouraged the member opposite at the time — if individuals would come forward to report these things either to the officials at the men's housing program or to the police or perhaps to a probation officer or someone they trust in the community so that we could continue to look into each and every allegation. I can indicate that there are regular searches of property — regular room searches at the men's housing program — so that we can combat the issues of contraband should they arise. What I can also say is that we are fully aware of the need for contraband of any kind to be kept out of that space. Individuals need to be supported there and supported in a way that allows them to reach their best efforts at sobriety and changing criminal behaviour. We have met with Connective, which runs that particular program, and they are also fully aware of the need to make sure that this is not a thing that is happening.

We looked into it before — and this is only from memory, so I'll wait and see if the department can confirm this, but my recollection is that there were no cases that proved in any way that there was contraband going between the two programs. But I leave that to them to continue to investigate on a case-by-case basis. It cannot be happening.

I can also indicate that we are working at the Department of Health and Social Services to support programming for individuals returning from treatment to be in supervised spaces, supervised housing, supportive housing — not to supervise them returning from treatment — and I should have used the word "supportive". In order to make sure that there is the gap of individuals returning from treatment and wanting to live a sober life and reintegrate into their own communities, this is in

reality a process that has to be step by step. Coming home from treatment and just returning to the very same personal circumstances, housing situation, community life, or neighbourhood life is a very, very difficult situation in almost all cases. We must recognize that there is a gap. Individuals returning from treatment having a safe place to stay is an important step on their journey and on the journey that we can help them with to avoid returning to the using of drugs and to make sure that their journey to sobriety is supported. A number of opportunities exist in our work with Health and Social Services to address that situation as well as with our funding for First Nations for land-based healing programs.

Ms. Blake: Another area of the report that I wanted to ask about is — it was indicated in the report that there is a lack of support for folks who are transgender or a part of the LGBTQIA2S+ community. I'm just wondering: What is the department doing to incorporate supports within the justice system for those folks?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you for the question. I noted that in looking at the report myself — I know that work that we are doing with other community-based groups and NGOs and community-based groups across the territory that provide services either through Health and Social Services or through Justice need to be completely aware of the importance of providing those services in an appropriate and respectful way to members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. As we work through the report and the recommendations there, we will continue that work. Recognition of this, by way of example only, at 405 Alexander where Connective is also responsible for those operations — and some of the supported programming by CYFN — have made an extreme effort to reach out to community organizations that support the 2SLGBTQIA+, including Queer Yukon and others, and to incorporate their advice into how they can respectfully work with their clients.

Ms. Blake: On page 14 of the report, the review states that Connective has been challenged in its reporting responsibilities under the TPA with gaps and delays in its reports to government, including a two-year delay in providing audited financials to the government and significant financial discrepancies.

What is the government doing to address this? It is, again, indicated on page 14 of the report.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: This was a concerning part of the reporting that, in fact, there were obligations in the transfer payment agreement that were not being met as quickly as we would have wanted them to be. I can indicate that we continue to work with Connective to resolve those issues as quickly as possible.

The transfer payment agreement requires certain reporting provisions. They will be enforced by us. We will continue to seek them on an early if not on time basis, because it is only with that kind of reporting, among other types of reporting through the service provision of these kinds of programs, that we will understand when and if there need to be changes and how we can address them.

Ms. Blake: I think that this is the second-to-last question that I have about the review. The review states that the location of the SHARP creates a psychologically unsafe and institutional space that can retraumatize residents. Yesterday, the minister confirmed to the Assembly that this government has no plans to relocate the SHARP despite the recommendations that are indicated in this review. Can the minister explain why?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you very much for the question. I do know that the comments with respect to the location and it being somewhat institutional — certainly it is. The opportunity to explore — I don't know if the member opposite will remember, but a program like this was previously provided for in a small house on the Alaska Highway. In that small house, there was almost no common space that was conducive to individuals being able to gather together or have cooking facilities. There were no cooking facilities for individuals who lived there. There were bedrooms that were shared among individuals.

Part of the balance that was made in the decision that was made when the SHARP program was moved to the part of the Whitehorse Correctional Centre that has its own entrance and exit and is on the far side was, in fact, balancing the idea of it being somewhat institutional with the fact that individuals would have more opportunity for programming, would have access to a good bus service, would have their own rooms, supported and redesigned, and proper furniture in the common area in an area in which they could hopefully cook meals together or learn some life skills, and an opportunity for that to happen. So, that was a balance. The decision was not made lightly to move the program there. It also allowed for more individuals than were able to stay at the old house that was available.

Also, just to remind Yukoners, that house and that program were run by the Salvation Army. We were given a number of months' notice — I don't remember exactly the number — that they would just stop running that program, and we were very concerned that the support — the opportunity for individuals to have a place to be when they are not in custody but are required to maintain certain requirements of behaviour and get supported through programming there, and we were very keen to make sure that didn't just disappear overnight. The decision was made after lengthy consideration and some research into using this place for that programming.

What I can say — and what I confirmed yesterday — is that there are no current plans to move that program somewhere else, because we simply haven't taken that into account and investigated that in a proper way, having just received the reports not too long ago. We are considering all the recommendations and comments made in that report. We will continue to explore options for improvements to that program, but I am keen and I know our department officials and those who advise me are keen to make sure that we maintain that program just the same.

Ms. Blake: Another area that stood out for me in the report was on page 12. It indicates that government administrators and partners, as well as service provider

representatives, noted challenges with the Yukon's service landscape, noting that the territory lacks supportive programming.

As such, while residents may improve their conditions and lives while participating in the program, the lack of stage 2 programming or subsequent wrap-around supports can impact the ability to maintain progress. Calls were made by participants to increase the availability of second-stage housing programs offering recovery and supportive housing environments to help residents continue their reintegration journey.

I think that this is one of the key things that stood out for me, because coming from an isolated community like Old Crow — a fly-in community where we have a shortage of housing and the majority of services that we rely on for our health and well-being are provided by Yukon government, such as the mental health services that are provided by counsellors in the community — with folks who are caught up in the justice system, they come from traumatic backgrounds, they live with complex mental health challenges, and they might be involved with the child welfare system. They might not have strong connections within the community or within their families because of the dynamics of the community, and there are not always options for stable housing in the community.

I was wondering what the government is doing within the Department of Justice around this particular issue that could help decrease recidivism for folks who are tied up within the justice system or to support folks who are working toward staying out of the justice system.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you for the question; thank you for the very apt description of the challenges that individuals have not only from isolated communities but even from Whitehorse and throughout the Yukon when they are trying to change their lifestyle from one that had them involved with the criminal justice system or with addictions and behaviour around addictions to one that does not include those things. It is an extremely apt description.

We note that individuals deal with trauma, they deal with housing issues, and they deal with food security. This is truly an approach that has not always been one that has been taken by governments. I have been very proud to see our government work together over the last nine years — eight and a half years — to discuss and to focus on an entire whole-person approach. We must know that people who have a traumatic background can't just deal with trauma if they're dealing also with housing or with food insecurity. We must treat the whole person, and we must understand that our programs have to be interrelated and they have to be integrated so that individuals who are being helped in one way, in one place, in one opportunity — whether it be by an NGO or by government or through this program at the supervised housing — that they also have to be able to interrelate the services that they get with those from other organizations or other places.

We are specifically looking at second-stage housing. I noted earlier in an answer that we are looking at the Department of Health and Social Services to filling the gap between individuals who are transitioning from some of these situations,

trying to go back to their own lives in communities, and the opportunity for them to have a sober, supportive place to be in the interim and make sure that they can land safely back in the territory, whether it be from a criminal justice intervention, whether it be from a treatment intervention — and our work together between the two departments of Justice and Health and Social Services is focused on filling that gap and making sure that our programming that happens in many, many ways and many, many places is actually — they're talking to one another, they're supporting the individual, and they're working to make sure that they can be supported in trying to change their lives.

Ms. Blake: The other question that I have is something that I'm often asked in my home community of Old Crow too, and that's regarding the support for victims of crime, especially those who are impacted by domestic violence or sexual assault. Coming from a small community, when those serious charges happen, it's hard for people to maintain distance from the person who caused harm. And when it comes to domestic violence, it's hard to find housing for people who are removed from the same location they were living in, and it just causes a lot of tension and more — I think — grief in the community. People don't often know how to navigate the services that they could reach out to for support. Like, one of the resources that I often tell people to reach out to is Victim Services, and sometimes, people don't find that mechanism supportive or they're scared to reach out. I know from my own experience last year before my life spiralled out of control, I was dealing with domestic violence, and reaching out to those services for support is scary, and sometimes, people don't know how to respond to those situations.

So, I'm wondering: How is the government addressing support for victims of crime, particularly those who are impacted by domestic violence and sexual assault?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you again for the question. Again, I appreciate very much the description by the member opposite of the challenges that face individuals who are dealing with domestic violence, sexual assault, sexualized assault, and the stresses that come with trying to determine safety, trying to determine a safe place to go or who to reach out to for help, and trying to determine what an individual might want to do in those situations.

This is something that I've worked on for, I'm sorry to say, probably more than 40 years. We have programming at the Department of Justice — I mean, just back up to say — so, I completely understand the description given by the member opposite, and I think it is a fair characterization of the stresses that people face when they are trying to deal with these kinds of situations.

We do have victim services that are available to every victim of any kind of crime even if they do not intend or want to report to the RCMP or to go through the services of a court process or anything like that. Victim Services is a place — it is a — all of those situations are scary to make that first call, but I can indicate that our trained individuals, counsellors there, understand how difficult that is for people to pick up a phone. I can also indicate we have a family information liaison unit

which attempts to assist individuals with providing supports to families.

It remains a key component of the Government of Yukon's implementation of *Changing the Story to Upholding Dignity and Justice*, which is something that we spoke about earlier here today — the Yukon's missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit+ people strategy. The family information liaison unit coordinator works with partner agencies to coordinate support for families, including information-gathering systems, navigation, and outreach. That may be something that's involved in the trauma of an individual.

We also have a program through the sexualized assault response team — SART — which focuses on transportation for victims of gender-based violence. We also have a program at Yukon Housing that prioritizes individuals to have housing if they are suffering a situation of domestic or gender-based violence and are looking for housing. It doesn't necessarily help in a small, tiny community, but there is an accompaniment service through the sexualized assault response team, also known as SART. The sexualized assault response team provides an accompaniment service for victims of sexualized assault or intimate partner violence seeking medical care. An individual could go with someone to the Whitehorse General Hospital. They could also go with someone if they are reporting to police. There is a weekend component as well. We are working to deliver this service 24/7.

The government remains committed to providing trauma-informed, client-led services and ensuring the availability of accompaniment services for victims of sexualized violence when seeking medical care and reporting to the police. I really want to emphasize that these services and the approach given at Victim Services, at SART, and probably also at the family liaison unit is that it is client-led. Services are provided and explained to individuals, but they certainly are not directed in any way to avail themselves of any particular services. I think that this is incredibly important with respect to how individuals can retain their power and retain their integrity in determining what is best for them.

I can also note that the sexualized assault response team is a network of agencies that provide safe, comprehensive supports for victims of sexualized violence. We are definitely committed to expanding the service to Yukon communities and, of course, it is available to anyone from a community or anyone in the territory if they choose to reach out by phone.

The expansion of services into the communities is guided by findings and recommendations of the "what we heard" report that was done with respect to expanding this service and is informed by leading practices and approaches from experts in the field.

The departments of Justice and Health and Social Services and the Women and Gender Equity Directorate are working closely with SART agencies to develop an action plan to enhance supports for victims of sexualized assault in rural communities. The work is making progress and is focused on strengthening relationships with rural service providers, with supporting rural service providers, and with providing travel

assistance for rural victims of gender-based violence and for improving navigation and pathways to access forensic care from rural communities and the ability to have that opportunity.

We are working to expand access to training for community service providers and updating communication material to better reach victims in rural communities and enhance awareness and understanding of sexualized violence in existing services such as the 24/7 toll-free support line that exists now and priority access to counselling through Mental Wellness and Substance Use community hubs.

This is just some of the work that is being done to expand SART into the communities and to respond to the needs of individuals when they are ready.

Ms. Blake: Being mindful of the time, I will conclude with my questions here. I just want to thank the officials for their time and the minister for answering my questions.

Mahsi' cho.

Deputy Chair: Is there any further general debate on Vote 8, Department of Justice, in Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*?

Deputy Chair: Seeing none, we will proceed to line-by-line debate.

Ms. Blake: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 8, Department of Justice, in Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 8, Department of Justice, cleared or carried

Deputy Chair: The Member for Vuntut Gwitchin has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 8, Department of Justice, in Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*, cleared or carried, as required.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$104,209,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$6,528,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$110,737,000 agreed to

Department of Justice agreed to

Deputy Chair: The matter now before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 15, Department of Health and Social Services, in Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: Committee will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

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

The matter now before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 15, Department of Health and Social Services, in Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*.

Department of Health and Social Services — continued

Deputy Chair: Is there any further general debate?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you to Deputy Minister Matt King for joining me today as well as our director of finance, Melanie Wallace, as well as Jared Wong, our senior advisor.

At the very end of our debate — it might have only been yesterday — we were discussing a number of things, and the member opposite left me with a number of questions. I think I did respond to the withdrawal management wait-list question as well as the wait times for long-term care. There were four other topics, and I'm happy to touch on them with information today.

One of the questions was about Emergency Medical Services community training opportunities. EMS offers a variety of training methods and programs to increase recruitment and retention of community responders and to ensure the support for community responders. We are very anxious and always supportive of individuals who want to come forward for this role. We have a training centre, a mobile training unit, high-fidelity training mannequins, and an online learning platform, and we have local training nights and certificate courses in addition to peer support programs and mental wellness and supports with a focus on the psychological health and safety of our first responders, because this is an aspect that must be addressed.

Training is being offered in communities in the spring of 2025 — including a training session in Carmacks on April 28, which will have just occurred. EMS also provides accredited programs and certification for community responders, and EMS provides compensation for four hours of non-operational pay per month to encourage community responder attendance and to support biweekly training nights.

I was asked about EMS community coverage. Yukon Emergency Medical Services is committed to delivering timely, high-quality care to the residents in every corner of the territory. They continue to recruit and increase the number of responders in Whitehorse and in all communities. As of January 2025, Haines Junction is supported by 16 community responders — I think that was the primary question. Primary care paramedic coverage is scheduled for Haines Junction for the week of May 9 through May 12. Yukon EMS has been supporting services with the float medics program out of Whitehorse since the start of 2024 to augment local community gaps — individuals who go from place to place to help with coverage. Anyone organizing an event in a community is encouraged to notify Community Nursing and Yukon EMS ahead of time to ensure that coverage is available during that event, and I think that's what I was asked about.

I will lastly just try to touch on the hospital shift coverage question about May and the hospitalist staffing. In May 2025, 88 hospitalist shifts are covered. There are four shifts per day and one shift per evening, for a total of 124 day shifts and 31 evening shifts. The Yukon Hospital Corporation prioritizes filling day shifts. Day shift hospitalists rotate evening and on-call coverage. A new hospitalist rate structure became effective on April 30 — just yesterday — and is anticipated to support the filling of the scheduling gaps if any remain in the month of May and going forward.

Our government is in the process of negotiating a new MOU with the Yukon Medical Association, and with the passage of Bill No. 310, we will be moving to ensure that contracts are scoped into future negotiations. In the meantime, the Yukon Medical Association and the Yukon government agreed that they will work together on the contract structure for hospitalist services and include the Yukon Hospital Corporation in that process.

I will take my seat after I note that the Government of Yukon is committed to this program and appreciates the collaborative relationship with the Yukon Hospital Corporation and the Yukon Medical Association to advance this and other critical physician initiatives. It is always absolutely essential that there is a partnership focus, because hospitalists are paid by the Government of Yukon, but they are scheduled by the Hospital Corporation, and the Yukon Medical Association represents their members as physicians, and our work together, for all of those reasons, is essential.

Mr. Cathers: I do have a number of questions, but time is unfortunately growing quite short in the Sitting here. I'm going to touch on just a few high-priority ones.

The government, in the *2023 Yukon Health Status Report* that was released in November of last year, notes, quoting from the government press release — quote: “Some of the report’s key findings include the following ... A decline in access to regular health care providers...”

We previously brought forward and passed a motion urging the government to recruit doctors, nurses, and other health professionals, including doing a marketing campaign focused on health professionals in the United States urging them to move here, as well as recognizing the credentials of US-trained doctors and speeding up the recognition of other health professionals and the licensing process.

I would ask if the minister could indicate when the government plans to launch that marketing campaign that they agreed to support.

I'm going to move on to the issue of the hospital. We are pleased that the government has finally provided funding to update the surgical services project. The government has so far been a little bit vague about how many new beds will be created as part of the addition of the patient space that is part of that project, along with the surgical services area. However, the Yukon Hospital Corporation, in its *Year in Review 2023-2024*, says on page 12: “Expanding Bed Capacity: With hospital occupancy frequently exceeding 100%, we undertook a phased, data-driven approach to planning the expansion of bed capacity by 30%, with completion anticipated by mid-2025.”

Can the minister confirm if the government supports that target indicated by the hospital of expanding the bed capacity at Whitehorse General Hospital by 30 percent through this project?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you for the question. With respect to recruiting health professionals from the United States, the Yukon government is committed to strengthening our health workforce, of course, through recruitment and retention. We recognize the importance of expanding pathways to qualified health professionals, including those trained in the US.

The Yukon government has done upfront work to establish an agreement with Nova Scotia, and that allows US-trained physicians to obtain credentials in Nova Scotia, and when they do that, they can be recognized here for licensure in the territory. Nova Scotia is the only jurisdiction in Canada that fully recognizes US-trained physicians as equivalent to Canadian-trained doctors, and this means that American-trained physicians who obtain licensure in Nova Scotia and want to practise in the Yukon will be recognized, and that could be a smooth transition.

We will continue to focus our marketing efforts both in Canada and expand to include the US, and we are seeing this in British Columbia. I have texted with the minister of health in British Columbia so that we will hopefully be able to meet sometime in the coming weeks or months to determine how it is that they are marketing in British Columbia and to partner with them on opportunities to work to actively recruit physicians in the US for the Yukon.

We are also actively supporting internationally educated health professionals, and I will stop there in order to be able to respond to the other part of the question.

Bed capacity at the hospital. The department has allocated \$12.9 million in O&M funding in the 2025-26 main estimates to the Yukon Hospital Corporation to address bed capacity pressures. We had, previously, 45 beds at the Whitehorse General Hospital. The increase of 30 percent of that would mean an increase of 13.5 beds. We have, through the changes and the work together with the Thomson Centre and opportunities for increasing long-term care, increased the bed capacity at the hospital by 10 already — so, almost 30 percent. I look forward to the mental wellness unit opening — a new area at the Whitehorse General Hospital which will provide space, initially, for five additional hospital beds but will be renovated because of the makeup of that space to improve the bed capacity at the hospital by a total of eight places and beds for individual patients at Whitehorse General Hospital, which will be an 18-bed capacity increase over the 30 percent identified in the question of 13.5.

We look forward to working with the Whitehorse General Hospital to continue to improve the additional beds for the hospital’s delivery of acute care as well and are making sure that we are supporting this by providing staff for long-term care optimization at Whistle Bend Place in a two-phased approach, with \$2.3 million allocated for that two-phased approach.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the clarification by the minister about what that was referring to.

With regard to the surgical services renewal project, the chair of the Yukon Hospital Corporation indicated that, in the project that had been presented to government in 2018-19, there were, I believe she indicated, 32 beds in a patient tower along with the surgical services expansion. Can the minister please confirm with the planning work that is being done, because there was an indication by the chair that they were likely going to revise that number upward. Does the minister have a sense of how many beds will be included in the revised plan for the surgical services renewal project?

Also, just recognizing that the time is growing short here, I will group another question in there regarding continuing care. The minister told us yesterday that: "The projected population growth for Yukoners aged 65 and over is expected to nearly double over the next 20 years. Seniors are projected to account for 49 percent of the Yukon's population growth by 2040." She also indicated that the percentage of the population aged 65 and over is anticipated to grow to 21.2 percent of the total population. That, of course, will create an increase in the requirement for continuing care beds. What I did ask the minister yesterday, which I hope she is able to tell us today, is: What is the department's estimate on the current projections for the growth for the next five years on the need for continuing care beds?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Work with the Whitehorse General Hospital surgical services renewal project began back in August 2018. It ran for five months at that time, culminating in early 2019 — in January — with a functional program version of a report. The consultant team was asked to return to Whitehorse for further sessions to inform a report, which was ultimately provided in March 2019. The report was guided by a clear vision statement.

It was about integrating a collaborative and patient-centred surgical services program providing excellent, efficient, and safe ambulatory day care and inpatient surgery.

That report aims to ensure that Yukon is able to maintain a robust elective surgical services program, recognizing that surgical care and increased inpatient bed capacity are both essential for the expanding population of the Yukon Territory.

Short-term improvements have been made within the existing surgical areas to mitigate challenges, including changes that were about implementing a flexible operating room suite to help move day procedures like endoscopy out of the main operating rooms. A scope reprocessing unit was developed adjacent to the flexible operating room suite. There is an introduction of the post-anesthesia care unit and trained post-anesthesia staff to improve the quality of patient care post-surgery.

We improved patient access and flow-through patient registration, a preoperative clinic, and outpatient clinics like the cast clinic and the minor procedures being co-located in a surgical services hub. That was all important work to improve patient experiences.

\$1.15 million has been included in our 2025-26 proposed budget — the one we are discussing today — to support a planning process for the proposed infrastructure expansion of Whitehorse General Hospital. This is the next step toward

building modern surgical services spaces, increasing the hospital's inpatient bed capacity, and increasing space and capacity for support services. The planning work will centre on designing the right equipment, space, and tools so that the hospital staff and physician teams can deliver the high-quality care that Yukoners deserve and rely on.

I can note that the Premier and I met not that long ago with two members of the general surgeons team to discuss this kind of process going forward. There will be a dedicated project team to support planning along with committees to ensure appropriate representation of program needs. Staff and physician input and participation will be absolutely critical in this phase to ensure that the designs and plans will meet care needs. There will be engagement opportunities, and we look forward to hearing insights from staff of all types at the Hospital Corporation. I also can indicate that we await the review of health infrastructure across the territory and expect that it will also work to inform our work going forward with respect to the surgical services improvements and ultimately a new hospital space.

I can also indicate that the committees that have been working on this in the past are being reinvigorated — and the opportunity for us to continue to meet with them as well as the Hospital Corporation — again, an important opportunity for the three important partners, Government of Yukon, Yukon Hospital Corporation, and Yukon Medical Association, to cooperate to bring this work forward to the benefit of Yukoners.

Mr. Cathers: Though I do have more questions, I will hand the floor over to the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin so that she has a chance to ask some as well, and I will just thank minister and officials for the information provided.

Ms. Blake: I guess the first question that I have is one that I've been asked numerous times by folks in Old Crow. It is about the issue of access to detox services. I'm just wondering: Is the government working on any plans to offer more detox services in communities like Old Crow? What I've been hearing from folks in Old Crow who want to access detox is that they face the challenge of having to leave the community, leave their jobs, leave their kids, and leave their families, and quite a few folks have asked if they will be able to soon access more detox services in Old Crow at the local health centre.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Withdrawal management has an average of eight calls per day here in Whitehorse that result in delayed admissions. I know that we were speaking briefly about wait times with respect to this yesterday. When a bed is not immediately available, individuals are encouraged to call back and are typically admitted within 24 to 48 hours. These calls are often from one individual calling multiple times for a bed until it does come available. We also make sure that individuals are in a safe place and are able to manage for the period of time if they need to wait.

There is not a wait-list for bed availability, as withdrawal management is a drop-in service and beds are offered on a first-come, first-served basis, allowing us to keep more beds occupied.

Once admitted, clients have a seven-day stay, and this allows some ability to anticipate when beds become available.

Because clients can choose to leave at any time during their stay, people are encouraged to call often about bed availability. Clients requesting a bed when one is unavailable are provided with support access and appropriate and immediate health and social needs. Individuals living outside of Whitehorse can call to reserve a bed before travelling from their home community. Youth bed requests or requests from pregnant individuals are never delayed.

What I can note with respect to the question about Old Crow is that there is no expertise in the community to manage withdrawal for individuals. The program is encouraged to take place over seven days, so that would be a barrier as well to that situation.

A clinical counsellor does travel to Old Crow biweekly, and a clinical child and youth counsellor travels to Old Crow monthly. Virtual or in-person Whitehorse sessions with a clinical counsellor are available when a counsellor is not in the community, and that comes as a result of the community hubs that were put in place with respect to mental wellness and substance use some period of time ago under the previous minister, who is from Old Crow and understood the importance of the hub process and the hub access to providing care to individuals.

There is not the ability to operate a withdrawal management program in Old Crow at this time, but I should note that individuals who are interested in entering withdrawal management here in Whitehorse from a community can call ahead, and a bed will be held, if it's available, for that person to be able to travel to Whitehorse and avail themselves of the services here in the territory.

There is also, at the Sarah Steele Building — in addition to the withdrawal management services — there is the intensive treatment services, which is an opportunity for individuals to enter into treatment for between two and 12 weeks. Of course, they will be focusing there on changing their relationship with substances, and that occurs here in Whitehorse as well. So, that is the opportunity right now — is for those to happen here in Whitehorse.

Ms. Blake: I thank the minister for her response to that question.

I guess my last question is: Can the minister confirm if the health centre in Old Crow will be fully staffed throughout the summer months?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: It is not currently on the list of communities where we are trying to fill vacancies. In the event that a vacancy is happening with respect to service provision in Old Crow at the health centre, we would — like we do in all smaller communities — work to make sure that those vacancies were filled. They have not come to our attention just yet. We know that the health facility — the new health centre in Old Crow — is a truly beautiful facility and serves the community very well. We also know that there are staff assigned to that health centre —

Deputy Chair: Order.

Termination of Sitting as per Standing Order 76(1)

Deputy Chair: The time has reached 5:00 p.m. on this, the 32nd sitting day of the 2025 Spring Sitting.

Standing Order 76(1) states, “On the sitting day that the Assembly has reached the maximum number of sitting days allocated for that Sitting pursuant to Standing Order 75, the Chair of the Committee of the Whole, if the Assembly is in Committee of the Whole at the time, shall interrupt proceedings at 5:00 p.m. and, with respect to each appropriation bill before Committee that the Government House Leader directs to be called, shall:

“(a) put the question on any amendment then before the Committee;

“(b) put the question, without debate or amendment, on a motion moved by a Minister that the bill, including all clauses, schedules, title and preamble, be deemed to be read and carried;

“(c) put the question on a motion moved by a Minister that the bill be reported to the Assembly; and

“(d) when all bills have been dealt with, recall the Speaker to the Chair to report on the proceedings of the Committee.”

Pursuant to Standing Order 76, it is the duty of the Chair to now conduct the business of Committee of the Whole in the manner directed by Standing Order 76(1). The Chair will now ask the Government House Leader to indicate whether the appropriation bill now before Committee of the Whole should be called.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The government directs that Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*, be called at this time.

Bill No. 217: *First Appropriation Act 2025-26* — continued

Deputy Chair: The Committee will now deal with Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*.

The Chair will now recognize the Member for Klondike for the purpose of moving a motion pursuant to Standing Order 76(1)(b).

Hon. Mr. Silver: I move that all clauses, schedules, the preamble, and the title of Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*, be deemed to be read and carried.

Deputy Chair: It has been moved by the Member for Klondike that all clauses, schedules, the preamble, and the title of Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*, be deemed to be read and carried.

As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall now put the question. Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Count.

Count

Deputy Chair: A count has been called. The Chair will ring the bells and conduct a count.

Bells

Deputy Chair: Order.

All members in favour of the motion, please rise.

Members rise

Deputy Chair: All members opposed to the motion, please rise.

No members rise

Deputy Chair: The results are 17 yea, nil nay.

I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$1,878,017,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$477,315,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$2,355,332,000 agreed to

Clauses 1 to 3 agreed to

Schedules A and B agreed to

Preamble agreed to

Title agreed to

Hon. Mr. Silver: Deputy Chair, I move that you report Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*, without amendment.

Deputy Chair: It has been moved by the Member for Klondike that the Chair report Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*, without amendment.

As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall now put the question. Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Count.

Count

Deputy Chair: A count has been called. The Chair will ring the bells and conduct a count.

Bells

Deputy Chair: All members in favour of the motion, please rise.

Members rise

Deputy Chair: All members opposed to the motion, please rise.

No members rise

Deputy Chair: The results are 17 yea, nil nay.

Motion agreed to

Deputy Chair: As the government bill identified by the Government House Leader has now been decided upon, it is my duty to rise and report to the House.

Speaker resumes the Chair

Termination of Sitting as per Standing Order 76(2)

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

MLA Tredger: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*, and directed me to report the bill without amendment.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

Standing Order 76(2)(d) states, "On the sitting day that the Assembly has reached the maximum number of sitting days allocated for that Sitting pursuant to Standing Order 75, the Speaker of the Assembly, when recalled to the Chair after the House has been in the Committee of the Whole, shall:

"(d) with respect to each appropriation bill standing on the Order Paper for Third Reading and designated to be called by the Government House Leader,

"(i) receive a motion for Third Reading and passage of the bill, and

"(ii) put the question, without debate or amendment, on the motion."

I shall therefore ask the Government House Leader to indicate whether the appropriation bill now standing on the Order Paper for third reading should be called.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, the government directs that Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*, be called at this time.

Bill No. 217: *First Appropriation Act 2025-26* — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 217, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Silver.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Finance that Bill No. 217, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2025-26*, be now read a third time and do pass.

As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall now put the question to the House.

Are you agreed?

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: Disagree.

Mr. Kent: Disagree.

Ms. Clarke: Disagree.

Mr. Cathers: Disagree.

Ms. McLeod: Disagree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Disagree.

Mr. Hassard: Disagree.

Mr. Istchenko: Disagree.

Ms. White: Agree.

MLA Tredger: Agree.

Ms. Blake: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 10 yeas, eight nays.

Speaker: The yeas have it.

I declare the motion carried.

Motion for third reading of Bill No. 217 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 217 has passed this House.

We are now prepared to receive the Commissioner of Yukon, in her capacity as Lieutenant Governor, to grant assent to bills which have passed this House.

Commissioner Webber enters the Chamber accompanied by her Aide-de-Camp

ASSENT TO BILLS

Commissioner: Good afternoon. Please be seated.

Speaker: Madam Commissioner, the Assembly has, at its present session, passed certain bills to which, in the name and on behalf of the Assembly, I respectfully request your assent.

Clerk: *Technical Amendments (Estates, unclaimed bodies and related matters) Act (2025); Early Learning and Child Care Act; Act Respecting the Yukon Medical Association; Act to amend the Income Tax Act (2025); Inclusive Yukon Families Act; Residential Tenancies Act; First Appropriation Act 2025-26.*

Commissioner: I hereby assent to the bills as enumerated by the Clerk.

You have been busy. I just wanted to take some time today to say thank you very much for all of the work that you have done during this session. I'm happy to be here today for the closing of the Spring Sitting of the 35th Yukon Legislative Assembly.

We are gathered on the ancestral lands shared by the Kwanlin Dün and the Ta'an Kwäch'än. They have been thoughtful stewards of these lands since time immemorial. I will continue to ensure that these lands are respected and protected for future generations.

I would like to take a moment to express my deepest sympathies to the Filipino community on the tragic incident that occurred on Saturday in Vancouver and left so many families in grief. My thoughts and prayers go out to everyone who has been affected.

I would also like to share my condolences on hearing of the passing of Pope Francis. I had the unique opportunity to meet him in person back in 2022 when I went to Rome with the

Assembly of First Nations delegation. I found him to be a man of kindness, empathy, and understanding. These are qualities needed a little more in the world right now.

It's always amazing how winter seems to last forever and then, one day, it's spring. You know that spring has arrived when the swans come back to the Yukon. A few weeks ago, my husband and I went out to Tagish and took in the beautiful sight of the swans. It has been a tradition for many years for us, and I feel that once I have seen them in the spring, spring has finally arrived.

Before the session closes, I would like to mention to you that I will not be hosting the Commissioner's Ball this year. I want to focus my attention on a new project. An invitation will be sent out announcing the opening of my new display at the Taylor House on the evolution of reconciliation. We are putting together the final touches on this display and are planning a grand opening on June 20 on the solstice. It is a free event and all are welcome. The display will be up for quite some time.

I would like to thank you all again for your hard work. I know that this is not an easy job and has many challenges, especially right now. I know that you don't immediately go on holidays, but I wish you all some well-earned time off spent with your family and friends this summer. Enjoy your summer and have a wonderful evening.

Commissioner leaves the Chamber

Speaker: Before I adjourn the last Sitting of the 35th Yukon Legislative Assembly, I have a few brief comments. I would like to extend thanks on behalf of myself, as Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, the Deputy Chair of Committee of the Whole, and on behalf of all Members of the Legislative Assembly to Clerk Dan Cable; Deputy Clerk Allison Lloyd; Clerk of Committees Logan Ockenden; director of Administration, Finance and Systems, Justin Gorczyca; operations manager, Warren Pearson; finance and operations clerk, Lyndsey Amundson; as well as Sergeant-at-Arms Karina Watson; and Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms Joe Mewett, who all provide invaluable support to all MLAs and their staff in order for us to continue to do the important work that we are sent here to do on behalf of all Yukoners.

As well, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the skilled team at Hansard for their timely and accurate services, the pages, our camera operators, and all the other background staff and contractors who keep the Legislative Assembly operating.

I would also commend the hard-working civil servants who deliver service to Yukoners and support to all of us as members in our work.

I wish Members of the Legislative Assembly all the best for the coming summer. I hope that all of us can look forward to the amazing summer adventures with family and friends in the great Yukon outdoors.

I would also wish the best of luck to all members and new candidates who put their names forward for the upcoming territorial election. Thank you very much.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Speaker: Before we end proceedings today, introduction of visitors outside of the usual time provided.

Visitors introduced

Speaker: As the House has, pursuant to Standing Order 75(4), reached the maximum number of sitting days permitted for this Spring Sitting and the House has completed consideration of the designated legislation, it is the duty of the Chair to declare that this House now stands adjourned.

The House adjourned at 5:22 p.m.

The following sessional papers were tabled May 1, 2025:

35-1-203

Yukon Human Rights Panel of Adjudicators 2023-24 Annual Report (Speaker Harper)

35-1-204

Yukon Human Rights Panel of Adjudicators 2024-25 Annual Report (Speaker Harper)

35-1-205

I Am Not Okay, It's Not Okay: A review of the Yukon government's response to the use of restraints and isolation spaces at Jack Hulland Elementary School (Speaker Harper)

35-1-206

Close To Home — A Yukon Approach to Supporting Children with Complex Needs: Summary of Findings (Speaker Harper)

35-1-207

For Our Children — A review of systemic racism in Yukon education (Speaker Harper)

The following legislative returns were tabled May 1, 2025:

35-1-177

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Mr. Hassard related to general debate on Vote 55, Highways and Public Works, in Bill No. 216, *Third Appropriation Act 2024-25* — airport leases (Clarke, N.)

35-1-178

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Mr. Hassard related to general debate on Vote 55, Highways and Public Works, in Bill No. 216, *Third Appropriation Act 2024-25* — PMVIs (Clarke, N.)

35-1-179

Response to oral question from Mr. Hassard re: school public address systems (McLean)

35-1-180

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Ms. White related to general debate on Vote 3, Education, in Bill No. 217, *First Appropriation Act 2025-26* — Catholic Education Association of Yukon TPA (McLean)

The following document was filed May 1, 2025:

35-1-339

Systemic Advocacy Report: Close to Home, letter re (dated March 31, 2025) from Mary Cameron, Deputy Minister of Education, and Matt King, Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services, to Annette King, Child and Youth Advocate (McLean)