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HANSARD

Monday, October 17, 2022 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Jeremy Harper

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2022 Fall Sitting

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

CABINET MINISTERS

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

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
Emily Tredger	Third Party House Leader Whitehorse Centre
Annie Blake	Vuntut Gwitchin

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**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Monday, October 17, 2022 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Speaker: Please note that we have a guest here, Deputy Speaker Hal Perry, Prince Edward Island.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I would also like to welcome some guests joining us today. We are tabling a Cannabis Yukon annual report. I would like to first welcome Dennis Berry, president of the Yukon Liquor Corporation, who is with us today; Daniel Carrick-Specht, our chief operating officer — thank you for being here today — and Dave Sloan, as well, who is the chair of the Cannabis Licensing Board, is with us today.

Applause

Speaker: Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of National Foster Family Appreciation Week

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to acknowledge that the third week in October is National Foster Family Appreciation Week. This week recognizes the ongoing commitment that the foster families across the country give us all and the opportunity to express our heartfelt thanks to them for providing care and support to the amazing children in their care.

Although, nationally, this week is referred to as “Foster Family Appreciation Week”, here in the Yukon, we refer to these families and individuals as “caregivers”. We recognize the dedication and love that these caregivers have for the children that they care for and the ongoing commitment that they have in support of reunification, cultural connection, and day-to-day care.

In 2021, Family and Children’s Services, the Council of Yukon First Nations, and First Nation governments launched the caregiver strategy. This strategy was developed in response to an ongoing need for further recruitment, retention, and training for caregivers. This strategy helped to begin forming an action plan that included consultation, feedback, and stories from these caregivers.

To complete the caregiver strategy, Family and Children’s Services met with current, former, and extended family

caregivers. They met with First Nation governments and staff working within the branch to hear about their experiences, the suggestions for improvement, and how we can better support caregivers. We look forward to continued conversations about expanding these services for caregivers, families, and children across the Yukon.

For those who would like to learn more about becoming a caregiver, you can reach out to the caregiver unit at Family and Children’s Services at 867-667-3002.

Mr. Speaker, caregivers are truly extraordinary people. They open their homes and their hearts to children who need a warm place to land — sometimes for a short time, sometimes longer, but no matter how long they are there, those children gain a second family, one that will be part of their lives forever.

Thank you on behalf of our community and on behalf of those very special children.

Applause

Ms. Van Bibber: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to recognize Yukon foster families and extended families during National Foster Family Appreciation Week. Foster families work to provide caring and attentive homes to Yukon children who require care outside their family situations. They help the child, or children, continue their daily routines while maintaining family contact and staying immersed within their cultures. They provide children with security, care, and a sense of stability, no matter the circumstances. No child or scenario is ever the same, so we so appreciate the dedication and time given to any child. Some provide care for long-term situations and others for short-term or respite situations. Others are family members who have been approved to care for relatives in need or have a strong relationship with the children.

So many Yukoners have opened their homes and their kindness to so many children. It takes dedicated and selfless individuals and patience and understanding from the entire household. Fostering in the Yukon has made a difference in the lives of many children, including mine. Without wonderful, caring, loving foster parents, I could not have achieved what I have done to this date.

All of our foster families throughout the years deserve our thanks and recognition today and always.

For Yukoners who are interested in fostering children in their homes, please reach out. There is a child in need.

Sessions are held regularly to help potential foster parents understand the needs of children in care and decide whether fostering is the right fit for their family.

Thank you to all of those who go above and beyond to make a difference within Canada and especially Yukon.

Applause

Ms. Blake: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon NDP to celebrate National Foster Family Appreciation Week. Foster families carry a critical role in communities. When children cannot remain with their primary caregivers and kin placements are not available, foster families provide children and youth with a safe family setting during a difficult and confusing time.

These families open their homes every day to children across the Yukon, striving to be a part of their healing and connection to birth families and helping children and youth to navigate complex systems as they grow up.

With each unique situation and set of challenges, foster families require increased levels of support, not only for the children they care for, but also for their families. That consistent support from community and from governments is important in sustaining the ability to care for children in the home.

As advocates for children, foster families also become experts in the wide range of systems from child welfare to education, health and social services, and more. The work that foster families have done to highlight gaps in services and creative solutions also makes these systems better as we saw with the recently passed *Child and Family Services Act*.

Foster caregivers form part of the team that supports young people in care, not only by providing a stable and caring home, but also by facilitating pathways to lifelong connections with family and community. In many cases, foster parents become second parents or lifelong aunts and uncles to the children they help raise. We know that children and youth do better when they are placed in homes that are connected to their family, community, and identity.

During National Foster Family Appreciation Week, we recognize the invaluable contributions of foster families across the Yukon. They provide essential care and support to the children and youth in their homes, and we are grateful for their unwavering dedication and for the love and care that they continue to give to all children, youth, and families.

Applause

In recognition of Small Business Week

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to Small Business Week, which is being recognized across Canada from October 16 to 22.

This is the 43rd year that the Business Development Bank of Canada has organized this event in recognition of entrepreneurship and the significant contribution that small business makes to the economy.

There are over 1.2 million small- and medium-sized businesses across Canada, representing 54 percent of Canada's GDP. Here in the Yukon, there are over 3,100 small- and medium-sized businesses. More than half of these are sole proprietorships, an indicator of the entrepreneurial spirit here in the Yukon.

Mr. Speaker, it takes a special kind of motivation to take a business concept and make it a reality. Entrepreneurs are bold thought leaders who have committed themselves to following their passions, despite the obstacles. The world is currently moving through a transition period as we tackle climate change and emerge from a pandemic. From labour shortages to supply-chain disruptions, entrepreneurs need to focus on innovation and sustainability to maintain their growth despite these challenges. They are also making their businesses more

inclusive and environmentally friendly while driving the Canadian economy.

Here in the Yukon, we have unique perspectives, and local entrepreneurs continue to reflect creativity and new ideas that connect our communities with the rest of the world, from businesses like Wild Yukon Furs opening a new retail location in Skagway for its fur, jewellery, and textiles, to Natasha Peter from Ross River taking her indigenous designs to runways of both New York Fashion Week and Paris Fashion Week, and travel-based businesses like Overland Yukon with strong growth in overseas clients, demonstrating the commitment of our Yukon entrepreneurs to providing the north with world-class products.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Yukon's entrepreneurs for their resilience, particularly over the past three years, and for their work to innovate and adapt to changing circumstances. Small Business Week is about recognizing these efforts. As always, I encourage Yukoners to shop local.

Applause

Ms. Van Bibber: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to Small Business Week. We spend a week each year to celebrate entrepreneurs and their places of business. The small coffee shop, the bookstore, the toy store, the pet store, and the quick oil-change shop — these are some examples of the small businesses that are a part of our community. Many of us probably know the owners and their staff. These same small businesses support their towns by donating to events and sponsoring sports teams.

People who have never been in business, even a small one, sometimes don't understand the rules and regulations to keep a business operating. If a door is open, the thought is that they must have money or that they are even rich, but the last two years have really opened the eyes of the general public to the lasting effects of a pandemic on retaining and attaining staff, as well as obtaining goods to sell. Many have gone into debt to keep their doors open during this period.

The current times in which we live due to inflation, and uncertainty with interest rates and fuel rates, compound the feeling of helplessness of small business. So, while we take the time to tribute, we also want to recognize the challenges they face and wish them only good things in the face of rising costs.

Please take time out of your usual schedule to stop by a local business that caters to our community's needs year-round; especially with the holidays coming around the corner, shop early and show your appreciation for the fact that they are open. Buying local will only make us stronger and more resilient for the future.

Applause

Ms. Tredger: I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP to pay tribute to Small Business Week. Today, as my colleagues have said, we are recognizing thousands of small businesses in the Yukon. As the MLA for Whitehorse Centre, I am especially proud of the many small businesses that are located between the south access and the Marwell industrial area. You just need

to take a stroll through my riding to fully see the beauty of Yukon's small businesses — bakeries, craft stores, bookstores new and used. There are coffee shops, and there are music stores and thrift stores. You can get your paddling gear from multiple downtown places and have drinks at any number of locations. You can eat ramen and sushi, pasta and pho, tacos and pizza. You can buy incredible art from First Nation citizens and other local artists. There are bookkeepers and mechanics and computer repair stores. I have a particular soft spot for the rather unlikely small business pairings — a bicycle shop and a coffee roaster, a brewery and an oyster house, a glass-blowing studio and a restaurant. These are just the tip of the iceberg for my riding.

Whitehorse and the Yukon have an abundance of entrepreneurial folks doing business and creating an important part of the Yukon's economy. It is challenging and it is difficult work, but with spirit and determination, they make it happen. We salute everyone across the Yukon who courageously puts themselves out there to create small businesses.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Pursuant to section 15 of the *Cannabis Control and Regulation Act*, I have for tabling the 2021-22 Cannabis Yukon annual report.

Mr. Dixon: I have for tabling a letter dated June 7, 2022 from the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce addressed to the Mayor and Council of the City of Whitehorse.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I have for tabling today Yukon University's *Yukon climate change indicators and key findings 2022* report.

Speaker: Are there any reports of committees?

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I have for tabling the *Fourth Report of the Standing Committee on Rules, Elections and Privileges* dated October 17, 2022.

Speaker: Are there any further reports of committees to be presented?

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 18: *Midwifery Integration Amendments Act (2022)* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that Bill No. 18, entitled *Midwifery Integration Amendments Act (2022)*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Health and Social Services that Bill No. 18, entitled *Midwifery*

Integration Amendments Act (2022), be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 18 agreed to

Speaker: Are there any further bills to be introduced? Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House congratulates the Canadian Rangers on the occasion of their 75th anniversary.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House congratulates the Taku River Tlingit First Nation on becoming an associate member of the Council of Yukon First Nations.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to consult with the residents of Destruction Bay on future plans for the closing of Kluane Lake School.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Minister of Community Services to implement the recommendations of the *Review of the Yukon Fire Marshal's Office fire suppression and rescue resource distribution — Final Report*.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to expand the scope of registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses to include the prescribing of medications for treatment of opioid use disorders, including the opioid agonist treatment medication and a safe supply of opioids.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to credit offenders working in the fine option program with an hourly rate equal to Yukon's minimum wage.

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Cannabis retail sales

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I rise today to provide an update on cannabis in the Yukon. Today marks three years since the Liberal government legalized the sale of cannabis in the territory in 2018. Since then, cannabis retail sales in the Yukon have experienced year-over-year growth, providing licensed retailers and producers with a robust and expanding market in which to do business.

We closed the government's Cannabis Yukon retail store in 2019, a year after legalization and once private retail licences had been issued. This past May, we rolled out regulations

allowing the territory's licensed retailers to sell online and deliver legal cannabis products to Yukoners. This fulfills another commitment we made to support the Yukon's growing cannabis industry.

I am pleased to announce today that the Yukon Liquor Corporation is now exiting the online cannabis retail market. The Cannabis Yukon website, which has existed since legalization to provide online sales and delivery to the Yukon public, is now being repurposed to provide wholesale purchasing for licensees. The site has provided a legal option for Yukoners to choose from a variety of cannabis products and have them delivered to their home.

With the closing of Cannabis Yukon to the public, the Yukon's private retailers are poised to take over the legal e-commerce market to meet Yukoners' needs.

There are currently six licensed retailers in operation, offering a variety of in-store, online, and delivery options. This government is pleased to say that Yukon's cannabis licensees now have the market for brick and mortar stores, online sales, and delivery.

We will continue to work hard to ensure that the legal cannabis retailers have the products they need to displace the illicit market. I wish to thank the staff of the Yukon Liquor Corporation for their hard work over the past four years and successfully launching the legal retail cannabis market in the Yukon. Thank you also to the Cannabis Licensing Board for their commitment to supporting the continued growth of this evolving industry.

I would also like to thank Yukon's licensed cannabis retailers for providing Yukoners with a range of options to purchase legal cannabis. I want to also thank my colleague, the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes, for his phenomenal work on this. I look forward to seeing yet another part of this thriving industry continue to grow in the hands of licensees.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Dixon: I am pleased to respond to this ministerial statement regarding the government's involvement in the legal cannabis industry in the Yukon. This is an issue that the minister and I have debated at length over the past few years, and the Yukon Party's position remains the same — that we disagree with the model that the Liberal government has chosen for the legal sale of cannabis in the Yukon.

We believe that the model that they have chosen is one that puts the government directly in the middle of this burgeoning industry rather than out of the way of it. It comes as no surprise that the involvement of government in the middle of an industry has not led to efficiency or nearly as much success as Yukoners would have hoped. Instead, it has led to uncompetitive prices, insufficient access to product, and an industry mired in a unique tangle of red tape that almost no other industry faces. In fact, here is what the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce said about the current cannabis business licence rules and regulations in a letter just a few months ago, which I tabled earlier today — and I quote: "It has been brought to the attention of the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce that the process for starting a cannabis retail store in Whitehorse is burdensome and challenged by

inconsistent and unclear regulations, with prospective business owners being provided limited and incorrect supporting information. Key issues include: lack of clarity of rules and regulations, inconsistent buffer requirements for restricted retail, and strict zoning.

"The Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce strongly encourages the City of Whitehorse and the Government of Yukon to evaluate ways of improving the current cannabis licensing regulations to create synergy on both levels of government. The lack of alignment between governments can be costly and act as a disincentive, particularly for new business start-ups. Uncertainty in any industry is problematic for investment and can deter local or outside investment in our community. It can also be extremely costly and frustrating to existing entrepreneurs who are trying to further develop businesses in our community.

"It is our view that looking at ways to eliminate red tape and align regulations from both levels of government is critical in supporting investment and entrepreneurship and advancing economic opportunity for all industries in the City of Whitehorse and the Yukon."

It is clear from this letter that the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce is of a similar view as we are — that the red tape that the Liberal government has imposed on this industry is preventing its growth and success. I would also remind the minister of what the Yukon Chamber of Commerce said earlier this year. In an April 7 CBC article, the executive director of the Yukon Chamber of Commerce said the following — and I quote: "The government is competing with the private sector and also managing the regulations and keeping an unfair playing field where they control both the pricing and the distribution."

What is unique about this particular morass of red tape is that it is not just preventing the success of businesses in this industry, but it is impeding their ability to achieve one of the most important stated goals of the whole point of legalization, which was to displace the black market. Simply put, the current legislative and regulatory framework for legal cannabis needs an overhaul.

Thankfully, the Yukon's *Cannabis Control and Regulation Act* contains a mandatory review clause. Can the minister outline what that review will consider and when it will be launched? Finally, will the section for a mandatory review include the complete regulatory framework for legal cannabis, or will it only include the legislation?

We remain hopeful that this industry will continue to grow and thrive; however, we know that will only happen fully when this government does its part and gets out of the middle of this industry and out of the way of business so that they can do their part to displace the black market with a competitive, safe, legal cannabis industry.

Ms. Tredger: Changes to the cannabis landscape were a long time coming, from decriminalization to legalization. I think that we can all agree that the change in the way we think about and regulate cannabis has been positive. People who use cannabis are no longer criminalized and forced to the black

market. People can access safe products in a safe environment. There are safeguards to protect children and youth, such as buffers around schools where stores can't operate and identification requirements.

There is a lot that we can learn from the success story of cannabis. We need to take those lessons and use them to move forward. Drawing on those lessons, the Yukon NDP has two calls to action. The first call to action is to reopen the *Liquor Act* to ensure that legislation has similar protection measures to those found in the *Cannabis Control and Regulation Act*. In a recent municipal hearing about buffer zones around schools, many people asked the question, "Why do we have a liquor store less than two blocks away from a high school? Why do the standards for cannabis not also apply to alcohol?" These are very good questions and ones that this House should be considering. So, we call on the government to reopen the *Liquor Act*.

The second call to action is to decriminalize other illicit drugs for personal use, including opioids. This call echoes those from organizations across the country, including the Yukon Medical Association. In our current overdose crisis, the criminalization of drugs only creates stigma and fear. Last year, the report *Getting to Tomorrow: Ending the Overdose Crisis* was released after conversations with community members about the opioid crisis. One of its key findings is that people are afraid to call 911 for an overdose. People are so afraid of being criminalized that they risk death rather than call for help. This is the result of criminalizing drug use. It's time for it to end. The Yukon NDP call on this government to apply for an exemption under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* to decriminalize the personal use of small amounts of illegal drugs in the Yukon.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Again, with the closing of retail sales on the Cannabis Yukon website, the government is handing over the legal sale of cannabis to Yukon's private retailers. Yukon's licensed cannabis retailers have been permitted to sell online and provide delivery since the spring. Again, the Cannabis Yukon website, which the Official Opposition, over the last year, commented on — how it was such an impact to the private sector — really accounted for only about \$2,000 of total cannabis sales in the 2021-22 fiscal year.

As the site is now closed — and I commend the team at Yukon Liquor Corporation for still using that digital infrastructure as an opportunity for us to pivot and use it now for the private sector to do their sales purchasing.

Cannabis sales in the Yukon have experienced 13-percent year-over-year growth in the first half of 2022. Again, we know that pricing of cannabis plays an integral part of displacing — and you have heard the Official Opposition talk about that on the pricing piece. The Yukon had an average retail price of \$8.52 per gram in July 2022, so that is a 14-percent decrease from July 2021 — again, dropping the price commitment that we made.

In addition, the wholesale markup was reduced from 22 percent to 20 percent — again, providing retailers with access to a wide range of products and a lower cost.

August was the first month that our six cannabis retailers collectively had more than \$1 million in sales — for the month of August. In 2018, we said that we would work for the health and safety of Yukoners — again, including youth.

So, what I would say today is: I think that the whole week, we are probably going to get criticized, file after file. I would ask the Official Opposition: On this one, can you at least admit that we got it right? We went through a three-year period. The minister committed to closing the store and it was done a year later. Then we came back in and made sure that we had the right infrastructure in place. We committed to making sure that the online store was done; that got done. Then we made sure — we committed to taking the price down, and we did that.

We are leading the country on impact. Right now, it is over \$22 on a monthly basis per capita — far and above. The Official Opposition constantly said that we had to look at the Saskatchewan model because government was out of the way in that one. Well, in 2019, a selection of Saskatchewan's independent retailers felt compelled — they had to launch their own cooperative to have buying power, which is what we had said the corporation here could do. We could go out and buy product for a number of folks and it wouldn't be a one-off; we could have that critical list.

So, now, in Saskatchewan, later on they have joined in. They have extra fees, extra costs, extra red tape — which they all had to create themselves, when we had a very clean path. So, I think — commend the previous minister and the corporation and the board for doing an exceptional job of moving through here.

Again, we have the most successful model in the country. We have committed, time and time again, to certain aspects of getting out. As of today, that's exactly where we are.

The other thing that was brought up by the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce — I think that was really about a municipal zoning piece. It kind of got skewed into something else, but the truth is that, when we went out for consultation on the act, no municipalities came back and said they didn't want that responsibility. We hear it all the time. When it comes to planning and zoning and those particular issues, municipalities want that control. Maybe that has changed, but based on the consultation at the time of the act, it certainly didn't.

When it comes to the Yukon Chamber of Commerce, I think we have illustrated and demonstrated here that we have reduced prices. Again, we want to work with those six businesses to make sure they flourish.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to bring folks up to date about the success of the cannabis act and our report today.

Speaker: This then brings us to the Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Sexual abuse within elementary school, Child and Youth Advocate review of

Mr. Cathers: In August last year, the Minister of Education made the following public statement: "... it is the view of the Government of Yukon that the Child and Youth

Advocate office does not have a legal authority to conduct the kind of review that had been proposed.”

In the Child and Youth Advocate’s report that was tabled last week, the advocate noted, “In refusing to cooperate with the review...” — the Department of Education — “... was in contravention of the *Child and Youth Advocate Act*.”

Is the minister aware that her initial response to the Child and Youth Advocate was in fact a contravention of the *Child and Youth Advocate Act*?

Hon. Ms. McLean: I am happy to stand to speak about the work of the Child and Youth Advocate in the Yukon. I certainly have worked closely with her over my time as Minister of Education. I actually tabled her report in the Legislative Assembly last week.

I have committed to responding to the recommendations and the findings of her report by November 22 and also have committed to the follow-ups that have been recommended in her report.

The Child and Youth Advocate certainly provides an important service to Yukoners. The Department of Education recognizes the value and role of advocacy and support that the Child and Youth Advocate plays in upholding the rights of children and youth in our territory.

As outlined in the advocacy protocol agreement between the two organizations, building and maintaining relationships through cooperation and information sharing is a priority. We absolutely worked with the child advocate and provided her with all of the information that she required to do her report.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, I have to remind the minister: The advocate’s report tabled last week specifically singled out the minister for her comments in the *Whitehorse Star* in August last year. The advocate’s report says — and I quote: “... the authority of the Advocate was publicly brought into question by the Minister of Education.” So, the advocate is very clearly singling out the minister’s comments here. The advocate then went on in her report to clearly say that this is a contravention of the act.

What is the minister’s response to the report stating that she contravened the *Child and Youth Advocate Act*?

Hon. Ms. McLean: Again, the Department of Education recognizes the value and role of advocacy and support that the Child and Youth Advocate plays in upholding the rights of children and youth in our territory.

As outlined in the advocacy protocol agreement between the two organizations, building and maintaining relationships through cooperative information sharing is a priority. We continue to have regular meetings with the Child and Youth Advocate to discuss matters of shared interest and to find solutions to individual and systemic advocacy matters. These meetings offer an opportunity to collaborate with the Child and Youth Advocate on individual advocacy matters along with broader initiatives, including student safety and attendance, to mention a few. I have been in receipt of the student attendance report, and we have included that and rolled it into our inclusive and special education and Auditor General’s report responses. Many recommendations in that report overlap and so we’ve included it there. We’re working closely with the Child and

Youth Advocate on other reviews such as the Jack Hulland Elementary systemic review, and we’ll continue to work closely with her.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, the minister’s initial response to the Child and Youth Advocate’s notification letter had a negative impact on families affected. Here is what the advocate’s report says: Education “... stated they were not in support of the Advocate’s review advancing as presented.” Education “... did not respond to the concerns addressed in the Advocate’s notification, further enraging parents and community members.”

The fact is that the minister and her department’s initial response to the Child and Youth Advocate’s review contributed to the anger and mistrust between the school community and this Liberal government.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, will this minister apologize for contravening the act?

Hon. Ms. McLean: I think that I have stated a number of times and have demonstrated through action the importance of the relationship between the Child and Youth Advocate and the Department of Education. My team has worked very closely with the Child and Youth Advocate through the development of this report. The Child and Youth Advocate’s Office report provided additional information and perspective on what happened and how we can move forward for the benefit of all Yukoners. I have committed several times in this Legislative Assembly to respond to the findings of the Child and Youth Advocate and the recommendations that she has provided to us in the time allotment that she has recommended to us for further follow-up. I am committed to doing just that.

I welcome further questions; however, I do have a question for the member opposite about their handling of these matters in 2015. I think that they owe Yukoners an answer in response to the way that they dealt with the first allegations against this individual.

Question re: Sexual abuse within elementary school, Child and Youth Advocate review of

Mr. Dixon: Last week, the Child and Youth Advocate’s report that was tabled in the Legislature made one thing very clear: Not only were children not prioritized, but their rights were violated. The report found that the Liberal government’s “incredibly poor handling of the situation” caused harm. Despite this, last week, the minister repeatedly told the Legislature that the well-being of children was at the heart of the government’s response.

How does the minister explain this extreme discrepancy between what she has told the Legislature and the Child and Youth Advocate’s report that she herself tabled last week?

Hon. Ms. McLean: I have stated many, many times — and I will continue to say — that at the heart of this issue are our children and their well-being, safety, and protection. We at the Department of Education, when children are in our care, take this very seriously. We are focused on taking the needed steps to rebuild the trust and provide the best targeted supports to the school community.

In terms of the supports that have been provided to the Hidden Valley families, I continue to hold up the dedicated staff at the Hidden Valley school who are ensuring that children feel connected, supported, and safe at school, which is very important.

No family will be left behind, Mr. Speaker. A range of free-of-charge supports continue to be available to the school community through our school community consultant who will work individually, and has worked individually, with families to provide options for them. I will continue to ask members of this Legislative Assembly to let me know, or the department know, if there are any families in need of support or services. As these reports —

Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Dixon: The minister can continue to repeat these lines, but the simple fact is that the Child and Youth Advocate's report shows something different. The very first line of the executive summary of the advocate's report reads as follows: "Children have not been prioritized, and their rights have been violated before, during, and after Educational Assistant..." — WAB — "...was charged in 2019..."

This conclusion is difficult to reconcile with the minister's statements that the well-being of children was at the heart of government's response. Now that the minister has presumably read the report in full, does she agree that the Liberal government's response has represented "incredibly poor handling of the situation" and that children were not indeed prioritized?

Hon. Ms. McLean: As I was just completing my last sentence at the last question, I just wanted to say that, as these reports and reviews and investigations are received, we will always be mindful of the supports for staff, students, parents, and guardians to ensure that they are supported as we continue to go forward. Our government has taken swift action to the report that we asked our independent reviewer to provide to us last year, Amanda Rogers. That report was asked for in October; we received it in January. We had an action plan in place by February, and we're actioning that. It's called the "safer schools action plan".

We accepted all the recommendations of the independent investigator. This plan has 23 actions; 13 of them are complete. I think that the work we have done as a government to respond and to be accountable for the findings of this report is incredibly important, and I think that we will absolutely continue to do that and look forward to responding to the advocate's report too.

Mr. Dixon: Well, today, and as she has done for some time in response to the advocate's report, the minister has suggested that the safer schools action plan that the Liberals developed following the last review is working well in addressing the needs of the school community.

The Child and Youth Advocate's report makes it very clear that this is not the case. The report says clearly that: "... a response to this review and its recommendations that merely subsumes the Advocate's review into the Safer Schools Action Plan (and steps taken since) is not adequate." This conclusion fits with what we have heard from the school community.

So, will the minister now agree with the Child and Youth Advocate's conclusions that the safer schools action plan, and steps taken since, are not an adequate response and that children have not been prioritized in the Liberal government's response to this situation?

Hon. Ms. McLean: I wanted to just raise the safer schools action plan because that is the response that we have put in place to the independent review that we initiated last year. Much of that work is either complete or on track to be completed by this spring. Definitely, we have taken note of the comments that the Child and Youth Advocate has made in her report around the safer schools action plan and it will be part of our consideration as we respond to the findings and we respond to the recommendations.

As I have said many times, I am in the same camp as the Child and Youth Advocate. When we take children, we make children the centre of our decisions. That is how I have approached my work since I became Minister of Education and how I have approached my work for a lifetime, Mr. Speaker.

Question re: Electricity rates

Ms. Tredger: The Yukon NDP first raised the issue of ATCO's overearnings at the expense of Yukoners in the Legislature last spring. The response of the minister was to offer a short-term band-aid solution. Thanks to continued pressure from the Yukon NDP, ATCO has now filed with the Utilities Board for approval of their own band-aid solution, but, Mr. Speaker, these measures don't fix the problem.

Here we have a private company earning millions of dollars more than intended and the government is refusing to intervene. This has been going on for more than five years. It is high time for electrical rates to be reviewed.

Will the minister finally address the issue of high electricity bills and compel ATCO to file a general rate application?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I think that it is important that we talk about these electricity rates. I did approach ATCO and did ask them to consider putting in for a rate review.

They developed a submission, which is in front of the Utilities Board right now. I did reach out to them after that and I did say to them — I wrote to ATCO and said that I don't think that this is enough. I think that it is important that we continue to do more.

What we have done is put in an interim rate relief previously under the then-Minister responsible for the Yukon Development Corporation. We put in a three-month, \$50-per-month rate relief for Yukoners earlier this year. We have put in another one right now. I will continue to follow up with ATCO and with the Utilities Board to get this right-sized.

I appreciate the question.

Ms. Tredger: What I don't understand is why this government is asking a private company to do their job, which is to ensure that there are fair electricity rates in the Yukon. What we are talking about here is a tightly regulated monopoly. Yukoners depend on ATCO for reliable and affordable electricity. They rely on ATCO to light their homes at night, to keep their families warm, and to cook their meals. Yukoners

can't shop around for a new electricity provider. They are stuck with ATCO and they expect them to provide their service at a fair rate, but it hasn't been fair for the last five years. ATCO has collected and keeps collecting millions of dollars more than they are supposed to.

Does the minister have a real plan to curb ATCO's overearnings, or is he content to continue subsidizing this corporation indefinitely with his rebate program?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I think that the member opposite just suggested that we are subsidizing ATCO. Actually, we have been rebating Yukoners.

There is the Yukon Utilities Board, which has the responsibility for setting rates. I will respect that board and its responsibilities. I will do what we can within the act that we have. I know as well that the Minister of Justice is working on a review of that act to provide more tools for us to address the situation. I will continue to work directly with ATCO and I will continue to work to support Yukoners to get us fair rates for our energy costs.

I was in contact with the vice-president of ATCO this morning on an unrelated issue, but I continue to be in contact with the energy distribution company, ATCO, and will continue to work to advocate to get lower rates for Yukoners.

Ms. Tredger: The minister says that he is not subsidizing ATCO. That's true. He is giving Yukoners money to subsidize ATCO. And he talks about the Utilities Board. They don't have the power to compel a rate review. That is in the hands of this government. More and more Yukoners are choosing to reduce their fossil-fuel consumption by changing their homes over to electric heat. Yukoners are increasingly dependent on a clean and reliable electrical grid.

Reducing home-heating emissions is a crucial component to reaching our climate goals. We need to continue to support Yukoners to switch from carbon-emitting fossil fuels to clean electricity for all of their energy needs. But that electricity needs to be provided at an affordable rate.

Will the minister tell Yukoners how he expects them to convert their homes to electric heat when he won't make the changes needed to make their electricity bills fair?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, I'm going to carefully review that. I think the member opposite suggested that the Utilities Board doesn't have the authority to call for a general rate application. I will check that. My understanding is that they do.

Second of all, no one is subsidizing ATCO. Money is not flowing to ATCO. We are giving rate relief to Yukoners in the form of three times \$50 on bills earlier this year and now another three times \$50 for this fall. We are giving that to Yukoners.

I will continue to look at what opportunities we have to ensure that this works, and that includes talking directly with ATCO, working through Justice to consider what avenues there are with the Utilities Board, and, if the Utilities Board so wishes, to consider a general rate application. If that authority exists under the act, then that is great, but I will respect the Utilities Board in their role.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Question re: Affordable housing

Ms. White: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just this weekend, I heard a story about a family who nearly left the Yukon because they couldn't find a permanent place to live. They couldn't afford to buy a home here, and it took them months to find a suitable home to rent. The housing crisis is suffocating our economy, contributing to the labour shortage, and depriving Yukoners, old and new, of a decent, affordable place to live.

So, let's talk about solutions to this crisis. Advocates have long suggested modular homes as a quick, affordable, and environmentally sound way to increase the housing stock. By working with municipalities on zoning for modular homes, we could have more affordable choices for more people with a much faster turnaround.

Will the minister work with the City of Whitehorse and other municipalities to create a new zoning for modular homes?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I think it's first important to touch on the fact that the work, at a collaborative level between the municipality of Whitehorse, the Government of Yukon, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and the Ta'an Kwäch'än' Council, is underway, with representation from the Minister of Community Services.

That was illustrated about a week ago when we were meeting together to take look at priorities, again, providing an opportunity for the municipal team, both at the elected level and at the technical level, to see where the potential spots are within the City of Whitehorse to develop land.

There has been a dialogue between Kwanlin Dün First Nation, being led by Chief Bill, and me and the Mayor of Whitehorse around modular homes to the point where I think Kwanlin Dün — it's either this week or next week. I could be off, but I know that it's within a short period of time that Chief Bill had let us know that there was due diligence being done in Alberta on a number of different plans to look at this option.

Certainly, we are deep into discussion. It really comes down to — whether it is a stick-built or module, you need to be able to have the land prepared, and you need to have horizontal services in. Inevitably, that is going to be the first step — and, of course, have the right zoning.

I look forward to questions two and three and continuing this discussion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. White: So, this government loves to tout its lot development, but what they don't talk about is how they cancelled an important program for turning those vacant lots into homes. It doesn't matter how many lots are available if people can't afford to build on them.

So, the home-building loan program provided financing to people who bought an empty lot so that they could build a home, but the Liberals cancelled it for Whitehorse residents. When my colleague asked about this program in the spring, the minister responded that it had been replaced by a new federal program. The problem is, though, that this federal program only applies to existing homes, not to building new ones. It does nothing to help those in Whitehorse in need of a construction loan.

Will the minister reinstate eligibility for the home-ownership loan program to include the Whitehorse area?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I just want to clarify a couple of points that were made by the Leader of the Third Party. Yes, I did speak to the fact that there was a federal program that could be used. I will have to go back and take a look at the Blues. I don't think that program was going to meet all of the needs of folks in Whitehorse. The previous minister took a look at how used the loan program was.

It was underutilized at the time, and there was a real shortage of opportunity within rural Yukon to use that debt instrument, so there was a focus on making sure that you could provide a higher loan because we were finding that the build cost was higher in communities across the Yukon, outside of Whitehorse, so we provided those funds for that particular opportunity for people who were looking to build and buy out in rural Yukon. At the same time, when I came into the role, I asked the president of the Yukon Housing Corporation to focus on looking at if we should bring this back. That is something that we have worked on. In dialogue with the Third Party, we have touched on that, but I am in complete agreement with the Third Party. I think that we should bring it back.

I can't say that today it can be reinstated because it has to go through a process in Cabinet, and I can't undermine that. I have to let my colleagues make their decisions on it, but certainly, we are working through the process and would like to have that program —

Speaker: Order.

Ms. White: So, when we talk about underutilization, I would like to remind everyone that this was before the Whistle Bend subdivision.

When we talk about the need for housing in Yukon, we need to ensure that any new housing programs are encouraging development that is actually affordable for Yukoners. The developer build loan program's only affordability requirement is that it meets the Yukon Housing Corporation's modest design guidelines. These guidelines cap the square footage of the home and require construction and materials that are simple, easy to build and maintain, and minimal in cost. There is nothing in these guidelines about sale price compared to market value or any other financial indicator. The only requirement is that they be small and simple.

How can this government talk about affordable housing when they haven't even defined what "affordable" means? In today's housing market, "small and simple" does not equate with "affordable". Will the minister commit to creating a definition of "affordable" in government-sponsored programs to make sure that units are actually affordable?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: The first question I heard was: Would you contemplate working with the City of Whitehorse on units that can be put in place quickly and modular units? Yes.

Are you working on the loan program and will you bring it back? As I voiced before, we are working on it. We are getting our submission ready. The answer is yes.

The third question was: Are we willing to look at "affordable"? We constantly — I would love to hear the thoughts of the Leader of the Third Party. If you want to sit down with our officials, if you want to submit something — you have done a lot of thinking about this particular concept.

We definitely are tracking affordability because we try to de-risk programs and to future-proof programs by putting funds in place, and then we have to make sure that they are still in that delta of "affordable", so we do track "affordable".

If there are other thoughts about what "affordable" — that term — should be, I am absolutely open to that. Again, we think that the developer build loan program is something that should be utilized.

We are seeing interest rates starting to go up, and in many cases, mezzanine debt and other things are double where they were. It is becoming very expensive. We are watching what is happening. There are people who have lots right now as well. We want to ensure that they still build, but they are taking a look at their business model again.

So, we are looking at all those different things. We are looking at the land trust as well. We are partnering on a problem that has been the biggest investment in Yukon history in affordable housing. So, I look forward to further questions this week.

Question re: Rural fire protection services

Mr. Istchenko: It has been almost a year since the Liberal government reviewed an independent report on fire services in rural Yukon, which was prompted by the loss of the historic Keno Hotel fire in 2020. Since then, rural Yukon has heard very little from this government in response. Citizens and affected communities have expressed frustration with how slowly this government has reacted. In fact, this summer, it was reported that at least one community — Keno — had pooled their money together to purchase their own fire truck because they felt that the Yukon government wasn't doing enough.

When can Yukoners living in rural communities expect to see a comprehensive response to the independent report that was tabled almost a year ago?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am happy to take the floor this afternoon to talk about rural fire services. The provision of fire services across the territory is absolutely essential. I heard it on my community tour. The prevention of fire starts at home, so I encourage all Yukoners to take a look at their houses and make sure that they are doing all they can to prevent fires up front, because the last thing we want to have is fire, and fire prevention starts at home with individuals.

The member opposite has talked about our fire review. The review contains 104 recommendations in the area of governance, operations, strategy, risk management, and compliance. They present an exciting opportunity to shape the future of Yukon fire services and we are pleased to see a number of recommendations that will ensure safe and sustainable fire services across the Yukon. Since the release of the review in December 2021, the Fire Marshal's Office presented the report to communities and fire service stakeholders. The Fire Marshal's Office has also met with key communities, Yukon fire chiefs, Yukon First Nations, municipal governments, and fire service stakeholders. Their feedback has identified priorities which include innovative programs that match the capacity of individual communities and strengthen fire resilience through a levels-of-service

response model, mutual aid agreements, and a fire safety champion program that focuses on fire prevention and education.

Mr. Istchenko: For many rural communities, like those in my riding, the government has simply not moved quickly enough in responding to this report. This past summer in my riding, Beaver Creek had a close call with a fire that was very close to the community. The government actually had to bring in volunteer firefighters from another community to show them how to operate the equipment that was in the fire hall.

In Destruction Bay, we have seen examples of people losing homes to fire. So, one recommendation from the report that has garnered some attention is the idea of providing the so-called “fire protection in a box”. This could include giving smaller, remote communities some fire suppression gear like hoses, portable pumps, shovels, and other equipment so they would have a basic capacity to limit spread of structural fires.

So, my question for the minister is: Will the government be acting on this recommendation, and if so, when?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: With 104 recommendations, including the review, there is significant work to be done to devise a path forward. Our government has taken immediate action on a few of the short-term recommendations identified in the review, particularly as they pertain to firefighter safety and Occupational Health and Safety compliance. We are now focusing on longer term goals that will support communities with fire service programs that match the capacity.

Mr. Istchenko: So, it has been almost a year now since the independent report was tabled and we still haven’t seen a comprehensive response from this government. One principle action item for the Yukon government in the independent report includes improvements to recruitment, safety, and training of firefighters.

So, can the minister tell us what steps this government has taken to implement this recommendation in rural Yukon? What steps has the government taken since last year to improve recruitment, safety, and training of firefighters in rural Yukon? Which communities have they met with?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The Fire Marshal’s Office remains committed to working with Yukon communities to ensure a pragmatic level of service in each community. The Fire Marshal’s Office held several meetings with the public and stakeholders to discuss the content of the review and next steps, including: a media briefing; a meeting with the community of Keno and a public meeting open to all residents of unincorporated Yukon in December 2021; several additional meetings with the community of Keno, most recently on August 9, 2022, to discuss establishing a fire response program and repairing water source, which has led to the establishment of two fire safety champions in the community and regular ongoing contact occurs with the fire safety champions in Keno; we have had multiple meetings with the Association of Yukon Fire Chiefs; a meeting with all Fire Marshal’s Office staff and the fire chiefs and deputy chiefs from across the Yukon on January 30, 2022; a meeting with the chief administrative officers in Yukon communities on February 10, 2022; a meeting with the CAO for the Town of Faro on May 30, 2022

to discuss the mutual aid agreement; a meeting with the National Indigenous Fire Safety Council on February 14, 2022 and July 13, 2022; meetings with the Ross River Dena Council on June 1, 2022 and September 7, 2022, actively working to re-establish a fire service; a meeting with Mendenhall Community Association on June 15, 2022 to discuss fire safety champions.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on and on. Thank you very much.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed. We will proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 19: *Technical Amendments Act (2022)* — Second Reading

Clerk: Second Reading, Bill No. 19, standing in the name of the Hon. Ms. McPhee.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that Bill No. 19, entitled *Technical Amendments Act (2022)*, be now read a second time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 19, entitled *Technical Amendments Act (2022)*, be now read a second time.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I am happy to rise today to speak to the importance of the details included in the *Technical Amendments Act (2022)* and the importance of the proposed amendments to each of the three acts within this bill and why they are needed at this time.

As such, I am pleased to discuss Bill No. 19, entitled the *Technical Amendments Act (2022)*, in further detail with members today through this second reading.

As members know, this bill proposes amendments to three different acts: firstly, to the *Condominium Act, 2015*; secondly, to the *Land Titles Act, 2015*; thirdly, to the *Corrections Act, 2009*.

To start, I would first like to provide the context behind the amendments to the *Corrections Act, 2009*. The Corrections branch, operationally speaking, has two distinct program areas. They are the facilities-based corrections and community corrections.

Facility-based corrections provides services and programming for clients at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. The managers and staff members who work at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre must balance the safety of inmates, the public, and the staff while providing a humane living environment, health services, and rehabilitative programming to all clients.

These services are delivered in a secure facility on a continuous basis, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The corrections centre is a unique environment that requires dedicated, consistent, and accountable leadership at all hours of every day.

Community corrections provides services and programming for clients who are on bail or probation. Staff at

community corrections help clients adhere to their court orders, work with clients to reduce their risk of recidivism — re-offending — refer clients to programming that reduces the risk of re-offending, and act as a client's case manager to help clients access services, such as housing, education, or social assistance.

We believe that all clients and staff members will benefit from a separation of these two program areas, as proposed by these amendments, so that each team benefits from the attention of a dedicated director of correctional facilities and a director of community corrections. That is what is being proposed here.

Other revisions to the legislation in this bill include updates to the *Land Titles Act, 2015*. Part of an ongoing modernization project of this government has been to fully implement the recently launched electronic Yukon land titles registry system. Some would say that we are finally getting into the 20th century. The new Yukon land titles registry system continues to improve the quality of service for all Yukoners so that it meets national standards, while maintaining the Land Titles Office's current high level of accuracy and certainty in title; however, with the new system, some provisions within the *Land Titles Act, 2015* are no longer applicable. As well, some provisions within the legislation require minor modifications to align with the operational requirements of a new registry system. As such, the amendments to the *Land Titles Act, 2015* have been included in this *Technical Amendments Act (2022)*.

Moving on to the final component of this bill, I would like to just briefly touch on the amendments to the new condominium legislation. As members and most members of the Yukon public are aware, a new *Condominium Act, 2015* and its regulations came into force on October 1, 2022 — just a few weeks ago. It is crucial that we continue to keep this piece of legislation up to date and useful for Yukoners. As such, the proposed amendments in this technical amendments bill will repeal the regulatory provisions that were not proclaimed. So, it will also adjust or fix some errors within the legislation and correct inaccurate cross-references. This is often the goal of technical amendments legislation.

As you can see, these amendments seek to correct some errors within two pieces of legislation to revise provisions to align with operational requirements of an electronic system that supports Yukoners in their property purchases and registration and, lastly, to support operational changes to the Corrections branch within the Department of Justice.

I am very pleased to bring forward this bill to ensure that our legislation remains accurate, effective, and up to date — a goal that I have spoken about in this Legislative Assembly on many occasions. I look forward to the comments by other members of this Legislative Assembly — to their submissions on second reading of this *Technical Amendments Act (2022)*.

Mr. Cathers: As the Official Opposition critic for Justice, I'll be brief in speaking to this legislation. I would just note that we do recognize that some of the changes seem to be necessary that are brought forward in this legislation. There are others, however, that we have questions about, and I look

forward to asking those questions during Committee of the Whole.

We will be supporting the bill moving forward to the Committee stage, so those questions can be asked when officials are here to assist the minister.

Ms. White: So, in speaking in response to second reading of the *Technical Amendments Act (2022)*, which references the *Condominium Act, 2015*, the *Corrections Act*, and the *Land Titles Act, 2015*, really, our questions are going to revolve around the *Corrections Act*, and that is the creation of the director of community corrections and, of course, the director of correctional facilities.

For a long time, we've understood the challenges that people face when they leave the correctional facility — lack of support in their home communities, if they can get there; what safe or sober housing may look like; and other issues. We're hopeful that we can have that conversation about what that director of community corrections will do and how that will support folks, once they leave the facility. We look forward to continuing that conversation in Committee of the Whole.

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

Does any other member wish to be heard?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: As I have noted earlier in my comments, I am pleased to bring forward this type of legislation, whenever it is needed, to make sure that the legislation here in the Yukon Territory is, in fact, as up to date as possible, as accurate as possible, and as effective as possible for Yukoners. I have noted that the members of the Official Opposition and the Third Party will have some questions regarding more the programming areas. I will endeavour to answer those when we move on to the next stage, but I look forward to the support of all Members of the Legislative Assembly for this bill at second reading.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McLean: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Clarke: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Blake: Agree.

Ms. Tredger: Agree.

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

Speaker: The yeas have it.

I declare the motion carried.

Motion for second reading of Bill No. 19 agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

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

The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 17, entitled *Clean Energy Act*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

Chair: I will now call Committee of the Whole to order.

Bill No. 17: *Clean Energy Act* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 17, entitled *Clean Energy Act*.

Is there any general debate?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I just wanted to welcome back to the Legislative Assembly Mr. Shane Andre. He is the director of the Energy branch from Energy, Mines and Resources. I would also like to welcome for the first time to the Assembly Ms. Rebecca Turpin. She is the director of the Climate Change Secretariat with the Department of Environment. I just want to give a shout-out to the other folks who have been instrumental in developing the bill that is before us today. They include Rebecca Veinott, who was here last week, and two other people whom I would like to acknowledge. One is David Dugas — he is the policy advisor to Energy, Mines and Resources — and Nicole Luck, who is the policy analyst from the Department of Environment.

One very, very small thing — on the last day when I got up, I said I would check *Our Clean Future* about the mining intensity targets. I'll just read here — it's actually 19:

“Establish an intensity-based greenhouse gas reduction target for Yukon’s mining industry and additional actions needed to reach the target by 2022.” So, this calendar year is that action timeline.

Ms. Tredger: Thank you for the update from the minister, and welcome again to the officials. It's always great to have them here.

I want to go back to what we were discussing at the very end of the last day. In the minister's last answer, we were talking about mining intensity targets and he had said that there was a bit of a wrinkle with the carbon price rebate. I'm wondering how the carbon price rebate is affecting the mining intensity targets.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: They are actually quite related. One of the reasons is that when you put out a price on carbon, in order for it to work, you have to have a way to judge the difference. Let's say that we're going to give some money back to businesses, which we do under the current system. There is a big difference between a business like, say, the Bonanza Market up in Dawson or a business like Your Independent Grocer here in town. You have different sizes and you have to have a way in which to judge the sizes of those businesses.

Working with the chamber of commerce, we came up with this way to use capital cost allowances, I believe — an asset class that they use to judge the size of a business so that when we're rebating we can give money back to businesses while maintaining the price signal around emissions. So, it still incentivizes businesses to reduce their emissions.

While we were working on the mining intensity targets, we were engaging over this formally over this past summer. We have been engaging previously on it, talking with industry. Then, recently, we saw changes coming from the federal government, and we needed to bring in the carbon rebate amendments. They are in right now. They use that capital cost measure. So, it's a way to judge the size of businesses, while still maintaining a signal to incentivize reduction of emissions. Because that's there, it's very similar to an intensity base. So, it's one of those things that we will have as conversations with the mining industry. We were already in those conversations and the wrinkle is just that we have another way in which it's being done right now. We did that in order to protect the rebate system that exists here in the Yukon.

Ms. Tredger: I think I had assumed that intensity base was going to be emissions per output. Is the minister suggesting that, in fact, we're looking at emissions per — I know I'm using the word “asset” not exactly correctly, but based on the size of the business rather than the output of ore, I guess?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I'm suggesting is that we need a way to measure that economic activity. Usually, the way we think of it is ore — gold — ounces of gold. That's the simple way we think of, say, a gold mine. Then, of course, it would be different for different types of ores, but that's the way we think of it typically.

We can use national standards, but there is also a way in which you're measuring the economic output by this asset class. So, there are different ways that it can be looked at. We are in conversation with industry about that. What you need to

do is to judge the amount of emissions for the amount of product or activity that is happening. You're trying to get that emissions down, and you need to get that signal out there so that there is an incentive to reduce emissions.

Ms. Tredger: I'm looking forward to seeing what decisions are made around the intensity targets.

Specifically looking at section 6, which is the section that deals with the interim greenhouse gas emissions reduction target, I want to talk about 6(3), which I believe we've flagged in the briefing. What I understand section 6(3) to say is that if there is a territory-wide interim target established — say we decided to go to 60-percent reduction — that it won't affect the site-specific targets such as the mining targets. I believe the reason in the briefing we were given is that they would need to go back and consult with the mining industry. I am wondering about why there is that need for consultation specifically with the mining industry, but not any other industry. So, for example, when we are setting the 45-percent reduction target, or the 30-percent which was originally set, there is no requirement for that to go consult with the trucking industry or the agricultural industry or the forestry industry or any others, so why is mining being dealt with specifically — why is that different for mining?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: So, a couple of things. First of all, under section 6(1), we talk about engaging with representatives of the sector. In this case, because we have an intensity target, we have said that, but if we ever did choose to bring in an intensity target for another sector, we could engage with them. There is no problem around that. It is also the reason that those other sectors that the member opposite gave as examples — forestry and trucking — those sectors, as we see them over time, their emissions are not volatile like mining. For example, when Faro mine was here, a lot of emissions; when Faro mine left, very few emissions, and we could have other mines come and go, and when they come and go, they make big, big swings to the emissions.

Section 6(3) says that we could bring in additional sector-based targets in the future. They would have to be more than the target we have set here, not less — because we have to honour what is set in the act, if it gets set in the act or in regulation — and it wouldn't automatically change the regulation. You would actually have to go back and change the act or the regulation at that time. You can add an interim-based target, but it would have to be "better than".

Ms. Tredger: I will ask everyone to bear with me, because I'm trying to understand this, and I don't think I do yet. I will leave aside the consulting piece for a moment. Section 6(3) says, despite subsection (2) — let me gather my thoughts for one moment. So, you're saying that section 6(3) is saying that any new targets have to be greater than previous targets, when it comes to sector-specific target reductions. Is that correct?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Okay, so, a couple of things. The first one is, say that, right now, we are going to set 45 percent by 2030. That is the main target. If I wanted to set a sector-based target afterward — not even whether it's an intensity, just

a sector-based target under subsection (2) — then it would need to be higher; you can't go lower.

Second, if we bring in — let's say, later on, we up our target, or let's say we put in a forestry target at some point of 50 percent. That is our target for forestry. It could be absolute — it doesn't matter — but it is a target. Let's say that, at some future point, we also increase the Yukon target to 60 percent. If that target was set at 50 percent, we would have to go back and change it, because it would not be changed by the fact that we said, overall, 60. So, all that we are really doing inside of the subsections here is just the rules around it if we change the targets in the future, but overall, the purpose here is to make sure that we have the flexibility to add targets and to increase the level. The only way to decrease the level in the act itself would be to come back here to the Legislature.

Ms. Tredger: Thank you to the minister for that. That is very helpful, and I appreciate that explanation.

I guess I will just say that I understand and that I don't think I agree with this idea that when we set a territory-wide target, we are not required to consult with industries, but when we set sector-specific targets, we suddenly have to start consulting with them. Obviously, of course, we should be consulting — of course, that is good practice — but this legislative requirement, I think, hinders setting targets in an emergency, which is what we are in. I do think that, at least in this situation that we are currently in, it gives mining sort of preferential treatment that no other industry is getting, but I will leave my disagreement on that choice.

I just want to talk a little bit more about the interim reduction targets. Is there any contemplation right now of setting interim targets in between now and 2030 using regulation?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I have a couple of points. First of all, going back to how we engage with industry — section 6(1) basically says, "Hey, if we are going to bring in a sector-specific thing, then we have to talk to that sector."

When we brought in the whole of the act, we did engage with industry broadly. So, as we are out there talking with chambers, we are in dialogue with them, so it's not that we didn't talk to industries as we were looking to bring in this act; we did.

With respect to: Do we have anticipation with bringing in other interim steps in the near future? — the only ones we have in our targets right now are based on the actions that we have from *Our Clean Future*, so we still have the renewables and we have the mining intensity targets. Those two are the ones that we are still contemplating, and we need to do the work first before we come back, but I do want to give a heads-up that I think that we are likely to try to come back and add. Then we have to judge whether that is through regulation or through amending the act and be coming right back here into the Legislative Assembly, because there may be differences; so, we have that work in front of us yet.

I also would acknowledge — for example, the Climate Leadership Council has given us lots of suggestions. If some of those are good to put in place under a clean energy act and make them targets that we wish to enshrine in a piece of legislation

that would hold governments to account, then we will consider those.

In talking with colleagues right now, I haven't heard of other ones that are on our radar screen at the moment, but I don't want to discount that possibility, given that we are going to continue to work to find these solutions to get us to these targets.

Ms. Tredger: Thank you to the minister, and I will wrap up my questions there for today. Thanks to the officials, and I will pass the floor to my colleague.

Mr. Kent: I welcome the officials who are here to support the minister today. Obviously, we spent a little bit of time talking about this on Thursday, and I just wanted to summarize my understanding of that discussion with the minister in setting the baseline on where we are at and where we need to get to.

On Thursday, we talked about the *Our Clean Future* document, which had the goal of 30-percent emissions reduction below 2010 levels. I just wanted to confirm with the minister that the new targets of 45 percent would take us to a 343-kilotonne emission level by 2030, which, my understanding is, is about an additional 70 kilotonnes beyond what the 30-percent reduction would have been. If the minister can confirm those numbers, that would be great.

I know we talked a little bit about the most recent data that we have, which is 2020. Obviously, in *Our Clean Future*, the data that is being referenced is from 2017. The minister mentioned last Thursday that we are currently above the 2010 emissions level, but if he can just confirm exactly where we were in 2020 as far as kilotonnes, that would be great.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I can confirm that, in 2020, the last year that we have reporting — the most recent year that we have reporting on emissions — we were 642 kilotonnes. Our baseline year of 2010 is 625 kilotonnes, and our target for 2030 is 343 kilotonnes.

Mr. Kent: The *Our Clean Future* document — and perhaps I am reading it wrong — I will just get the minister to confirm that he said 624 kilotonnes in 2010.

It says in this document that the 2010 emissions were 592 kilotonnes. So, has that changed? Sorry, I might be reading the *Our Clean Future* document incorrectly. I just want the minister to confirm that he said it was 624, I believe, in 2010, whereas this document says that it was 592.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: One of the challenges with calculating these emissions is that we work with something called the “national inventory report” from the federal government. Especially for small jurisdictions like the Yukon, the numbers move around on us somewhat. So, for example, they were recalculated for 2010. What I think I said was 625, so I will just confirm with my colleagues here. But I believe that the baseline year currently, as given to us through the national inventory report, is, for 2010, 625 kilotonnes.

We also issue interim reports that I have referenced here. We note that in those reports when they come out. I appreciate that we are all looking at *Our Clean Future*, and we try to update the public as those numbers have changed.

Mr. Kent: So, the number that we will work off of now is the 2010 emissions — 625 kilotonnes — and we need to reduce that by 45 percent — obviously not the plan in *Our Clean Future*, but it is what the legislation is asking us to set as the goal. That was the revised commitment that came out of the confidence and supply agreement between the government and the Third Party that they signed after the last election.

I do want to ask some questions again regarding transportation. I am going to the 2030 targets here on the government's website. We talked a little bit about the zero-emission vehicles. The goal is to get 4,800 zero-emission vehicles on the roads by 2030. I think the minister said that we were at 161 currently registered. It goes on, as part of the key Government of Yukon actions, that they will get to the 4,800 number by working with local vehicle dealerships and manufacturers to establish a system to meet targets for zero-emission vehicle sales.

Can the minister elaborate on that? What work has been done with local vehicle dealerships? What manufacturers have they talked to? Is the system in place now to meet these sales targets for zero-emission vehicles?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The department folks — I think that this is both the Energy branch and probably Highways and Public Works — have met with all the local dealers. We have run education campaigns showcasing those dealerships and what opportunities they have for zero-emission vehicles. Sometimes you will hear them called “ZEVs”, which is just the pronunciation of the acronym.

We have met with the Canadian Vehicle Manufacturer's Association and, with them, we have discussed supply chains for the Yukon. Over quite a bit of time now — but significantly — we have been meeting with Natural Resources Canada, the federal government, regarding their sales mandate program. We have been meeting with all of these groups, talking about the transition for light-duty cars and vehicles.

Mr. Kent: So, is the system established that is going to help to meet these targets for zero-emission vehicle sales based on the meetings that have been held so far?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, what I will say is that we have lots of programs that are directly within our control. For example, the Minister of Highways and Public Works has been talking about our own fleet vehicles and how we make that transition. The question is: How do you work with the public to support them as they make this move across to a new type of technology?

I think that our government has been putting in place the diligent steps in order to support that. What I didn't say in my previous response — but I did say the last time we were debating this last week — is that we have an incentive program where we are giving significant rebates to purchasers of zero-emission vehicles, and so does the federal government.

What you need to understand is that this move, as it happens across Canada, will not happen in isolation in the Yukon. It will happen everywhere. Once it starts to move, we believe that it will move quickly. What we are really doing is lining ourselves up to be at the forefront of that and not coming in behind.

There are many factors, and it is difficult to predict exactly when all of that transition will happen, but we have seen examples — for example, in other northern climates like Norway where now their zero-emission vehicle sales are far surpassed their internal combustion engine sales.

So, we have seen these transitions and we are working to make sure that the Yukon is lined up to move quickly. I have mentioned previously that the Yukon has, at present, the third-highest sales per capita for zero-emission vehicles, following Québec and British Columbia. So, I think that the work that the department has put in place is the appropriate level of diligence for this transition.

Mr. Kent: This is one of the key Government of Yukon actions — it is the first one — to get 4,800 zero-emission vehicles on the roads by 2030. The minister said last week that we are currently at 161, so there is an awful lot of work to be done, and one of the key actions on this is to establish a system to meet targets for zero-emission vehicle sales.

So, I am just going to ask again: Is this system in place? If so, will the minister share it with us, or where can we see this system that the government is going to put in place to meet sales targets? Because, as I have said, 4,800 is the goal; we have 161 currently. There is an awful lot of work to do between now and 2030 to reach that goal.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: So, I have listed the pieces so far that we have. I will add a couple more in this response, but they include that we have put in place infrastructure to support zero-emission vehicle owners and drivers so that they can travel not just within their community, but across Yukon communities. We will continue to densify that network of infrastructure to support this. We are working with our energy utilities around the transition to a user-pay model at the level 2 charger set-ups and our fast chargers. We have introduced incentives, both federally and here in the territory, that are moving this.

There are some supply chain issues at the moment, but we think that those will be resolved in time. We feel that there is demand here. In talking with our dealers here in the Yukon, we know that there is a lot of interest to have further sales. We have worked with the dealerships here, and they are keen to move. We have worked nationally with associations on how this transition will happen. We know that being part of the federal program is important. We know, as well, that we have put this through our modelling system. As I've referenced several times, in order to try to do our due diligence around this transition, we have worked with a company called Navius to do our energy modelling. That includes doing the transition to zero-emission vehicles. The curve isn't linear; it is an accelerating curve, because we know that, after our early adopters have moved, we anticipate that it will be moving quickly after that.

Finally, we are building into this act itself the obligation that we will meet these targets. The whole point of that is to send a clear signal to Yukoners. I think that this is one of those ways. This is the part of the diligence — the bill that we have in front of us — because it will enshrine that responsibility. I hope that all of us, as legislators, seek to enshrine that so that we make that commitment.

Mr. Kent: I'm not trying to be difficult here, but I'm just reading this first bullet of the key Government of Yukon actions. As I've said, the first action in here is to "... establish a system to meet targets for zero-emission vehicle sales..." But the minister seems to be including in that "... providing rebates and investing in charging stations..." which are the next two portions of that action bullet. So, providing the rebates that he talked about — the \$5,000 per vehicle — and investing in charging stations — I guess I'm just trying to — it doesn't appear to be a system in place to meet the targets for zero-emission vehicle sales — because that is a standalone commitment in here — and then providing rebates and investing in charging stations are the second and third commitments in this bullet.

I'm just trying to understand if this system is in place for sales targets. Just while I'm on my feet, I guess what I would ask the minister is: In discussions with the local vehicle dealerships, is there any idea of the wait time for ordering one of these zero-emission vehicles that currently exists? The minister has flagged supply chain and other issues. You just have to drive around the City of Whitehorse to see that getting new vehicles into many of the dealerships is a bit of challenge for them. Is there any idea on the current wait time to get zero-emission vehicles after the discussions that have been held with the local vehicle dealerships?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The way *Our Clean Future* reads, we have listed out many actions. Lots of them interrelate with each other. They're not all exactly distinct. For example, when I go under the subsequent section after the transportation section, which really deals with our homes and our buildings, we start off with each one talking about retrofits across the board, and then we talk about doing energy assessments of our government buildings. So, they are related. It's not a big surprise.

Similarly, when we're talking about the action the Member for Copperbelt South is referring to, we say we're working with local vehicle dealerships and manufacturers to establish a system by 2024 to ensure zero-emission vehicles are 10 percent of light-duty vehicle sales by 2025 and 30 percent by 2030. So, we actually have interim targets there, and then below — in all of the other actions — we work to flesh that out.

So, the system that he is referring to is the very one that I have been describing here in responses, and it includes all of these steps that work to build up the overall support for this transition to electric vehicles.

The member asked what the lag time is right now on orders. I believe it's about a year, although I've heard from some dealerships that there is a delay in getting vehicles, period — new orders. So, there are supply chain issues — yes. We anticipate those to be resolved, and this is all part of the broader initiative we have, for example, around our critical mineral strategy, where we are working to ensure that there is a supply chain for all of this transition here in Canada.

Mr. Kent: Again, the system that is referenced here is with respect to meeting targets for vehicle sales of zero-emission vehicles. I don't want to belabour this, but I don't

have a good sense that there is a system that has been established to meet these targets.

The minister was talking about the *Our Clean Future* document. So, to meet the 30-percent reduction — so, increase in the use of zero-emission vehicles — that would have accounted for 13 kilotonnes of the 263 kilotonnes needed. The minister did mention earlier that some of the numbers have changed here with respect to the 2010 emissions. So, is that number still the same on the 30 percent? And can the minister tell us what we would be looking for in kilotonne reduction to meet the revised target of 45 percent?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Can I just give a shout-out again to the folks at Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources? They have done a lot of work on this.

So, the system includes incentives like rebates. I understand that those financial incentives also extend to people shipping used zero-emission vehicles into the territory.

There is infrastructure — whether that's fast-charging stations, which we are doing very well to get from the north to the south, from the east to the west of the territory, including moves around quite a few level-2 chargers — we also have an action in here around the ability to ensure that our homes are set up so that, when we are building them, we are going to have charging for our electric vehicles. We are aligning with the federal government on their initiatives. We are working with industry, both locally and nationally. We are doing public education campaigns, and then finally, we are seeking to set targets here today through this bill. That's all part of that package — that system — that we have been working to put in place.

The member opposite asked about the modelling. I will say that we seek to update the modelling at all times. What I can say, from the Navius modelling, is that they felt we would actually exceed the targets that we had within *Our Clean Future*. I have mentioned previously when talking to the Member for Whitehorse Centre that we are currently taking the recommendations from the Climate Leadership Council. We are re-running the modelling, based on their suggested actions, and we will update that, as always, with the new emissions numbers that we get through our emissions inventory that we publish every couple of years.

So, yes, modelling is being redone, and it will be an ongoing thing that we continue to revise it, based on all sorts of factors, as we move toward our targets. That modelling work is underway. I don't have anything to report today about the specifics from that, but the last time we had the modelling and I spoke with the Energy branch, the modelers felt that we would probably exceed the targets in *Our Clean Future*.

Mr. Kent: So, again, in *Our Clean Future*, it sets zero-emission vehicles' greenhouse gas reductions at 13 kilotonnes. So, is that where — when I asked earlier about the 2010 levels, they had gone from 592 kilotonnes to 625 kilotonnes. So, is this number the same to meet the 30-percent goal that this document set out?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: A few points — the first one is that I have just stood up and said that I don't have new numbers today from the modelers, but I have said that we are working

on updating those numbers at all times, so I will continue to look into it. I appreciate the member opposite's interest. I think that it is an important issue.

Second of all, I will say that we have talked, for example — I mentioned about talking with those national manufacturing associations. When we have talked with them, they have told us that our targets are achievable. So, they have given us that assurance, as we confirm with them.

Lastly, what I will say is that I appreciate that we haven't yet hit the target of 10 percent of our light-duty vehicle sales by 2025 yet, but we are in 2022, and we are at four and a half percent. So, we are roughly halfway there. We have a few years to go. We think that this is going to accelerate, so we feel that this is an achievable target, and we are looking forward to this transition.

Mr. Kent: I guess the challenge that I would highlight for the minister is that there is one new number that is before us today, and that is the 45 percent, which is the new goal for the reduction below 2010 levels. The modelling that has been done is for a 30-percent number, but the minister and his colleagues are asking us to vote on a 45-percent number with no modelling to get there. That is why I am walking through this in detail trying to get a sense of what these numbers are. If the House does pass this bill into law, how we are going to get from here to 45 percent when the only modelling and the only plan that we have is to get to 35 percent? That is why I am going to continue to walk through these key government actions and other actions that are before us while we are in Committee of the Whole here today.

I do have a question on the vehicle rebate that we talked about last week. We talked about \$5,000 per vehicle. So, to meet that 4,800 zero-emission goals — I mentioned the number that this would cost Yukon taxpayers — \$24 million. However, the minister mused about perhaps how, in the future, that rebate would come off as the price of these zero-emission vehicles came down. I guess my question for him is: What sort of target price is he looking for with respect to zero-emission vehicles to either start reducing that rebate or to eliminate that rebate so that we have a sense of what this is going cost taxpayers going forward?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Madam Chair, first of all, the colleagues supporting here explained that the modelling has been redone based on the new numbers. What I don't have today is a breakout of this individual item, which is being asked for very explicitly. I think that this action that we have been talking about is an important action. I agree with the member opposite, and I think that there has been a lot of diligence put toward it.

One of the places where I think you would seek to adjust a rebate is when you start to see parity, or close to parity, between internal combustion engine vehicles and zero-emission vehicles. When those two prices come close to each other, that's typically a time when you start to phase things out. Currently, the projection for Canada is that this might happen somewhere around 2025 or 2026 — those numbers will shift — and possibly earlier, possibly later, but that's roughly the thinking. That's when I think we would seek. It's really not a

set number; it's how that number compares to the competitive purchase or the alternative choice. As soon as you go past parity, then, of course, it's cheaper for people to buy zero-emission vehicles than it is to buy an internal combustion engine vehicle.

Mr. Kent: Just a quick follow-up question for the minister — when we're looking at the budget documents — and I don't have the current budget documents or the forecast documents in front of me — is that rebate amount listed as a separate line, or is it part of a bigger line item as far as looking forward for the next number of years as we go toward this potentially \$24-million expenditure? Where do I find that in the budget? Is it a separate line or is it rolled up into a different line item?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will have to look into this specific answer. I know that, for example, we did highlight several things around *Our Clean Future* in the more public-facing budget document.

We talked about \$80 million overall going to *Our Clean Future*, and it included several numbers around the retrofits, around renewable energy — I think it's \$35 million for renewable energy. I know that we have \$2.1 million which was indicated for rebates and charging stations, but I don't know whether it exists as a separate line item. I will just have to look into that.

Mr. Kent: I appreciate that and look forward to getting that information from the minister.

The minister said that the modelling does exist for us to get to the 45 percent. I apologize if it's on the website and I just didn't find it, but is it available publicly? If so, where can I find it?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: In the recent interim report that we released, we still show that there is a gap that we have to fill. What are we doing with that gap? That's what we have a Climate Leadership Council for. We asked them for their suggestions about which actions we can and should take or could enhance. They have just given us that. We are now working through that to see — we will put it through the modelling system. I think I have mentioned that several times.

Also, with *Our Clean Future* as it was adopted originally, we identified that we would use an adaptive management approach, which is that we will iterate with the actions and continue to try to improve them. I have mentioned previously that, in the couple of times that I have seen the Minister of Environment and me tabling those reports, we have updated some of the actions to say that we are going further with this one or we have had some challenges with this one and we are adjusting it, but it's about how to increase the amount of reductions of greenhouse gas emissions.

That work has always been anticipated, even when we had a 30-percent target. That is the work that is underway and that we are undertaking now.

Mr. Kent: So, just to understand the minister, he said that during the recent interim report, there was a gap identified that we still need to fill. In a previous answer, he said that the model exists to get us to 45 percent. Is that not correct, or is there not a public model? Again, I guess the challenge that, as

a legislator, I am trying to overcome is that we have a 45-percent target identified in the act that is before the House, but I don't see a plan or detailed model for us to get there. I am just curious — when he mentioned earlier that the model exists for us to get to 45 percent — if that is a public document or if it is an interim or if it is not quite complete. Where are we at with respect to having a plan identified to get us to 45 percent that I can show to Yukoners or that we can show to colleagues here in the Legislature that justifies this 45-percent number that is in the new act?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will go back and check to make sure of exactly what I said, but I don't believe I ever said that there is a model that gets us all the way to 45 percent. What I said was that we have run the modelling on each of these initiatives and we have projections about where our emissions go and that there still is a gap.

If what we are looking for here is certainty — so, here are the actions and it is already a fait accompli — then, really, part of this is that we are talking about the wrong thing. This is about setting a target. That in itself helps us to achieve it because it creates accountability. I have seen several times here in the Yukon when we have said that, yes, we are going to do this, and it has not happened — I shouldn't say "several"; I have seen it twice. In those times, I have watched where we did not make a public commitment like this to achieve that target.

I am happy to stand up — I tabled a large report today from Yukon University talking about the impacts of climate change, what the implications are for us as a territory, and the cost to not act, which we have not discussed. In that, there is a significant cost that exists out there, whether it is in dealing with flooding across the territory, or forest fires, or those other risks that are increasing on us.

So, the modelling that we have is for the suite of actions that we have within the report today, including being updated with current information, and then we have said that we will seek to find extra solutions. We created the Climate Leadership Council — a report that has also been tabled here, which has within it a whole suite of actions that we will now introduce into the modelling.

That is the situation. The members opposite have to decide whether they wish to set a target and whether they wish to enshrine that target and make it the responsibility of not just this government, but future governments, and what is at stake here is whether or not we make that public commitment.

Mr. Kent: I will check the Blues too and confirm what the minister said about the existence of the modelling. We will keep asking these questions so that we can make sure that the targets that are set out in the legislation are ones that we can meet. I mean, there is a long history of governments at the national level and subnational level setting targets and missing those targets. I want to make sure that, if we set out targets in legislation, we have a plan in place to meet those targets or to come close to those targets or whatever we are going to do. That is why I will continue to walk through these commitments and key government actions so that Yukoners have an idea.

I look forward to reviewing the Yukon University report that the minister tabled earlier today because, of course, we

know that there is a cost to not acting, but, of course, there are costs associated with acting, too. So, that is what we are walking through with these Yukon government actions. As I said, I will look forward to having a look at the university report that the minister tabled earlier today.

I do want to move on to another key Government of Yukon action under transportation, which is to ensure that at least 50 percent of all new light-duty cars purchased each year by the Government of Yukon are zero-emission vehicles. I have a few questions with this, but I guess the first one would be: Where are we with respect to that target of 50 percent of all new light-duty cars purchased each year being zero emission?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: The Yukon government is committed to electrifying its vehicle fleet to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Department of Highways and Public Works is leading by example by adding zero-emission vehicles to the fleet and promoting sustainable and suitable vehicle options that will meet requirements, while embracing new vehicle technology.

One of the targets in *Our Clean Future* is to develop and implement a system to prioritize and purchase zero-emission vehicles for all new Government of Yukon fleet acquisitions, where available and suitable. The department will also be tendering for electric trucks, vans, and SUVs to replace gasoline vehicles, wherever appropriate. This goes well beyond the targets set in *Our Clean Future*.

These tenders show climate leadership by signalling the government's intended direction for emissions reductions and clean transportation options. In early 2021, the Yukon government purchased two zero-emission passenger cars from local dealerships. The cars were delivered in April 2021.

In late 2021, 12 plug-in electric hybrid SUVs were ordered. Two of these vehicles were delivered this past summer, and we're anticipating the ongoing delivery.

In 2022, Fleet Vehicle Agency has planned procurement for up to 94 vehicles, including 26 pure zero-emission vehicles. The procurement of electric vehicles is one component of the Yukon government's commitment to reducing emissions in all possible areas of government work. Highways and Public Works continues to meet with local dealerships to build relationships and understand market conditions.

So, Madam Chair, I've certainly been listening to the debate this afternoon. I would echo what the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has indicated, which is that we don't perceive at all that there's a lack of — from my perspective as the Minister of Highways and Public Works, I meet with the Fleet Vehicle Agency officials on quite a regular basis, and I have provided this direction to try to procure — start with light-duty vehicles, wherever possible, but we know that the teeter-totter is tilting quite quickly.

We've seen private ownership F-150 Lightnings in town. They're coming to town. GM has a similar product. So, we know that with respect to the YG fleet — which is somewhere between 500 and 600 vehicles — when we get light- to medium-duty pickup trucks, that will be an absolute game changer.

Of course, these vehicles have to be appropriate for the purpose, and I am cognizant of the pushback that some of these vehicles currently may not be appropriate with respect to their operational capacity in extreme cold weather in remote locations — I get it.

As I said in my comments last week, there are smart people working through this. I wouldn't say we are bombarded — bombarded in a good way, like in hockey broadcasts and football broadcasts and all manner of sports broadcasts — about new pickups that will become available, and they are indicating 640 or 650 or 660 kilometres of range. We know that's not going to be the real usable range at minus 35 with some terrible windchill out there, but the optimal range that we are seeing in these ads is 650 to 660 kilometres. So, there are a lot of kilometres to work with there.

The issue is not the political will, because I am pushing the Fleet Vehicle Agency to investigate all manner of procurements that may be possible. Recently, there was an electric cargo van available at Whitehorse Motors. On a very positive note, it was snapped up by a local contractor within the first week that it was on the lot. So, it doesn't really matter in the Yukon whether the vehicles that come into the territory are snapped up by the private sector or whether we, as adopters — showing the way, in some respects — and they become part of the YG fleet.

I speak to dealers, and I know some of the dealers reasonably well. There is a ton of interest, and I have a high degree of confidence that the early adopters will snap up absolutely all available supply in the foreseeable future.

As I also said in my comments last week, the Chrysler CEO at the Detroit Auto Show said that all of their production line will be electric by 2029. So, in some respects, to answer the Member for Copperbelt South's question, as you go from 2022 to 2029 or 2030, it's foreseeable that there will be very little supply of internal combustion engines.

Is that CEO of Chrysler being unduly optimistic? Maybe. It is probably her job to be unduly or guardedly optimistic, because she is in the business of selling her products, but that was the stated intention. If she puts that flagpole or marker down and says that it is what she is going to do, it is very likely that Ford will follow suit, GM will follow suit, and other carmakers will follow suit as well. We know that this is happening with significant speed in western Europe as well. As my colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, indicated, the movement was remarkably quick in Norway. That is because there was societal — well, it's probably one of the most prosperous countries in the world, actually. It's relatively small and most of the population lives in and around Oslo. They adopted it very quickly with incentives.

I will look into this and report back to the House, but I believe that they are likely in the position where they will be in the process of de-incentivizing, because it will not be required for much longer in Norway, as you will get to that equilibrium where the sale of zero-emission vehicles and plug-in electric vehicles outstrips those of ICE — or internal combustion engine — vehicles.

The other point will be that, of course, within the foreseeable future, as my colleague indicated, perhaps as early

as 2025 or 2026, electric zero-emission vehicles will be very similar to the same price point for the same product, with the same range, and with the same utility as an ICE vehicle. When that happens, well, you have a fairly even market that doesn't require rebates or incentives.

My view for Whitehorse and for communities is that, if this is your second vehicle, you don't need a large electric vehicle. You need a vehicle with modest range and hopefully, at some point, modest cost.

At Highways and Public Works and the Fleet Vehicle Agency, it is not for want of direction. I have made my direction absolutely clear that, where appropriate, electric, plug-in electric, or even hybrid ought to be considered. I did look at the numbers recently with respect to registrations, and they are lumped together. I grant you that it's not helpful that they are lumped together, but they are. But the numbers right now are approximately 300-plus registrations of either hybrid, plug-in electric, or zero-emission vehicles. I think why that is important is that this is a pretty strong indicator of early adopters — persons who are prepared to probably move from a hybrid to a plug-in electric to a zero-emission vehicle. So, you have a base there of 300-something registrations.

I take the Member for Copperbelt South's point that this is a steep mountain to climb to get to close to 5,000 vehicles by 2030, but there are many, many indicators, and of course, to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources' point, the Yukon will be a strong adopter and we will push strongly here, but we will also be subject to the market forces of Canada, of North America, and, indeed, global market forces. I have read recent articles indicating that the cost per container shipment has dropped significantly in the last few months. It is now down to \$3,000-something from a COVID high of approximately \$10,000. So, there are indications that the supply chain is relaxing, and so that is, of course, the not-so-silver lining. It means that there is less demand, but those supply points in the big Chinese ports and southeast Asian ports and in California, as well, are starting to unchoke, and there is a good indicator that, as a result, the supply chain issues that have been a challenge for Canada and for the Yukon are starting to ameliorate. That is certainly very positive as well.

I will finish my comments, but I also heard from the Member for Whitehorse Centre that we should always be mindful that, to get from 2022 to 2023, you have to — and we do — we hold our metaphorical feet to the fire and there's a report card. There's a report card from last year, and there will be a report card this year — there has been and there will be in the future. So, we'll get an idea about where we're going on a lot of fronts with respect to meeting *Our Clean Future* obligations and the benchmarks that were set out for us.

On the transportation front within the Yukon for light vehicle and then ultimately for light pickup, medium-duty pickups and then, of course, the big equipment to unpack would be mining equipment or big dirt movers — D8s, D9s, D11s — that's obviously in the future, but it's coming. As I said last week on Thursday, massive North American and western European and Chinese companies are investing in the electric future. The Yukon will be part of that future, and specifically

with respect to Fleet Vehicle Agency acquisitions, I'm vigilant on that, and we'll continue to monitor how we're doing and encourage the team there to continue to make as many procurements of plug-in electric or even hybrid vehicles that make sense from an operational perspective.

Mr. Kent: So, at the beginning of the minister's response, he mentioned a number of vehicles that have either been purchased or ordered. Are we now at 50 percent of all new light-duty cars purchased each year by the Government of Yukon being zero-emission vehicles? That's the number I'm looking for. I think he mentioned in his initial comments that he anticipated exceeding that percentage. So, are we there yet, or where are we with respect to this 50-percent goal of all new light-duty cars being zero-emission that the Government of Yukon buys?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Well, on page 35 of *Our Clean Future* action, what it indicates is: "Ensure at least 50 percent of all new light-duty cars purchased by the Government of Yukon are zero emission vehicles each year from 2020 to 2030."

In retrospect — and I guess not anticipating a 102-year global pandemic — although, to be candid, setting this out in 2019 or whenever, this may have been ambitious. I'm not sure if there would have ever been that supply —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Clarke: The Member for Copperbelt South is —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Clarke: So, the answer is no. That is almost certainly not where we would have been in 2020, and in 2020, that supply would not have been available anywhere, I would conjecture, in the western world.

But, as I indicated in my comments, the plan is for — where possible, going forward, between 2022 and 2030 — all new light-duty vehicles purchased by the Government of Yukon to be — well, practically, for Fleet Vehicle Agency — either zero-emission vehicles, plug-in electric, or hybrid by 2030.

We have 7.5 to eight years to meet that commitment. So, have there been supply chain issues? Have there been just plain supply issues? Absolutely. That objective was not attainable in the last 12 or 18 months, but I am very optimistic that we will meet these benchmarks sooner than later.

Chair: Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 17, entitled *Clean Energy Act*. Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Kent: I want to move on to the cleaner fuel for transportation commitment. In *Our Clean Future*, it says that there is going to be a requirement for diesel fuel to be blended

with biodiesel or renewable diesel, beginning in 2025, and an additional requirement for gasoline to be blended with ethanol, beginning in 2025. We talked briefly about this last week. I got one question in toward the end of my time, but I am hoping to explore this further with the minister here this afternoon.

I guess my understanding would be that this blending would occur at the refinery or where the fuel is purchased. Is that the minister's understanding as well? If so, how do we put in a requirement for this when the refineries are in different jurisdictions than the Yukon? I guess that's where I am trying to get a sense for how we build in this requirement when none of this fuel is refined here in the territory.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: So, there are a couple of ways. It really depends on which type of fuel we are talking about — where that blending happens — but for biodiesels, I do think it's going to be happening at the refineries, but it does matter which one of these we are talking about.

There are national clean fuel standards. In general, we will be following those. In that way, we get the benefit here. As noted, even in the Climate Leadership Council, there are some standards that British Columbia is setting. Where it's possible, we will piggyback with neighbouring jurisdictions because we know that they will have the buying power in a way that we don't as a territory. We can anticipate that they will be able to set it and we will be able to benefit from that standard that they have set.

Mr. Kent: This commitment is a significant amount of the overall greenhouse gas reductions. The modelling that is in *Our Clean Future* says that it's 59 kilotonnes from the blending of diesel and 11 kilotonnes from the blending of gasoline. It says that the Yukon, starting in 2025, will require that all diesel and gasoline fuel sold in the Yukon for transportation align with the percentage of biodiesel, renewable diesel, and ethanol by volume in leading Canadian jurisdictions. So, we won't have that requirement in place unless neighbouring jurisdictions require something similar — is that what I'm hearing from the minister?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The member is asking about whether provinces will be going — first of all, we have the national clean fuel standards. Those are meant to apply across the provinces. There is a technicality where they don't necessarily apply in the Yukon, but that's fine, because the main point back there is that the provinces then will have those clean standards and we can come along with them.

When I look at BC and what they are targeting for biodiesel and other renewable fuels, they are further ahead than what we have as our targets here. The targets that they are currently setting are more than the targets that we have here, so that is an indication that, again, we actually could possibly move further. We will watch to see how this develops for them. That is, I think, one of the recommendations that came from the Climate Leadership Council — that we watch those jurisdictions closely and see if we can come along with them.

Mr. Kent: Can the minister elaborate on what the technicality is with respect to the clean fuel standards, where it might not apply in the Yukon? That is the first I have heard of

that, so I would like to explore that with the minister to get an explanation of what that technicality is.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The federal government put in place a caveat that says that it doesn't necessary apply to remote communities, and so that is why we would possibly be exempt, but it does apply for any fuels imported, for example, from the United States. So, for those fuels that we are bringing in from Alaska, they would require it because it is coming across the national borders. So, there are just those small technicalities. Now, having said that it is not required here, it doesn't mean that we can't piggyback with other provinces and make sure that we seek this because it is, as the member opposite knows, a significant reduction in emissions.

Mr. Kent: I thank the minister for that explanation.

The minister has referenced the clean fuel standards or the Canadian clean fuel regulations. So, do those standards or regulations meet the targets that we have in *Our Clean Future* for these blending amounts? Are we able to piggyback on what they are doing nationally?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am informed that it is a complex arrangement, that the clean fuel standards are really about working with industry — in this case, the oil and gas industry — to make sure that their emissions intensity is coming down and that the outcome of that is that we will have access to these cleaner fuels. We anticipate that the access is there, but there are some technicalities being described around it that I think I would have to seek to get a fuller response on. I'm not trying to wash over it; I'm trying to say that I'm being informed that the mechanisms by which it works have complexities to them, and so I just want to indicate to the member opposite that the team is fairly confident that we have access to these types of fuels at the levels we're saying and that there may be suggestions that we could go further. The clean fuel standards will support that but do not create it directly in a straight line.

Mr. Kent: So, when it comes to these requirements for blended diesel and blended gasoline, there are a couple of jurisdictions — probably British Columbia, in and around Prince George, I think, where there's a refinery, and in Alberta where there's a refinery. Are we going to direct that we have to be supplied by one refinery or another to meet these standards? I'm just trying to get a sense — are we limiting our supply sources for diesel and gasoline by setting these targets for these blended fuels?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, most of our fuel comes from Alberta, BC, and Alaska.

With respect to Alaska, the clean fuel standards will come into effect, so that fuel, as it comes across the border to us — the federal mechanism will assist there.

Second of all, with respect to refineries in Alberta and BC, we know that the national clean fuel standards will require that these types of fuels are being produced. We know that, from BC, they are going to set the amount of biodiesel and renewable — these blended fuels, which have more renewables in them — that the level at which they are targeting is higher than the level at which we are targeting. That means that there will be the opportunity for us to piggyback.

Lastly, what's being described to me is that there is even flexibility for our fuel suppliers here, because they will have the ability — diesel is typically done at the refinery, but there are other ways that you can put in additives that will create the blended fuels that we need. That can be done here, for example.

We set the threshold that we are seeking to achieve through *Our Clean Future*. The suppliers will have opportunities to choose whether they source that type of fuel directly or whether they blend it here. We believe there is the opportunity for them to do it, and, right now as it currently stands, *Our Clean Future* action is less onerous than the targets that British Columbia is setting.

Mr. Kent: So, BC is setting more aggressive targets; we're not sure about Alberta, and then, for the stuff coming in from the United States, that requirement will be on there right away. I guess my question would be: Is the minister prepared for the eventuality that any of the fuel coming in from the US, if it has to be blended on their side of the border — and perhaps it's not a very large market share — if the refineries in the United States will just stop supplying fuel to the Yukon? That will reduce our suppliers to BC and Alberta if they are meeting the standards we have.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The last day we spoke, the members suggested that we shouldn't be speculating. These are not questions that are easily answered — what will happen. I will say that just — I don't know — a month or so ago, I was in Edmonton for a conference talking about carbon capture use and storage, where there was a lot of discussion — I heard from speakers from Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, but there were a lot there from Alberta. They were talking about ways in which they will transition the fossil fuel industry to make sure that there are lower emissions within that industry.

So, it was enlightening for me to hear how much that had moved within the industry. I was impressed.

Yes, there is risk that the future might go the other way. But, of course, we are all seeking — everyone is seeking — how to transition away from fossil fuels and to a greener future, and this is one of those pathways.

We see that the US is doing work on this. So, rather than thinking of it as a challenge, I think of it as an opportunity. I see it happening in Alberta. I see levels being set in British Columbia. We are in between the three. I think that the targets that we have set are reasonable, and, in fact, again from the Climate Leadership Council, there is the suggestion that we should take them even further.

For the time being, what I will say is that this is one of those important interim steps as we work to transition off. It is how to make sure that our current fuels are as low emitting as possible. From my experience working with other jurisdictions, they are working diligently on this path.

Mr. Kent: I guess the other thing that is important to realize is that the clean fuel regulations and the clean fuel standards set out by the federal government will have an impact on the price at the pump or the price that people pay for gasoline and diesel. In doing a little bit of research, I came across a *Global News* article from June of this year. It suggests that these new federal regulations will cost Canadians up to 13 cents more

per litre at the pump by 2030. Is the minister aware of this potential cost increase for consumers? I don't think you have to go very far without running into individual Yukoners who are quite concerned with the current cost of gasoline and diesel at the pumps. Is the minister aware of this impact? Is the 13 cents what he would anticipate the price per litre increasing as a result of the requirement for these blended fuels by 2025 that the Yukon government is putting into place?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I do think that we can anticipate that there is a differential cost. It's difficult to know what it is. I have not read the article that the member has. I'll seek it out from him afterward, just so I can have a read. I thank him for drawing it to my attention.

The other thing that you have to note is that — well, there are a couple things I'll comment on. One is, when you bring in these lower emissions — when you're blending in with lower emissions — then the carbon price goes down, because that's when it's lower, because the price should be there, based on the emissions. So, lower emissions mean lower carbon price, so there's an offsetting element here. I don't know which one wins out overall, but what I can say is that the whole goal here — the broad, broad goal — is to move us away from fossil fuels. That is it. That's what we're doing by 2050 — is to get to net zero. In fact, the members opposite — I just checked their platform at the break, and they say, yes, net zero by 2050. It's there.

And I happened to be in the environment debate with Mr. Eric Schroff, their candidate, who was in the environment debate. There was a commitment in that debate for *Our Clean Future* — which has, as part of it, to set the clean energy act. So, it's interesting to me, because it's almost like the argument is — and I appreciate the diligence; I do. I think it's important — but we need to be careful that what we're not doing is creating an ongoing dependency on fossil fuels, because we need to transition off. That is the goal. So, we need a pathway to get there, and this act is — or this bill that would create this act — is a part of that pathway. Do I know exactly what the cost will be for the blended elements of these fuels? No, I don't know that at this time, but I do know that there is some up and down with it, and I'm happy to investigate it further.

Mr. Kent: Just to be clear with the minister, just because we're here asking questions about the costs that this will mean to the taxpayer or to consumers, it doesn't mean that we don't share the same goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions; we just need to be able to communicate honestly with Yukoners on what that cost is going to be, and that's why we're asking those questions, and that's why I also look forward to reviewing the university report that the minister tabled earlier today, which talks about the costs of inaction when it comes to wildfires, or flooding, or some of our infrastructure being compromised. So, I look forward to reviewing that as well.

Just before I leave this, one of the things that the minister mentioned sort of piqued my curiosity. As this comes in, he anticipates that the carbon tax will go down. Is that what he is saying to us? Because that is what I heard. He said, when talking about bringing in the clean fuel standard, that once that is in, the carbon tax will decrease — perhaps not by an equal

amount, but I just wanted to clarify that this is what the minister said here this afternoon.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Imagine that we have a jerry can full of diesel here and, right next to it, a jerry can full of diesel that is blended with biodiesel — maybe, just for argument's sake, half and half. In the jerry can that is full of diesel, then the carbon price would have been charged on all of that diesel. In the jerry can that is full of half diesel and half biodiesel, if the biodiesel is purely from a biological source and it's not creating emissions the way that fossil fuels are, then the carbon price would be on the half that is the regular diesel, and the half that is the biodiesel would not have the carbon price on it.

Mr. Kent: I thank the minister for that. It will be interesting to see how that is reflected at the pumps or on home heating fuel bills.

I do want to move on now to the homes and building actions with respect to *Our Clean Future*. So, looking at the website, the first key Government of Yukon action is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from Government of Yukon buildings by 30 percent by 2030, compared to 2010. So, I am hoping that the minister can give us an idea of where we're at with respect to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the Government of Yukon buildings. I think that the most recent data he talked about was 2020, but if he has more recent data or earlier data, I am just trying to get a sense for where we are at right now with respect to that government action.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I can say that, this year, we completed three high energy-efficient buildouts, and there are another 28 that are in progress. I don't have the percentage with me today. I can say that, just this past week, I signed off on another one here in the territory for investment. I will investigate it further, but I believe that I have seen quite a few projects underway. Within our budget this year, we talk about \$23.6 million going toward green infrastructure and government retrofits, so I would have to check on that split, but there is definitely investment that is going toward buildings.

I will just acknowledge that it was under the past government that this building was originally slated for retrofit. I think that the work went over a few years, but this is one of those buildings where we see lower heating costs now due to that energy retrofit.

Mr. Kent: The minister referenced three retrofits, I think, complete and 28 in progress. My question was specific to Government of Yukon buildings with this one. I mean, it's not the residential, commercial, and institutional retrofits. I wanted to focus in on this one action where they are going to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from Government of Yukon buildings by 30 percent by 2030, compared to 2010. So, I am looking for the number with respect to government-owned buildings.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The buildings I was referring to are government buildings.

Mr. Kent: The minister probably doesn't have this information with him, but if he could table it or send it across to the opposition, I would appreciate the list of the three retrofits and the 28 that are in progress.

The minister mentioned that he had signed off on one of those ones. I am curious why that would be his responsibility, rather than the Minister of Highways and Public Works'. Is there a reason why he would be signing off on a Yukon government building retrofit?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: For government-owned and operated buildings, it is Highways and Public Works that deals with those. For buildings where we rent them but they happen to be private sector owned, then it is the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources who signs off. The member opposite is correct: They would be institutional buildings or they would be commercial buildings, so not part of the list of the three.

Mr. Kent: So, to just be clear, the three completed and the 28 are all Yukon government-owned buildings, or are these some of the ones that we lease for various purposes?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: That's correct. These are government buildings that I was referring to.

Mr. Kent: So, again, I think the minister made a commitment that he would get us an idea of how much we've reduced greenhouse gas emissions from the buildings, as the target is 30 percent by 2030, compared to 2010. So, I'll look forward to getting that information as well.

The next commitment there is to complete 2,000 residential, commercial, and institutional energy efficiency retrofits by 2030 through low-interest financing, rebates, and funding. Does the minister have a snapshot on how many of those have been completed so far, as we work toward that goal of having 2,000 done by 2030?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Based on our annual report from 2021, which we published this year, we've initiated 41 energy retrofits in Government of Yukon buildings. I should also note that for any new builds that the department is doing, there is a target for 35 percent less energy than the National Energy Code for buildings, so it's better, again, to make sure that emissions are down.

With respect to the homes, that's largely going to be through the Better Building program, which we took longer than we thought to get through this House, but it's here now. The regulations are just in place now. I know that Community Services has been working with municipalities around that program. I know that the bulk of it for the public will run through the Energy Solutions Centre — getting the audits done, et cetera.

In 2021, we were up to 120, or maybe 130, buildings in total, but we expect that to ramp up now that the act and regulations are in place.

Mr. Kent: So, 41 Yukon government buildings have been retrofitted — Yukon government-owned — and 120 of the goal of 2,000 on the residential, commercial, and institutional retrofits have been completed so far, and the minister expects that number to ramp up here over the next while. I thank him for that information.

The next Yukon government action is to replace 1,300 residential fossil-fuel heating systems with smart electric heating systems by 2030. Again, I am looking for an indication of where we are with respect to that government action. Then there is a question from a couple of my colleagues who

represent ridings that are off-grid — Watson Lake, of course, and some of the communities on the north Alaska Highway of Destruction Bay, Burwash Landing, and Beaver Creek. It is my understanding that they are not allowed to convert their heating systems to electric heat. Is that also the minister's understanding, and is there any work being undertaken to allow them to do that in those so-called "diesel communities"?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Can I just back up for a second? I believe that what I said was that we had initiated 41 retrofits in government buildings. This year, we had completed three. I would have to check backward to see how many had been completed previously.

In terms of residential, I just added up the numbers. So far, it's 145. With respect to heat pumps and smart heating devices — again, this report is from 2021; we are just catching up a little bit — but there were 21 heat pumps and 50 smart heating devices installed.

With respect to our off-grid communities, there is, I believe, a contractual agreement that is with the utility. I would have to check on what the language is specifically around that, but it's that they don't have electric heating where they are off-grid and the power is generated by thermal; however, we're working in every community right now to start to bring in renewables. So, those sorts of things will change.

The other thing to note is that, even though it's no to electric heat in those communities, as I understand it, that doesn't mean you can't have renewables, for example, wood and biomass. We could get into the debates about the other challenges around wood, but that is a renewable fuel, and there is a lot of it used here in the territory.

Mr. Kent: We will, during this debate, have an opportunity to talk about fuel and biomass, I'm sure. I guess the challenge — or one of the challenges I wanted to highlight and see if the minister is aware of this is that I understand there is a discrepancy between Burwash Landing and Destruction Bay — communities that are in very close proximity to one another — where, in Burwash, they are allowed to put electric heating systems in their homes, and in Destruction Bay, that is not the case, and of course, in Beaver Creek, it is not the case as well — just a question I'm asking on behalf of my colleague, the MLA for Kluane. Is the minister aware that this discrepancy exists? And if he could explain that, that would be helpful.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: My understanding is that there is a casework underway, and we'll look for the officials to give us some response and happy, of course, as always, to respond to those caseworks.

Mr. Kent: We look forward — and I know the MLA for Kluane will look forward — to getting that response to his letter to the minister.

One of the other key Government of Yukon actions is to support businesses, organizations, and local governments to install 20 commercial and institutional biomass heating systems by 2030 — again, looking for a progress report on that. How many of these commercial and institutional biomass heating systems are in place currently, as we move toward the goal of 20 by 2030?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: We installed one new biomass system in 2021, and we worked with four Yukon First Nations on four biomass feasibility studies, which were on top of four from 2020. We looked at renewable heating options in 70 government buildings in 2021. Just one second — with respect to commercial and institutional biomass, so far, we have installed nine, and our target, of course, is 20 by 2030.

Mr. Kent: Does that figure include both chips and pellets? And then I guess the other question from that would be with respect to pellets and the modelling for greenhouse gas reductions. Would that also include the transportation of pellets from wherever they are purchased, because pellets are obviously not manufactured here in the territory?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Madam Chair, I am not sure what the split is between chips and pellets. I can say that on most of the projects that I have looked at more recently, they use these flexible boilers, which can take either. The reason for that is that the technology has improved to a state where it is just smarter nowadays to put in something that can handle both. Chips can be sourced locally. Pellets, at this point, are imported, similar to how we import oil and gas. Typically, pellets would come from BC.

When it comes to emissions around the transportation of goods, the Yukon is responsible for the transportation of those goods within the Yukon, and other jurisdictions are responsible for the emissions that occur for transportation of goods within their jurisdiction. Similarly, if we have goods that are passing through to Alaska, then we are responsible for those emissions that occur here on our highways. That's how the accounting system works.

Mr. Kent: I was on Yukon Bids and Tenders earlier today, and there is a planned bid for a district heating system design for Haines Junction. Perhaps this is a question better asked of the Minister of Highways and Public Works. I am just looking to get a sense for what that will look like as far as: Is it a biomass system that they are looking at there?

The other question is with respect to another planned tender that I noticed on Bids and Tenders earlier today, and that is the expansion of the biomass at the Whitehorse correctional facility. I know that one is pellets. Again, that is why I just wanted to make sure that any of the emissions reductions were offset by the transportation of those pellets into the territory.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I don't know about the specific tender. I appreciate the question.

When it comes to almost all of our goods here in the Yukon, they come up the highway — I mean, different directions, of course, so, if we're talking about almost all of the things that we have here in the territory, they come a distance. So, we're always working to try to source more locally if we can and to foster that. That's in our agriculture policies and in all of these policies that are in front of us. We work to move to cleaner fuels and to locally sourced, wherever we can.

Luckily for wood, despite specific supply challenges at the moment, there is a lot of wood available, so we can resolve that problem and will. With respect to pellets, they are at least sourced from closer afield than many of the fuels that we use

today. So, yes, there is a challenge there, but I think it is still preferential to some of the alternatives.

Mr. Kent: As I mentioned earlier, we'll get a little bit later on in debate into the fuel-wood supply issues and what's happening on that side with respect to challenges around that.

I do want to ask about this next Government of Yukon action, which is to work with the Government of Canada to develop and implement building codes suitable to northern Canada that will aspire to see all new residential and commercial buildings be net zero energy ready by 2032.

So, I'm just looking for an update from the minister. How much work has been undertaken with the Government of Canada? And if he has an idea of when we might get a look at those new building codes and when they can be shared, obviously, with the Yukon public.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am informed that it is very soon. They may even be here already. We believe that these codes are likely available through the Standards Council of Canada. I am sorry that I don't have a full update on this action, but it's imminent. I don't have anything more to add to this.

Sorry — the 2020 National Building Code was published in March 2022. It will come into effect here in the territory on April 1, 2023.

Mr. Kent: Just to clarify with the minister that this set of building codes will see all new residential and commercial buildings be net-zero energy-ready. Is that what I'm hearing? That is the key action that I'm highlighting here. It says that we have to work with the government to develop and implement these codes, but it sounds like they may already be in existence. I just want to make sure so that we can point those who are interested in the right direction.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The way the National Building Code works is that it has a set of tiers or steps within it. We start at tier 1. We will work through over time how to progress to net-zero energy-ready by 2030 so it doesn't happen all in one go. It happens over time and you can see their tiers when you look at the code.

Mr. Kent: What I understand from the minister's response is that we are not there yet; we are at tier 1 and we are advancing through these building codes. If individuals want to see where they are at, they can go to the national building standards — I think that is where he directed people to go to see where we are at right now — and that will continue to evolve as we move toward making these new buildings net-zero energy-ready.

Has the government done a cost analysis for what that might mean to the cost of building — residential and commercial buildings — as we move to make them net-zero energy-ready? Is there a cost analysis done of that?

I guess a similar question with respect to the next key Government of Yukon action — which is to adopt and enforce building standards by 2030 that will require new buildings to be more resilient to climate change impacts like permafrost, flooding, and forest fires. Obviously, it is important that our buildings be more resilient to those types of impacts, but I am just curious if there has been any analysis done with respect to this action of what it will cost builders and, I guess, in the end,

consumers or homeowners, renters, or others to see these two actions undertaken.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: So, there were a couple of questions there. I will do my best to respond to them.

First of all, we have some incentive programs that we're working on to support builders with some of these questions. Before I was elected to this Legislature, I happened to be part of the national panel on the building codes dealing with climate change impacts and how to make our buildings more resilient, so I was pretty familiar with that.

With respect to the 2020 National Building Code, I made a mistake. I said the "Standards Council." It's actually on the NRC — the National Research Council — website. That's where it's located. I just looked it up and it is available.

With respect to what's happening today within the Yukon, on average, our homes are being built nearly 50 percent more energy efficient than the 2020 code. The builders today are way ahead of tier 1. They are building that. The reason is that, when you invest the money up front, yes, there is an additional cost — or, from an adaptation perspective, both — you have to pay more up front as you are building the home, but then usually the home costs much less to heat or to sustain. Those costs come down. There are improvements on the cost of running and maintaining a home over time.

So, this is one of those differences — we could make the same argument with zero-emission vehicles: that the cost is higher up front, but the maintenance is much, much lower over time. So, there's a trade-off there, and that goes into all of that thinking.

Mr. Kent: Just before I move on to questions around energy production and get a sense of where we're at with Yukon Energy's renewable plan, I'm just curious if the minister can tell us — as we look at the model to 2030 and what we have in front of us with respect to 30-percent reductions, what is anticipated to be the impact of the carbon tax? Obviously, that was initially slated to go up to \$50 per tonne. The federal government has revised that, and now it is going far beyond that in a price per tonne — incremental increases between now and 2030.

I'm just curious what the minister anticipates the greenhouse gas emission reductions by kilotonne will be from the implementation of the carbon tax.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The team is explaining to me that it is part of the model. It's built in, but I don't have the breakout of what we were anticipating from it. I'm not able to provide the number today.

Mr. Kent: Can the minister give us an indication of when he can provide that number to the House?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I, of course, will seek to go back and investigate these things further. I am just sort of guessing that we may not clear this today, so I may have a chance to be back up on my feet. If I do, I will do my best.

Mr. Kent: I think the minister is guessing correctly about the timing for Committee work still on this bill.

I will talk a little bit about the Yukon Climate Leadership Council report, because it does reference in there redirecting some of the carbon tax funds, I believe, and some of those that

are over and above the \$50-per-tonne mark that we are going to be hitting, I think, next year. We can certainly get into details on that when we get a chance to discuss that later on in Committee debate, because I am curious as to what the government's thoughts are.

Obviously, their commitment has always been to return carbon tax dollars to Yukoners. I mean, we can argue the past and exactly what that commitment was, but this would be a detour from that practice of returning those dollars to Yukoners and instead investing them in projects over and above that \$50 per tonne. Again, when the federal government first introduced the carbon tax, it was supposed to be finished at \$50 per tonne. Now, obviously, they have changed their mind, and it will be going much beyond that.

Perhaps what we'll do now is continue some discussion with respect to the *Our Clean Future* recommendations and the key government actions. I'll turn my attention now to the energy production piece. So, the first action is to require at least 93 percent of electricity generated on the Yukon integrated system to come from renewable sources, calculated as a long-term rolling average.

Of course, we know there are a number of planned projects that are on Yukon Energy's project list. I guess I'll look for an update from the minister on some of them. The most immediate one that we have with respect to renewable is the battery storage units on the south access or off Robert Service Way here in Whitehorse. So, is the minister able to give us a budget and timing update on that project?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, with respect to the recommendation that came from the Climate Leadership Council, I think it's their C9, using a portion of the carbon tax proceeds to establish a business incentive fund for private sector, low-carbon projects. Look, I think the principle we've always adhered to is that we wouldn't grow government with the rebates. You know, if the chamber came to us and made this suggestion, and if they were willing to try to use a fund like that, then I think, as long as it adhered with our overall principle, then I think it's a conversation we could have. We've not had that conversation. I've not even talked to my colleague, the Minister of Economic Development, about it, but that would be where I would start, because I think we made a very principled approach that we would not bring money back to government.

With respect to Yukon Energy's battery storage project, I spoke to the president recently about this project, just asking where things were at. I think that we all saw the construction begin earlier this year. They are on the south access. I understand that there has been good progress so far with respect to access, the transmission, and engineering. The latest I heard about their budget is that they are still projecting the cost at \$35 million, so I haven't heard any change to that yet.

I can indicate that we have seen costs go up across the country. When Yukon Energy put in for this bid, they put a rider on the contract that said that, if there were increases, the proponent would get dinged a bit — "penalized" is a better term — so they put in some protection there. Currently, the budget remains the same from the information that I have.

With respect to timing, the hope was to have the project completed by this coming spring. Yukon Energy let me know that they think that this has been pushed out somewhat, but they still are anticipating — what they really want are those batteries up and running a year from now, when we hit the cold weather in 2023. Currently, it is still on track for that.

Mr. Kent: On the carbon tax — I was going to discuss it a little bit later, but with the minister's response, I am kind of curious. He is correct in that he did point me to the right recommendation in the Climate Leadership Council's recommendations, which is: "C9. Using a portion of carbon tax proceeds to establish a business incentive fund for private sector low-carbon projects..."

The minister mentioned that their commitment was to not grow government — I think that is what he said. I will have to look back at the Blues, but when you look back at the 2016 Yukon Liberal platform, they say that the carbon tax should not impose a burden on Yukoners and commit to working with the federal government to ensure all carbon revenue collected in the Yukon will be returned to Yukon and rebated to Yukoners.

So, if this recommendation C9 is something that the minister and his Cabinet colleagues are considering, that is a departure from having rebates to Yukoners when it comes to revenue from the carbon tax. It is certainly an interesting point that I am sure we will get an opportunity to explore with the minister, as debate on this bill continues.

Madam Chair, I do want to ask some questions now about other planned renewable projects on Yukon Energy's plan. We can get an opportunity to talk about the Atlin expansion — hopefully, get an update from the minister on where we are at with that — as well as the Moon Lake pump storage possible expansion and some of the demand-side management programs and the Southern Lakes project as well.

Madam Chair, seeing the time, I move that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by the Member for Copperbelt South that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Ms. Blake: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 17, entitled *Clean Energy Act*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

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

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

The following sessional papers were filed October 17, 2022:

35-1-62

Cannabis Yukon Annual report — April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022 (Pillai)

35-1-63

Fourth Report of the Standing Committee on Rules, Elections and Privileges (October 2022) (Mostyn)

The following document was filed October 17, 2022:

35-1-72

Yukon University — Yukon climate change indicators and key findings 2022 (Streicker)

Written notice was given of the following motion October 17, 2022:

Motion No. 471

Re: definition of anti-Semitism (Dixon)

The following written question was tabled October 17, 2022:

Written Question No. 30

Re: privacy data breaches (White)