



Yukon Legislative Assembly

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HANSARD

Wednesday, October 14, 2026 — 1:00 p.m.

Whitehorse, Yukon

Speaker: The Honourable Yvonne Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2026 FALL SITTING

Speaker: Hon. Yvonne Clarke
 Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committee of the Whole: Patti McLeod
 Deputy Chair of Committee of the Whole: Tyler Porter

CABINET MINISTERS

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PORTFOLIO
Hon. Currie Dixon	Copperbelt North	Premier Minister of the Executive Council Office; Finance
Hon. Cory Bellmore	Mayo-Tatchun	Minister of Community Services; Minister responsible for the Yukon Lottery Commission
Hon. Linda Benoit	Whistle Bend South	Minister of Highways and Public Works
Hon. Brad Cathers	Lake Laberge	Minister of Health and Social Services
Hon. Jen Gehmair	Marsh Lake-Mount Lorne-Golden Horn	Minister of Economy, Tourism and Culture; Public Service Commission; Minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation
Hon. Wade Istchenko	Kluane	Minister of Environment
Hon. Scott Kent	Copperbelt South	Government House Leader Minister of Education; Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation
Hon. Laura Lang	Whitehorse West	Minister of Justice; Minister responsible for the French Language Services Directorate; Women and Gender Equity Directorate; Workers' Safety and Compensation Board
Hon. Ted Laking	Porter Creek Centre	Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources; Minister responsible for the Yukon Development Corporation and the Yukon Energy Corporation

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Party			
Doris Anderson	Porter Creek North	Yvonne Clarke	Whistle Bend North
Adam Gerle	Porter Creek South	Patti McLeod	Watson Lake-Ross River-Faro
Tyler Porter	Southern Lakes		

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

New Democratic Party			
Kate White	Leader of the Official Opposition Takhini	Lane Tredger	Official Opposition House Leader Whitehorse Centre
Carmen Gustafson	Riverdale North	Brent McDonald	Klondike
Linda Moen	Mountainview	Justin Ziegler	Riverdale South

THIRD PARTY

Yukon Liberal Party			
	Debra-Leigh Reti	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Vuntut Gwitchin	

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Allison Lloyd	Clerk of the Legislative Assembly	Logan Ockenden	Acting Deputy Clerk and Clerk of Committees
Bhreagh Dabbs	Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel	Joseph Mewett	Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms
Karina Watson	Sergeant-at-Arms	Deana Lemke	Hansard Administrator

Wednesday, October 14, 2026 — 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

Speaker: Introduction of visitors.
Visitors introduced

Speaker: Tributes.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Statement — Great ShakeOut earthquake drill

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Tomorrow, Yukoners will participate in the Great ShakeOut earthquake drill at 10:15 a.m. We join millions across the globe in taking part in the same drill, all learning how to stay safe during an earthquake. Earthquakes can happen at any time during any part of the year. All of the Yukon is in a moderate- to high-risk zone for earthquakes.

During the drill and, more importantly, during an earthquake, drop where you are onto your hands and knees, cover your head and neck with one arm and hand. If a sturdy desk or table is nearby, crawl under it for shelter. Finally, hold on until the shaking stops.

Register to participate in the Great ShakeOut earthquake drill as an individual, school, or workplace at shakeout.org/yukon.

Statement — *Slogging North of 60* book publication

Carmen Gustafson: Over the past 50 years, local explorer Peter Heebink and companions have travelled more than 15,000 kilometres throughout the North, all on foot and mostly off the beaten path. These self-supported expeditions, over 1,500 winter days and nights, wound across watersheds and over mountain passes, spanning the western reaches of Mount Logan to the eastern edges of the Ragged Range Mountains; routes forged a continuous path from the Beaufort Sea to Juneau, Alaska.

This fall, Peter launched his book *Slogging North of 60*. Author Karen McColl worked alongside Peter over several years, interpreting both Peter's handwriting and the world of self-publishing. This tome of trails and tales includes over 50 trip reports, with stories of memorable meals and fireside environments along with maps and tips and tricks to support your own slogging plans.

Some have described slogging as skiing; others as Type Two fun. The objective is simple: Get outside and see where your body and spirit carry you. It makes for good friends and a love of the wild.

Congratulations to Peter, Karen, and all the contributors. Slog on.

Statement — Women on Wildfires training program

Debra-Leigh Reti: Today, I want to speak about the Women on Wildfires training program put on by Yukon First Nations Wildfire. This year's training week was held at the beautiful Kluane Lake. This program offers a supportive, inclusive environment for participants to explore wildland firefighting. Fourteen participants and four instructors participated in on-the-land training to learn first-hand what it takes to become a wildland firefighter. They learned essential firefighting skills and had the opportunity to build confidence, develop new skills, and explore a career in wildfire.

It is so important that our First Nation women have opportunities like this to experience wildland firefighting and learn how to protect the land and learn the importance of the communities building up their SSRUs like in Old Crow.

Statement — Housing development and traffic safety in Porter Creek South

Adam Gerle: I rise today to highlight some positive developments in Porter Creek South. In conversations with residents, two priorities that have consistently come up are housing and safer neighbourhood streets. This summer, we saw progress on both fronts.

The new Chasàn Tatäy subdivision in Range Point, next to the Northland Trailer Park, is a partnership between the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Yukon Government and will bring more than 380 new housing units to our growing community.

I was also pleased to see action taken on traffic safety concerns raised by residents around 12th Avenue, Centennial St., and Wann Road. Active enforcement by Whitehorse RCMP, along with the installation of new reflective traffic bollards, helped improve safety and awareness for drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, and families in the neighbourhood this summer. I look forward to seeing this progress continue in Porter Creek South.

Statement — Intimate-partner and domestic violence

Linda Moen: I rise today to speak about intimate-partner violence and domestic violence in our communities.

In October 2025, the Yukon Bureau of Statistics reported that Yukon had the highest per capita rate of police-reported family and intimate-partner violence in Canada. We also know that many people who experience violence never report it. These numbers are a reminder that we must do more.

We need to support the NGOs and community organizations that work every day to prevent violence, support survivors, and advocate for our communities. A year later, this report is more important than ever. We must remember what is told to us and we must act on it.

Statement — Community events and engagement in Watson Lake, Ross River, and Faro

Patti McLeod: One of the best parts of representing Watson Lake is the strength and resilience of our communities.

This summer, I had the opportunity to spend time with residents across the riding, from community events in Ross River to the Crane and Sheep Festival in Faro and conversations with residents in Watson Lake.

In Watson Lake, residents participated in engagement sessions on the proposed long-term care home, a project that the community has worked toward for many years. Their ideas and experiences will help shape the future of care in our community. I'd like to thank the residents, volunteers, and community leaders who continue to make Watson Lake, Ross River, and Faro such remarkable places to call home.

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Justin Ziegler: I have for tabling screenshots from the Yukon Party's social media.

Speaker: Are there any committee reports to be presented?
Are there any petitions?
Are there any bills to be introduced?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Debra-Leigh Reti: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to table any correspondence it has had with Canada's Major Projects Office since it was elected in late 2025.

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Question — Rental housing legislation consultation

Kate White: For years, the Yukon Party lectured the previous government about poor consultation on legislation, but it seems the tables have turned. Now that they're in government, it's not just about poor consultation. When it comes to removing rent controls, this government hasn't consulted at all.

There was a 2024 public engagement on the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* that heard from 1,420 Yukoners, an engagement process which specifically notes — and I quote: "The number of landlords who responded to the survey was disproportionately high in comparison to tenants..." The 2024 engagement found that more Yukoners supported rent control than didn't, including landlords, and most of those Yukoners supported the very same CPI-based model the Yukon Party government is throwing out. So, this Yukon Party government did no consultation on their decision and is ignoring the consultation that does exist.

So, why is the minister moving forward with a harmful policy that goes against public opinion?

Hon. Currie Dixon: Over the course of the last five years, we've had a lot of debates about rent control in this House. When the Liberals and NDP brought it forward hastily in 2021 and we saw the incredibly negative impacts on the range of renters and landlords back then, we realized that there was a problem. Then in 2023, when the Leader of the Official Opposition apologized for the unintended consequences of that poorly thought-out policy and helped the Liberal government introduce a million-dollar subsidy for landlords, we again rejected that proposal.

But, Madam Speaker, we're in a position now to finally act on the commitment that we made to Yukoners in the last election, which is to remove these harmful policies, to restore balance to the rental market, and to ensure that Yukoners have access to a rental market that allows for investment, that encourages landlords to become landlords, stay landlords, and invest in their properties. We think that's a better result, and we know that the NDP disagrees.

Kate White: I can understand why there was no mention of the 2024 consultation about the *Residential Tenancies Act*, because it disagrees with the Premier. The Minister of Community Services is bringing back no-cause evictions, which people in the 2024 engagement described as antiquated compared to the rest of Canada. Their survey did not even ask about them, as they are ill-supported and frowned upon in the rest of the country. The Yukon is about to step backwards to join Newfoundland and Labrador as the only Canadian jurisdictions to allow no-cause evictions. Yet the minister is going ahead with these changes without holding a single public engagement session.

Can the minister explain why the Yukon Party can't be bothered to consult with Yukoners before moving the Yukon's rental legislation back to the stone age?

Hon. Currie Dixon: Where we're going back to is pre-CASA. That's exactly where we're going back to. We think that's where Yukoners want us to go, and that's the message they delivered to us in the last election when we campaigned vociferously on this policy, where we spent five years debating this policy, voting consistently against the Liberal-NDP proposals to bring in these flawed policies.

We're now acting to reverse the harm that's been caused by these policies. We're acting to restore balance in the rental market. We're creating a system and a market where Yukoners can feel free to make investment in rental housing, to feel comfort and consistency in the market that is before them. We think this is going to improve things. It will take some time, of course, but, Madam Speaker, this should come as no surprise to anybody who has been following politics in the Yukon for the past five years.

Kate White: It appears that the Premier is ignoring the extensive consultation that was done about tenancies in the Yukon — consultation, I note, that occurred two years after rent controls had come into effect. The 2024 engagement was clear about what Yukoners wanted. Rent control should stay. No-cause eviction should not be allowed. But this Yukon Party government isn't building its policy off what Yukoners actually want or even sound policy-making. They are building it off what their friends want.

Will the Premier take a step back and commit to a real public consultation with Yukoners before moving forward with changes to the *Residential Tenancies Act*?

Hon. Currie Dixon: What I can commit to is doing exactly what we told Yukoners we would do in the last election, which is to repeal these harmful policies, to revert the legislation back to the situation that we found ourselves in prior to 2021 largely. There are some changes we have made, of course, in addition to the removal of the flawed rent cap policy — that is the extension of the six-month lead time to allow for

rent increases or the termination of a tenancy agreement between a landlord and a renter.

We think that these policies will help. We know that there's more work that needs to be done. We need to continue to work with the RTO, the Residential Tenancies Office, to ensure that they have the support needed to ensure that both renters and landlords have the resources that they need. We think that there's also probably future changes to the act that could benefit both renters and landlords and help the market going forward. But that will come in the next few years. When that time comes, we'll be happy to engage in public consultation about those changes.

Question — Artificial intelligence use by Cabinet and caucus

Justin Ziegler: May 13 of this year, the Yukon Government issued a five-page directive to government workers on the issue of artificial intelligence in the workplace. Let me just say that I think this is really important and I'm glad to see the government providing guidance to its workers on this.

The directive lists the principles of the use of AI as transparency, public benefit, responsibility and accountability, fairness and reliability, safety, and security. These are all important considerations for public servants in undertaking their work. However, the policy appears to only apply to public servants.

Can the minister confirm if this policy also applies to Cabinet and their staff or if they have similar policy?

Hon. Currie Dixon: I am aware that the government has issued an internal policy for the use of AI. I'll have to go and review that policy to determine its application. When it comes to political offices, oftentimes, the political offices aren't subject to the same GAM and FAM policies that apply to government employees who are covered under the union and the collective agreement, but I'll have to confirm that.

Justin Ziegler: As the critic for the Department of Economy, Tourism and Culture, the obvious use of generative AI by Cabinet for public-facing work is upsetting. I speak for many artists and particularly photographers in the territory when I say that this practice is deeply disappointing. The Yukon Government already maintains a database of purchased images from photographers. If they don't have what they need in that database, the Yukon Party can put out a photo call and purchase new materials or hire a photographer. The Yukon is full of talented graphic designers, illustrators, and photographers. No computer can replace them. But every image or graphic generated by AI is an opportunity taken away from a Yukoner.

Will the Premier commit to following the Yukon Government's AI policy for his own ministers, MLAs, and staff?

Hon. Currie Dixon: I think I agree with much of what the member opposite asked in this question. If there's a case where we can be doing more to support local artists, we're certainly willing to do that and look at ways to ensure that we're doing that. When it comes to the partisan or caucus use of either graphics, images, or photographs, I'll have to confirm the current suite of policies and report back to the member.

Justin Ziegler: It's already hard enough for independent artists to protect their intellectual property, and it seems problematic that the Yukon Party Cabinet would make rules for the government but refuse to follow them themselves. The use of generative AI artwork is disrespectful to our arts community. AI cannot create something from nothing as humans can. Instead, it must steal samples and data from artists in order to generate images. This is years of stolen time, study, energy, and dedication into an artist's craft with no compensation or credit.

If this government is committed to supporting the arts, then they need to make a commitment to not use generative AI images anymore. Will the Premier commit today to discontinue the Yukon Party's use of generative AI?

Hon. Currie Dixon: I don't believe that we have been using generated AI recently. I know at one point over the last several years, we have, but if that practice is going on, I'll have a look at the policies that we have in our office and I'll make the necessary changes.

Question — Coroner's recommendations on Whitehorse Emergency Shelter

Debra-Leigh Reti: There was a coroner's inquest held in the spring of 2024 regarding the deaths of four Indigenous women at the emergency shelter. One of those women was my cousin. There were several recommendations that came out of that coroner's report. I asked about these recommendations in the fall of 2025, and the government said there was more work to be done.

Can the minister tell Yukoners whether the implementation of these recommendations is now complete?

Hon. Laura Lang: Thank you to the member opposite for that question, and as I said previously, I'm very sorry for both your loss but also the loss of the other Yukon families that have experienced terrible situations such as death at the shelter. I can confirm that I will look into the member's question and I will determine whether or not any steps have been taken based on the coroner's findings.

Debra-Leigh Reti: The last response from the Government of the Yukon posted to the coroner's website with regard to this inquest is from November 2024. The government said in the fall of 2025 that work was still ongoing to respond to the coroner's recommendations. The government has a legal obligation to ensure its full response is made public.

Why have no further updates been made to the public since November 2024?

Hon. Laura Lang: I will note that my colleague the Minister of Health and Social Services is currently unavailable. However, when he returns, I will be working with him to understand from his perspective where the status is of the coroner's findings in terms of implementation within the shelter. And I will, of course, as we do every day, confirm my willingness to work with him on ensuring the proper implementation of anything that will see improvements in a way that we do not see loss of life.

Debra-Leigh Reti: Despite the work in progress to respond to the coroner's recommendations, it is obvious that more needs to be done.

What other work is underway to ensure the safety of clients using the shelter is a top priority, whether in Health and Social Services or Justice?

Hon. Currie Dixon: Of course, the work that we're doing to look at the operations of 405 Alexander is comprehensive. Work involves the Department of Justice, the Department of Health and Social Services, and others. But importantly, it also involves our other levels of government, including First Nation governments. And so, we've been engaged through a number of committees with Yukon First Nation governments to look at the model that's being used at the shelter.

As a result of that work, we decided to extend the current contract and continue to evaluate the work that's being done currently as we move toward the possibility of a change in the operating model for that shelter following the work done by that committee. We'll continue to work with our partners, we'll continue to work with different branches of government, and we'll continue to work with First Nation governments to ensure that we're providing services that are appropriate, that are compassionate, and that recognize the importance of those services to the people who use them.

Question — Highway safety

Brent McDonald: Last week, there were four major traffic accidents that each led to the closure of the Alaska Highway at multiple locations near Whitehorse. Sadly, one included a fatality. We've also heard growing concerns from Yukoners about vehicles travelling at extreme speeds and drivers making unsafe passes on Yukon highways. Yukoners travel our highways every day, and everyone wants to get home safely.

What immediate action would the minister take to address traffic safety, dangerous speeding, and unsafe passing on Yukon highways?

Hon. Linda Benoit: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for their question. Safety on the Alaska Highway and all highways in the Yukon is always our top priority. However, as Whitehorse continues to grow, the Alaska Highway corridor is experiencing increased traffic volumes, new development, and greater use by pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. These changes reinforce the need for ongoing investments to improve safety, traffic flow, and transportation options along the corridor.

We do work with both the RCMP, in terms of enforcement, as well as the Department of Justice where appropriate to try to encourage more enforcement in the community. We can't speculate on the causes of these accidents, which are investigated by the RCMP, but each serious incident does underscore the importance of ongoing investments in safe infrastructure, driver awareness, and long-term corridor planning. We have completed a number of significant improvements along the Alaska Highway corridor in recent years, including upgraded intersections, pedestrian crossings, traffic signals, speed reductions in some areas, and expanded multi-use trail connections.

Brent McDonald: Enforcement is only one part of highway safety. The government is also responsible for making

sure drivers can clearly see where they are supposed to be on the road. Yukoners have raised concerns that lane markings on portions of Yukon highways have become so worn they are difficult to see. This becomes even more dangerous at night, in poor weather, and when vehicles are travelling at highway speeds. The Yukon Government's own roadway maintenance program recognizes that line painting helps drivers remain in their lanes and is an important part of highway safety.

Would the minister tell Yukoners which sections of Yukon highways are scheduled to be repainted, relined, and when that work may be completed?

Hon. Linda Benoit: We do spend a significant amount of time and resources doing line painting each season. I'm unsure what is scheduled for the future, but I can commit to get that to the member opposite.

Brent McDonald: We've also heard from Yukoners who have seen government vehicles travelling at excessive speeds and making unsafe passes on Yukon highways. Vehicles with government licence plates are easy to recognize. When one is driving dangerously, Yukoners need to know that their concerns will be taken seriously and properly investigated. It's not clear how these incidents are reported, who investigates them, or what happens when unsafe driving is documented. It's our understanding that Yukon Government fleet vehicles are equipped with GPS monitors to monitor their speed.

Can the minister tell us what happens when a government vehicle is identified as having been driven at an excessive speed?

Hon. Linda Benoit: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for their question. I can confirm there are GPS units in government vehicles that are monitoring speed and maintenance, among other things. I know that supervisors for department staff get reports when vehicles are speeding. I would have to get back to the member opposite on the process after that, as it becomes kind of a Public Service Commission or human resource process from there.

Question — Arctic sovereignty grid plan

Patti McLeod: Yukon is facing record electricity demand, limited grid capacity, and growing pressure from housing, critical minerals, and economic development projects. The government has repeatedly referenced the urgent infrastructure needs to support the current energy needs of the territory. Earlier this year, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources indicated that the total cost of the Yukon's needs is around \$1 billion. Yukoners deserve to know what the government's plan is to meet our future energy needs and what support it is seeking from Ottawa.

So, can the minister tell this House what Yukon's plan is and what they have asked the federal government to help deliver?

Hon. Ted Laking: The Yukon has a significant energy infrastructure deficit. The investments needed to meet our energy needs are simply too large for Yukon taxpayers and ratepayers to fund on their own. That is why we have asked the federal government to partner with us on what is called the Arctic sovereignty grid plan. The plan is shovel-ready and will

address Yukon's urgent needs and improve reliability and economic growth. The total estimated cost of the plan is approximately \$1.2 billion to \$1.6 billion. Once fully implemented, it would effectively double Yukon's generation capacity. The plan is necessary to support federal goals of growth and Arctic sovereignty, and that is why we have asked the federal government to partner with us so that it is not up to 50,000 Yukoners to shoulder the entire costs of delivering on national goals.

Patti McLeod: The Arctic sovereignty grid plan focuses on three critical investments that will increase capacity and improve reliability across Yukon's electricity system. First, it includes modernization of the Mayo hydro facility and replacement of the aging Wareham spillway, a critical piece of infrastructure supporting one of Yukon's key hydro assets. Second, it includes new Whitehorse Power Centres. Third, it includes the Atlin hydro expansion. While Yukon is not the project proponent, Yukon Energy would purchase the additional electricity generated by the project, adding about eight megawatts of renewable power to Yukon's grid. And together, these projects will strengthen reliability.

Speaker: Order.

Hon. Ted Laking: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you to the member opposite for succinctly summarizing a number of the key projects in the Arctic sovereignty grid plan. As the member opposite noted, it includes upgrades to the Mayo generating facility, which, of course, is 15 megawatts of clean energy that is essential to the stability of our grid. It includes moving forward with the Whitehorse Power Centres project, and it also includes the Atlin hydro project, which would add eight new megawatts of clean energy to our grid. These are essential projects, and we're looking forward to working with federal partners to advance them.

Patti McLeod: Now the minister has outlined a plan involving more than \$1 billion in energy infrastructure investments across the territory, and these are significant projects.

Can the minister explain why these investments are so important and how they will prepare Yukon for future growth?

Hon. Ted Laking: The Arctic sovereignty grid plan is necessary because Yukon's demand for electricity continues to grow. It will provide dependable backup, bring new clean energy onto the grid, and prevent an essential piece of infrastructure from failing. The plan will strengthen reliability, increase available capacity, and help ensure Yukon has the power needed for new homes, growing communities, and economic growth.

The reality is that the Yukon has continued to grow demand for electricity over the past decade without keeping up with our ability to generate and supply it. With a price tag of more than \$1 billion, these are not investments that Yukon taxpayers and ratepayers can fund on their own. That is why federal partnership is essential. These projects support Yukon's future while also advancing national priorities.

We have a plan. We know what needs to be built, and we are working to secure the partnerships needed to make it happen.

Question — Warming centre services

Debra-Leigh Reti: As winter arrives in Whitehorse, our minds turn to Yukoners who need services when the weather turns cold. One of the first decisions of the new government last winter was to cancel the use of the Jim Smith Building as a warming shelter. When asked about the decision, the minister said that there are plenty of places to warm up and that the service wasn't needed here.

Can the government confirm that the warming centre that operated in this building for the last several years will not open again this winter?

Hon. Currie Dixon: It's my understanding that the warming centre that was hosted in this building will not be here in the Jim Smith Building.

Debra-Leigh Reti: The folks who use the service are among the most vulnerable in our society. It doesn't make sense to reduce services to people who need them. While the government has talked about decentralizing services from the downtown shelter for the last year, the reality is nothing has happened. Anyone driving along Fourth Avenue can see the situation has gotten worse over the last 10 months.

We have a lot of empty space in the building we are standing in today. There is obviously a demand for more services. Why is the government so unwilling to open this building to people who need a place to stay warm?

Hon. Currie Dixon: When we debated this less than a year ago, the minister provided a long list of areas around the City of Whitehorse where warming facilities were available to those who needed it. Some NGOs provide certain degrees of services. Some government departments provide these services and, of course, this facility, this building is, of course, available and open to the public if someone needs to come in and warm up. But when it comes to the delivery of services to Yukoners, it was deemed that there are other more appropriate areas around the City of Whitehorse to deliver those services.

Debra-Leigh Reti: The priorities of this government are on full display this fall. Looking after people, though, who need a place to keep warm does not seem to be on the priority list.

Is there any expansion of services for this winter in Whitehorse, or is the plan to simply go with the same reduced level of services that were available last year?

Hon. Currie Dixon: If the member opposite has a suggested area where we can improve services, we're always willing to listen, but my understanding is that the status quo will continue.

Question — Government support for outfitting industry

Lane Tredger: Last fall, when Yukoners discovered that one of the Yukon's outfitting companies is partially owned by Donald Trump Jr., many were horrified. The thought that the animals and land of the Yukon are being used to fund his wealth was unacceptable to many Yukoners.

While Donald Trump Jr. is the most famous investor in Yukon outfitting businesses, in fact, many of the outfits in the Yukon are owned by investors from outside of the Yukon and even outside of Canada. That means that when wealthy tourists

pay tens of thousands of dollars to trophy hunt Yukon wildlife, money leaves the Yukon. This doesn't seem to make this Yukon Party government any less enthusiastic about outfitting. In just the last year, the Minister of Environment travelled to multiple American conferences to promote the Yukon as an outfitting destination.

Why is the Yukon Party supporting an industry which largely funnels money out of the Yukon and into the hands of out-of-territory and foreign investors?

Hon. Wade Istchenko: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for the question. The Yukon Party supports all industry. One of the oldest industries is the outfitting industry in the Yukon, and I've met with them since the election. I've met with the Fish and Game Association and many other organizations. It's part of our tourism industry. It's a key player in the industry, and we'll continue to work with them.

Lane Tredger: Yukoners of all walks of life deeply value the land, water, and animals of the Yukon. For many Yukoners, hunting is how they feed their families. For others, trips out on the land are how they connect with themselves, their friends, their family, or their spirituality. The chance to live alongside animals like moose, bison, sheep, and bears is something Yukoners treasure, and the chance to see those animals in person draws in thousands of tourists who do spend their money here and fund a significant part of our economy.

But there are competing pressures on those animals. Not all Yukoners who want or need to hunt get tags, and even those who do don't all succeed in getting an animal. As habitats are destroyed and the climate changes, tough decisions have to be made to balance hunting with keeping animal populations sustainable. But when animals are harvested by outfitters and their clients, they're not available to Yukoners.

Why is the Yukon Party so keen on supporting outside investors instead of prioritizing the needs of Yukoners?

Hon. Wade Istchenko: The Yukon is divided into approximately 450 game management subzones, allowing harvest to be managed at a local scale. Game management zones are used to establish area-specific management measures. Beyond game management zones, the harvest of some species, such as moose, sheep, and grizzly bear, is managed more broadly based on habitat management units that they occupy over several subzones. The Department of Environment is going to continue to monitor our wildlife populations through surveys, harvest reporting, research, and collaboration with all wildlife co-management partners, including outfitters.

Lane Tredger: Previously, the Minister of Environment has said that his department was doing a review of the outfitter quota process, but it's hard to imagine how that can be a neutral review given his constant enthusiasm for outfitting, and that's actually true of the whole party. The Yukon Party received tens of thousands of dollars in donations from outfitting companies during the last election, including thousands from the very same company that boasts Donald Trump Jr. at its helm.

How can Yukoners trust this government to prioritize their interests over outside investors in outfitting when the Yukon Party took tens of thousands of dollars in donations from the outfitting industry?

Hon. Wade Istchenko: Absolutely, we committed to working with the outfitters. The fiscal pressures became evident right after the election. There are significant cost-savings by having the department lead the development of the revised outfitter quota process. So, we hired an external facilitator, and this cost is much lower than using the Fish and Wildlife Management Board. But I do recognize the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board's important role in wildlife management in the Yukon, and, of course, I'm committed and this government is committed to ensuring meaningful involvement in and throughout the process. The first step was that we hired a facilitator, and then the next step is that we are going to work with our co-management partners, including First Nations, the board, our renewable resources councils, and, of course, our outfitting industry, as it apparently affects them.

Question — Wood Street Centre Advisory Committee

Doris Anderson: The Wood Street Centre school gives Yukon students opportunities to learn outside of a traditional classroom. Its programs help students explore new interests, build skills, and prepare for future careers.

Can the Minister of Education tell this House how community involvement could play a role in the future of the Wood Street Centre school?

Hon. Scott Kent: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, and I thank the Member for Porter Creek North for raising this issue here today. The Wood Street Centre has provided innovative and experiential learning opportunities for Yukon students for decades and remains an important part of our public education system.

Unlike Yukon schools with elected school councils or those governed by a board, the school does not currently have a formal governance body of its own, and that's why our government is establishing a Wood Street Centre Advisory Committee. The committee will bring together students, parents and guardians, Yukon First Nation representatives, community partners, and education staff to provide advice on programming, student experiences, as well as future opportunities for the centre. Most importantly, it will ensure that the voices of those who know and value the Wood Street Centre are helping to shape its future.

Doris Anderson: The Wood Street Centre has benefited from the involvement of students, families, and community partners for many years.

Can the minister advise this House how interested Yukoners can get involved in the new Wood Street Centre Advisory Committee?

Hon. Scott Kent: As we announced last week, we are currently accepting expressions of interest from Yukoners who want to serve on the inaugural Wood Street Centre Advisory Committee. Applications for these positions are open until October 30. The committee itself will begin meeting in November, and we encourage students, parents, Yukon First Nation representatives, community partners, and others with an interest in education to apply. This is an opportunity for Yukoners to help shape the future of the Wood Street Centre and support student success across the territory.

Doris Anderson: The Wood Street Centre has built a strong reputation through innovative programs and hands-on learning opportunities.

What does this minister hope this new advisory committee will accomplish for students and the future of the centre?

Hon. Scott Kent: Thank you again. So, our goal is to ensure the Wood Street Centre continues to evolve alongside the needs of Yukon students and communities. The advisory committee will strengthen connections between the centre and the students, families, Yukon First Nations, and community organizations that help make its programs successful. The inclusion of student representatives and First Nation voices will help ensure a wide range of perspectives are reflected in future discussions and planning. So, by bringing all those voices together, we can continue building on the Wood Street Centre's strong foundation and ensure Yukon students benefit from innovative, engaging, and relevant learning opportunities for years to come.

Question — Psychiatric services for youth

Kate White: Our office has heard from multiple different families over the summer months, each with a teenager in psychiatric crisis. In each of these cases, they were kids who were suicidal and brought to the hospital by parents who were terrified and doing everything right. In each case, that child was sent home, and the family was told that no psychiatrist would be available to see them for months.

These are not numbers on a spreadsheet; these are parents lying awake at night watching their child, fearing for their child's life, and feeling helpless because the system told them that's the only option that they have. When a family does everything right and still ends up with nothing, that's not a gap; it's a failure.

Can this government confirm how many young people in Yukon are currently waiting for psychiatric care and how long those wait-lists are?

Hon. Currie Dixon: Of course, youth mental wellness is important to us, important to this government, and is a part of our mandate commitment. This crucial work includes prevention, early intervention, counselling, crisis response, and partnerships with Yukon First Nations and community organizations. Youth experiencing mental health emergencies can access the Whitehorse General Hospital emergency department for services 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including dedicated mental health nursing assessment and stabilization, with access to psychiatric consultation as required. Youth can also access confidential 24/7 mental health counselling and crisis support by phone in both English and French.

When it comes to the services that the member has referred to as being unavailable, that's certainly something I can look into with the department and provide a more comprehensive response at a later date.

Kate White: Although I appreciate that the Premier says that mental health is a priority for his government, the reality is a stark contrast.

When a suicidal teenager is turned away from the hospital because there is no psychiatrist available and there is no other option offered, no transfer, no outside territorial referral, no

interim support of any kind, that tells families something very different. So, wait and hope, but that isn't a plan.

Can the Premier explain what protocol, if any, exists for a young person in psychiatric crisis when local care isn't available, or would the Premier prefer to explain to families why this service doesn't exist?

Hon. Currie Dixon: While we endeavour to ensure that services are available as often as they can be, we know that from time to time that may not be the case. I am aware that youth can access confidential 24/7 mental health counselling and crisis support by phone in both French and English, 24/7. So, there are services available. I'm also aware that Lynx Health locally provides child and adolescent psychiatric services for Yukon youth, including psychiatric assessment, treatment, and follow-up, virtual care for youth and communities, and consultation at Whitehorse General Hospital for more complex or acute mental health needs.

If there are instances that the member comes across in the course of her time as MLA, she's certainly able to provide us with that information. If there are cases where folks didn't receive the services they should have, we're happy to learn about that so we can try to correct it.

Kate White: The challenge is that this is an example of the failures in the system. I have written to the minister, I have sent notes, and I have asked for help, and so have those families. The problem right now is that there are gaps — not just gaps — there are absolute canyons in support for young people in psychosis.

There are emergency measures that this government could be implementing right now: outside referrals to youth hospitals, telehealth, psychiatric support, emergency transport for youth in crisis, or even respite or care to support families. I appreciate that the Premier said that there are many services that exist, but I'm here to say that they don't.

Is the Premier committed to putting emergency measures in place so that the next time a family walks into the emergency room with a suicidal child, they're not sent home without supports?

Hon. Currie Dixon: I'll carefully review the list of suggested improvements that the member opposite has made and ask the minister to look carefully at those and consider whether any improvements should be made by the government.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE LEADERS' REPORT ON LENGTH OF SITTING

Hon. Scott Kent: I rise pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 75(4) to inform the House that the House Leaders have met for the purpose of achieving agreement on the maximum number of sitting days for the current Sitting. The result is that the 2026 Fall Sitting should be a maximum of 29 sitting days, with the 29th sitting day being Thursday, November 26, 2026.

Speaker: Accordingly, I declare the current Sitting shall be a maximum of 29 sitting days, with the 29th sitting day being Thursday, November 26, 2026.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS — MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 175 — Country residential lot development

Clerk: Motion No. 175, standing in the name of Adam Gerle.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Porter Creek South: THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with the City of Whitehorse and other partners to develop new country residential lots for housing development.

Adam Gerle: Madam Speaker, the Yukon has undeniably been faced with a severe housing shortage for many years. Housing affordability and availability remain significant challenges for many Yukoners. With a rapid population increase over the last decade in the territory, Yukoners saw limited availability of both homes for sale and rental options. Accessing land for building has been difficult. Costs of land and construction materials have risen, making building difficult. Those supplying the rental market have not been able to keep up with these increases in recent years, and the current government is now trying to play catch-up on housing availability, looking at how each piece fits into the bigger picture of housing. Ensuring country residential lots are available is just one of these many pieces.

Families are struggling to find homes that meet their needs. Young people are finding it difficult to establish themselves, and people who want to build their own homes are faced with limited options. For many years, government focused on building social housing. This has resulted in a critical shortage of affordable rental housing, apartments, townhouses, and serviced residential lots in our community. We have made strides to address this shortage. While there is still more to do, we need to keep looking at housing across the spectrum.

There will always be a demand for a range of house sizes, lot sizes, locations, and development models. Yukoners have diverse housing needs and aspirations. Some prefer urban living, but many Yukoners want the space and lifestyle of country life. A healthy housing system should provide opportunities for both.

Families grow and change, and so do their needs and wants. Many skilled workers, entrepreneurs, tradespeople, and families are looking for housing options that provide additional space for equipment, home-based businesses, gardens, or multigenerational living. Providing those options supports families and businesses. It helps Yukon attract and retain the people our economy needs.

The demand is there, but the land is not. When supply is limited, prices rise for everyone, not just those on existing lots but for everyone across the housing spectrum. Housing opportunities should not be limited only to those with significant resources. Creating additional housing options will improve access and choice for all residents regardless of where they choose to live. Having the opportunity to live outside an urban centre and enjoy the space and lifestyle our territory is known for is a dream for many Yukoners, but that dream is only achievable if the land is available for them to act on it.

We need to be proactive when it comes to land development. Working together with the City of Whitehorse and Yukon First Nations to identify land for future development should be happening now to ensure the lots are there when they are wanted and needed. Land planning, assessments, consultation, design, permitting, and construction take time. If Yukon wants country residential options available 10 years from now, planning must begin today. Identifying the land is the first step. Collaborative work with Yukon First Nations, the municipality, rural residents, and stakeholders must also take place simultaneously to ensure that land development is informed by local priorities, respects rights and interests, and supports responsible growth in the areas identified.

We must turn attention to where Yukoners are going to live in years or even decades from now. Country residential development is not a substitute for affordable housing or rental housing. It is one component of a balanced housing strategy that recognizes the diverse needs of Yukon residents. As families outgrow their homes or look to move out of the city centre, new housing opportunities open up for those looking to get into the market on a smaller scale. Expanding housing choices and ensuring the availability of suitable residential land will help reduce barriers to home ownership and improve overall housing availability.

I'm happy to open the door to my colleagues to hear their thoughts on country residential lot development as another important part of the housing picture in the Yukon.

Carmen Gustafson: I rise to speak on Motion No. 175. I will not be supporting this motion, as it is not in alignment with the City of Whitehorse official community plan and is frankly out of touch with the real pressing needs for housing in this territory.

This morning, I looked at the listings on realtor.ca. For the rural residential properties that are listed, they are all listed at or above \$1 million. To afford a million-dollar mortgage or to build on a lot a million-dollar house, a household needs a gross income of around \$19,000 a month or just under \$228,000 a year. That's without accounting for heating costs or existing personal debt. That's also with a 20-percent down payment. I'm sure that there is a desire for this type of housing — I myself wouldn't mind living out of town — certainly for households that can comfortably afford it — I don't suggest there aren't any — but I'm not sure that this is a priority for the city or the territory to be putting resources into at this time.

Developing rural residential lots is expensive and not a good use of municipal or territorial funds. Prioritizing wants instead of needs seems to be a theme of this government and the members opposite, even while they keep telling us that the coffers are empty.

The Whitehorse *Housing Needs Assessment* from January 2026 identifies a number of urgent housing challenges facing the city. The population grew by 21.2 percent between 2011 and 2021 and is projected to reach more than 48,000 residents by 2041. To meet that growth, the city estimates that more than 3,000 additional homes will be needed between 2026 and 2031.

The report highlights a significant pressure across the housing continuum. Nearly 20 percent of renter households are

spending more than 30 percent of their income on shelter costs. Home ownership remains out of reach for many Yukoners, with a household income of approximately \$130,000 required to afford the average condo in 2024. Vacancy rates have remained persistently low, rental rates continue to rise, and wait-lists for Yukon Housing Corporation units remain lengthy. There is a growing need for supportive, accessible, and affordable housing options.

The assessment also found that an average of 167 people are experiencing homelessness in Whitehorse and identified significant gaps in supportive housing services. There are substantial challenges that require attention from all levels of government.

When I review this list of priorities, I believe it's important to consider where government collaboration and resources are most urgently needed. While the development of additional country residential lots may be a topic of interest to some residents, it doesn't appear to be among the most pressing priorities identified by the municipality itself. Housing that is high-density and affordable, initiatives that bring down the cost of living, and plans that support and eliminate homelessness seem to be areas of higher priority.

We can look to the official community plan for the City of Whitehorse. The development of country residential lots generally falls under the responsibility of the municipal and local governments. So, collaboration with the City of Whitehorse can be beneficial when requested, and municipalities are already responsible for planning and managing this type of development within their own jurisdictions.

Among the goals for development and growth of the City of Whitehorse are reducing urban sprawl, higher density development focused on the urban core and centres, and neighbourhoods designed for the use of active transport and transit. It says that — quote: "Development in rural areas will generally not be connected to municipal services." Among the goals for housing for the City of Whitehorse in the official community plan are housing options that are financially attainable. Arguably, developing rural residential lots doesn't fit into the goals for the official community plan for the City of Whitehorse.

Country residential lots are specifically zoned properties located outside of urban residential neighbourhoods and town centres. The *Whitehorse 2040 Official Community Plan* establishes policies governing rural and residential development, including lot sizes, zoning requirements, waste management, and other regulatory considerations. The creation of new residential lots often requires extensive planning work, including geotechnical and hydrological studies, to ensure that properties can safely support septic systems, sewage disposal fields, and reliable water sources.

There are also broader implications associated with country residential development. Again, the *Whitehorse 2040 Official Community Plan* notes that low-density development outside urban centres can contribute to congestion, carbon emissions, air pollution, and does not support transit or the city's sustainability goals. Expanding country residential development can also place additional pressure on public infrastructure and services, including transportation networks, schools, health care facilities, and commercial services.

Just today, we heard about the congestion and the safety concerns on the Alaska Highway. Additional country residential lots that use the highway will place additional pressure and create additional safety concerns on those highways.

As we consider this motion to encourage additional country residential development, we should first ask whether existing infrastructure has the capacity to support that growth. Throughout this Sitting and the last Sitting, we discussed challenges facing public transit, including service disruptions and route cancellations. Given these realities, is expanding country residential development the best way to support families, students, and workers who depend on reliable access to schools, health care, and other essential services?

I think it's also important to consider the views of the governments that would be most directly affected by this motion. The territorial government has important responsibilities, but so too do municipalities and First Nation governments. Decisions with land use implications should respect those roles and be guided by the priorities of the communities involved. In fact, the government made a similar argument during debate on an Official Opposition-proposed moratorium on mineral staking and exploration within municipal boundaries on April 15, 2026. The Premier suggested that the motion raised concerns about process, lack of supporting evidence, no consultation, and unintended consequences, and he went on to suggest that there was no request from the municipality or a First Nation government for that. So, the motion got ahead of that work rather than expecting it.

While the Premier was speaking about a different issue, I believe the same principle is highly relevant here. Before advancing a motion that encourages additional country residential development, we should ask whether municipalities, First Nation governments, or which local residents have requested this action. Have any of these governments identified country residential development as a priority? Have they asked the territorial government to become involved? The official community plan doesn't seem to support it.

These questions matter, because land use planning is already guided by official community plans, zoning processes, municipal governments, and First Nation governments. What may appear to be a straightforward proposal can carry significant governance, infrastructure, environmental, and financial implications. Moving ahead without clear requests from affected governments risks creating unintended consequences and undermining existing planning processes and documents that are already in place. The city is working with First Nation governments on planning for the north and south growth areas to accommodate additional development according to the goals, strategies, and priorities identified in the official community plan.

I do not dispute that there are some Yukoners who would like rural residential lots to be available. It's just that at this time, with the continued pressing challenges facing Yukoners and the City of Whitehorse, frankly, the development of rural residential lots seems to be a misstep and out of line with the priorities of the City of Whitehorse and the development of attainable, affordable housing that so many Yukoners need. Rural residential lots, while a nice want, should really not be a

priority of this government, and I will not be supporting this motion.

Debra-Leigh Reti: I rise today to speak to this motion.

Housing remains one of the most pressing challenges facing Yukoners, and developing more lots of every kind, including country residential lots, is most likely needed as well. But in conversation yesterday with colleagues, we talked about how it would be better to see more affordable apartment buildings coming forward.

It is my understanding that the Government of Yukon and the City of Whitehorse have long worked together on lot development. So, I should hope that this motion is not encouraging the government to do something that it is not already doing, and I hope that the relationship with the city is continuing and will be central going forward. But I do want to offer one note of caution: When the Government of Yukon works with the city, that work should begin early and respect the city's planning processes. Too often already, we've seen the territorial government or government MLAs stepping into the city's jurisdiction, ignoring or trying to override existing plans and processes. The city has jurisdiction over planning and zoning to determine how and where it grows and develops. The city sets this out in its official community plan as well as specific community and area plans. The Yukon Government should be looking at these as the foundation for all work going forward and not looking to impose its own ideas of what is best for the city.

I would also remind the House that during the election, the Yukon Party committed to a rural land development strategy, and to my knowledge, this has not been actioned. Yukoners waiting for a lot will want to see those commitments delivered.

With that said, I will support this motion and I look forward to seeing some action on this topic.

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I rise today to speak to Motion No. 175.

Obviously, Whitehorse is experiencing significant growth, and meeting the housing needs of Yukon residents requires a coordinated and collaborative approach. The Government of Yukon recognizes the importance of ensuring adequate supply of land for housing development and is prioritizing this work, including opportunities for country residential living. Community Services is actively working with Energy, Mines and Resources, Yukon First Nations, municipalities, industries, developers, and other partners to better understand the opportunities and challenges associated with land development across the territory in both a rural land development study and in Whitehorse.

This year, Community Services has done some work to develop mapping to identify Whitehorse periphery country residential areas that can be developed. Fourteen sites were identified and five were shortlisted for feasibility studies. We look forward to continuing to do that work with our partners at the city within the city boundaries.

Importantly, the Government of Yukon already has a number of housing and land development projects underway and are expected to deliver approximately 800 new housing units with our partners. We continue this work; we remain committed to exploring opportunities with the City of Whitehorse and other partners to provide different types of lots

for building as well as country residential development as options for Yukoners.

Hon. Scott Kent: I rise to speak to this motion brought forward by the Member for Porter Creek South in support of that motion.

The riding that I represent, Copperbelt South, is largely country residential within city limits, with the exception of the good folks in Lobird. That said, there is a proposed country residential development by the owner of the Lobird Trailer Park that is currently making its way through YESAB, so there are some additional larger lots that they're hoping to make available in behind the trailer park in the near future.

Listening to the Member for Riverdale North, she seems to be very much pigeonholing Yukoners into one particular type of housing. I think it's possible for us to develop multiple types of housing at one time to meet the needs across the housing continuum.

With my ministerial hat on for Yukon Housing, we are increasing the supply of affordable housing through two major capital projects in Whitehorse and Dawson City, with completion anticipated in the fall and winter of this year. Together, these modern high-density and energy-efficient projects will add 79 rent-geared-to-income units for the territory. There's also the duplex under development in Burwash Landing to support staff. As I mentioned, the Korbo Apartments in Dawson will have 34 community housing rent-geared-to-income units, expected to be completed early in the new year. The Ryder Apartments here in Whitehorse are 45 community housing rent-geared-to-income units in Whitehorse.

Then we have partner-led projects as well that are coming online. Winter Crossing, which is being built by the Da Daghay Development Corporation — the development corporation of the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council — will have 105 affordable rent-geared-to-income or market-rent units that will become available in Whistle Bend. The Yukon Housing Corporation will assume responsibility for 75 of those units and will be able to add those to our rent-geared-to-income portfolio. There's The Hearth, which is operated by Safe at Home, which provides 67 supportive housing units in Whitehorse. Then there's Project 1096, which is run by the Northern Community Land Trust Society. It's a 32-unit development in Whistle Bend of permanently affordable multi-family condominiums. Those are some of the opportunities that exist within Yukon Housing and the partners.

I know that the Member for Porter Creek South earlier today in a member's statement mentioned the development at Range Point next to the Northland Trailer Park that will add another 300 units. So, we are looking at densification within the city.

Yesterday during debate and last week, we talked about the housing initiatives fund, and that will increase the supply of affordable housing across the territory by supporting partner- and community-led housing developments. The ninth intake for that fund concluded on March 16 of this year, so the Government of Yukon is investing over \$5.1 million in partner-led housing projects across the territory as a result of that. Combined, that funding alone will help construct 87 new homes, including 54 affordable homes. This supply of

affordable housing across the territory responds to ongoing needs in Yukon communities.

Ahead of the next intake scheduled for later this fall, Yukon Housing will be undertaking program improvements that we've spoken about, and I look forward to reporting back to the House very soon on those.

Just to give an example: Since 2018, when the housing initiatives fund was introduced, it has committed over \$39 million in funding to support housing development across the territory. This investment has helped unlock more than \$350 million in proponent spending and has supported the development of 992 new housing units. Of those, 769 are deemed to be affordable.

Madam Speaker, you can see that, unlike what the Member for Riverdale North was saying about how we only have to focus on one thing, we believe that we can focus on the housing needs of Yukoners no matter where they are on the housing continuum. Of course, Whistle Bend, Riverdale, Copper Ridge, Granger, Porter Creek, and other neighbourhoods in the Whitehorse area are beautiful neighbourhoods, and many people choose to live in those for different reasons — downtown as well, given the proximity to work or other opportunities. There are many people, including many of my constituents, who enjoy living in country residential, and I think there are others who currently reside in some of the other neighbourhoods in Whitehorse who wouldn't mind some country residential opportunities.

This motion contemplates working with the City of Whitehorse and other governments — the First Nation governments. There are opportunities, as the Minister of Community Services mentioned, not only within Whitehorse but outside of Whitehorse in the periphery as well. Those discussions will have to be had. Obviously, an awful lot of dialogue will have to take place with not only the City of Whitehorse, the First Nations, and other partners, but, of course, it's extremely important to engage early and engage often with residents who may be affected. I know that is something that I learned during my time in Opposition when some infill lots were scheduled for Mary Lake and Cowley Creek. There was an awful lot of engagement that those residents were looking for, and I know that, again, if there are plans in proximity to people's existing homes, that engagement will have to take place as well.

I thank the Member for Porter Creek South for bringing forward this important motion, which adds another layer of housing opportunities for Yukoners. Unlike the NDP, we support opportunities for Yukoners no matter where they are in the housing continuum — whether it's transitional and emergency shelters all the way through to home ownership and country residential or condo living — whatever they prefer. I don't think it would be prudent for us to shut down one opportunity at the expense of others, and we're not doing that. We're proceeding with multiple opportunities no matter where Yukoners or Whitehorse residents find themselves on the housing continuum.

Hon. Jen Gehmair: I rise today to speak to Motion No. 175.

Yukoners are undoubtedly in need of more housing options, including opportunities for country residential across

the entire territory. I agree; the Government of Yukon should work with the City of Whitehorse and other partners to identify where new lots can be developed. This work must also include meaningful collaboration with the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and the Kwanlin Dün First Nation. We must also listen to residents and consider access, infrastructure services, and character of existing neighbourhoods. Affordability and access must remain central to this work. Country residential living has traditionally been within reach for working families and retirees, without requiring people to spend everything they have to secure a home and a piece of land.

We should also examine opportunities within existing country residential areas, where land is suitable and planning requirements can be met. Families and retirees who want to diversify their options in country residential should have a reasonable path to do so. This could allow parents to create lots for their children, help seniors remain close to their homes and, as their needs change, add housing while making use of existing roads and services. This can also increase rental opportunities outside of the city core and reduce strain on city services.

Finding the right balance will require careful planning and partnership. Country residential lots are only one part of the Yukon's response to housing needs, but they can give people more choices and create opportunities for different generations to live near and support one another. Working with municipalities, local advisory councils, and Yukon First Nation governments can help us find a balance between housing supply, affordability, access, and needs of the region.

I appreciate the member for bringing this forward, and I look forward to supporting it.

Kate White: Today, as I wade into Motion No. 175, I'll note a couple things. In the wording, it says that this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with the City of Whitehorse and other partners to develop new country residential lots for housing development. So, one of the things is that it's not to investigate, it's not to collaborate, and it's not to plan; it's straight up to develop.

So, in listening to some of the arguments today and some of the words, it's interesting, because it seems that Government members didn't necessarily like their words turned back on them when they were reflected. I think about the things that have been said to the Official Opposition in time of bringing things forward, including a lot of things that we've heard repeated and reflected back. So, the idea that country residential lots at this point in time, with the housing prices and land development prices in the City of Whitehorse, are affordable in any capacity — I mean, I love that; I wish it were true, but it's not. I'm just going to put this out there, because I think this is what I heard, and if that was the case, then that would be problematic. But my understanding from the Member for Porter Creek South was possibly that there was too much time spent building social housing and that was the reason why there was a shortage of housing. I'm happy for him to correct me in his closing statement, because that seems like a pretty brash statement there.

When we think about all the things facing the City of Whitehorse — I was just online looking at their *Housing Needs Assessment*, their official community plan, and others, and the one thing that they don't say right off the top is that what we

need more than anything is country residential lots. I think about all the times I've been to AYC and I've heard municipalities say that one of the challenges they face is people who live on the outskirts of municipalities who use the resources — services and stuff within the municipality — but aren't paying those same property taxes. I heard that often from not just rural Yukon but from the City of Whitehorse as well.

So today, when we have this motion ahead of us, language does matter, and the fact that it was chosen, that it was “develop” — it wasn't about “plan”, “investigate”, or any other language could have been chosen — I think it's interesting that this is a priority. Especially, I note that the Member for Porter Creek South, in speaking about his riding, hasn't — I think about the folks in Northland who, because of changes to legislation, are going to be feeling a crunch, but that's not what he's talking about; he's talking about new country residential lots and not investigating, not working together to look at, straight up developing. It's an action word; it has direction there, and frankly, we don't support it. They could have chosen how to word it in different ways. They have told us before that, you know, you have to be careful with the wording of motions, and we don't disagree. So, this is an example where the Member for Porter Creek South is dictating an action on others — City of Whitehorse and other partners — to develop country residential lots. So, it's the problem I have.

I have a lot more to say about housing this afternoon, but we will not be supporting this motion.

Hon. Ted Laking: I appreciate the ability to talk about this today. I think that this is a great opportunity. In fact, it's one that came up during the election and one that we made commitments to during the election as well.

For the members opposite, I think it's important to reflect on the fact that you can walk and chew bubble gum at the same time. So, putting work into one type of lot development does not take away from the work of another type of lot development.

For just real-world examples: Earlier this year, we released 43 residential lots in Haines Junction. We did seven lots through a builders' lottery, which included high-density condo and multi-residential lots as well. We put 10 other residential lots on the market in August, and we're moving forward with phases 12 and 13 in Whistle Bend, which will include high-density multi-residential lots that will provide over 300 new units of housing. All of these things are not mutually exclusive. In fact, it makes sense to move forward with all types of lots to support all types of needs in the housing market, and that's how you make a healthy housing market.

I would encourage the members opposite to reconsider and not take an ideological or partisan position to oppose a motion just because they don't necessarily want to support this type of housing. But I think it would be a strange thing for sure for Yukoners to notice the Yukon NDP vote against lot development. That is a strange thing, and certainly, I think that would be the first time I've heard of that happening in this House.

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

Adam Gerle: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I'd like to also thank my fellow members for sharing their thoughts and insights on this motion.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Currie Dixon: Agree.

Hon. Scott Kent: Agree.

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Agree.

Hon. Linda Benoit: Agree.

Hon. Ted Laking: Agree.

Patti McLeod: Agree.

Hon. Laura Lang: Agree.

Hon. Jen Gehmair: Agree.

Hon. Wade Istchenko: Agree.

Adam Gerle: Agree.

Doris Anderson: Agree.

Tyler Porter: Agree.

Kate White: Disagree.

Lane Tredger: Disagree.

Brent McDonald: Disagree.

Linda Moen: Disagree.

Carmen Gustafson: Disagree.

Justin Ziegler: Désaccord.

Debra-Leigh Reti: Agree.

Clerk: Madam Speaker, the results are 13 yeas, six nays.

Speaker: The yeas have it.

I declare the motion carried.

Motion No. 175 agreed to

Motion No. 174 — Red tape reduction framework

Clerk: Motion No. 174, standing in the name of Patti McLeod.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Watson Lake-Ross River-Faro:

THAT this House supports the Government of Yukon's creation of a red tape reduction framework.

Patti McLeod: Madam Speaker, I rise to speak to Motion No. 174, which reads as follows:

THAT this House supports the Government of Yukon's creation of a red tape reduction framework.

No matter where we find ourselves in the Yukon, we're likely to encounter some form of red tape. It can be as simple as waiting in line at Motor Vehicles to renew a driver's licence or as complex as completing paperwork for multiple permits across several different government departments. Yukoners and Yukon businesses should be able to spend less time navigating government processes and more time focused on what matters to them. Each individual requirement might seem small — not a big deal — but together, they cost Yukoners time that they can never get back.

Red tape is unnecessary government rules, processes, and paperwork that add time, cost, and complexity without enough public benefit to justify them. Now, not every rule is red tape.

Many rules protect people, but I regularly help constituents navigate rules and processes that seem to exist for the sake of the rule or process itself, and that leaves us all frustrated.

My constituents are busy working, raising families, and running businesses. They shouldn't need to become experts in every government process just to get a straightforward answer. In some cases, the process has no real purpose at all. That wastes people's time, wastes government resources, and wastes taxpayers' dollars. For these Yukoners, an unnecessarily complicated government process is not simply an inconvenience; it can be a real barrier to getting things done. Government processes should be clear, practical, and accessible regardless of where in the Yukon you live.

I first became the MLA for Watson Lake in 2011, and since then, I have represented three communities, knocked on thousands of doors, and spoken with Yukoners across the territory. In the lead-up to the 2025 election, one message was loud and clear: People have had enough of red tape. Businesses feel it, non-profits feel it, municipalities feel it, Yukoners feel it.

Red tape reduction isn't about getting rid of necessary rules; it's about eliminating unnecessary barriers. To get the job started, we need a way to identify it, measure it, and eliminate it. A red tape reduction framework is a practical, common-sense way to start that work. It's a step that I hope all members in this House can support.

Justin Ziegler: I rise as the Official Opposition critic for Economy, Tourism and Culture.

I will say at the start that we support the idea behind this motion. I think that nobody in this House wants Yukon businesses or Yukoners to spend their time on forms instead of on their work or their regular life. But I want to explain what our support means, because this motion asks us to support a framework that does not exist yet.

There is a webpage on Yukon.ca that was published by the department last April. It has a feedback form, an e-mail address, and it says that the government is in — I quote: “discovery phase” — collecting information on where Yukoners think the burden is. That's a good start, but that's not a framework. The page also gives a definition. It says that “red tape” is “... time, effort and cost it takes to access government programs; follow government rules; and complete required processes.” I want to give one example that fits this definition very well, and I think it's interesting that the first example comes from this side of the House. The Yukon business investment tax credit — that I'm calling BITC — lets Yukoners invest in local businesses and get a 25-percent tax credit. This tool allows local money to work for local businesses, but since 2020, only two businesses have used it. The Minister of Economy, Tourism and Culture has described it as — and I quote: “... an administratively burdensome program...”

For a small business, the process requires legal and financial advice, time, and paperwork that many simply do not have the capacity for. The money is there, the program is there, and small businesses simply don't use it. Time, effort, and cost to access a government program — that is the government's own definition of “red tape”.

At the same time, some rules exist for good reasons. The minister has said that reducing red tape — and I quote: “...needs to also be measured against health, safety, and

accountability...” I agree. Rules protect workers, tenants, consumers, the land, and generally speaking, they protect public money. So, the limits are there. The minister names health, safety, and accountability. The government's page names health, safety, and the environment. I think all of these points are right and all should remain. But right now, they are spread across a webpage and a few statements, and I think everyone wishes that there would be less red tape. The hard part is deciding on a case-by-case basis whether a rule protects people or only slows them down.

I have to admit that I am looking forward to the day when one single definition arises from the government about what “red tape” precisely is, and that's why a framework matters. It should write these limits down in one place as one test and apply that same test to every rule, including the government's own rule. When this framework is tabled, that is what we will be looking for.

First, if the limits are health, safety, the environment, and accountability — and I will repeat this: and accountability — put all of them in the framework and apply them to every change, not only some of the changes.

Second, I want to talk about service delivery. This is government's own processes, its forms, its applications, its programs, and how long Yukoners wait for an answer. This is where we can make real progress without removing anyone's protection.

When we talk about red tape, we usually think about businesses, but some of the heaviest red tape in the Yukon falls on people trying to access support — a senior trying to apply for a benefit online, a parent filling out a form that asks for the same information three times, a person with a disability asked to prove again something that has not changed, someone in a community where the office is only open a few hours or only in Whitehorse, and someone who has to do all of this in their second language. At some point, people decide it is not worth the trouble — they do not apply; they do not ask — and I think this red tape should also be taken into consideration in the framework. Sometimes, the answer is not removing a step; it's helping people get through it. Sometimes, it is making the process more accessible — simple language, services in French, a phone number where a real person answers, an office that is open when people can actually come, et cetera.

Third, the rules themselves. Some should be reviewed, but every rule was written to protect someone or something. When a rule is reviewed, the people it protects should be at the table — not only the people who find it inconvenient but workers, tenants, First Nation governments, and communities as well as businesses.

I think success should not be measured by how many rules are removed, because we've heard that before; it should actually be measured by what changes for people: time saved, money saved, and protections kept.

Lastly, we'll be looking at what reporting looks like in the framework — which rules were reviewed, which were changed, which were kept, and why. All of this depends on one thing: The framework has to be tabled. Right now, the motion asks us to support something with no dates and no commitments to show us. Yukoners who took the time to fill out the government's form deserve to know what happened to their input.

Amendment proposed

Justin Ziegler: I move:

THAT Motion No. 174 be amended by:

(1) replacing the phrase “supports the Government of Yukon’s creation of a” with the phrase “urges the Government of Yukon to table by the 2027 Fall Sitting of the Legislative Assembly the government’s”; and

(2) adding after the word “framework” the phrase “and a summary of the input on red tape reduction received from Yukoners”.

Speaker: The amendment is in order.

It has been moved by the Member for Riverdale South:

THAT Motion No. 174 be amended by:

(1) replacing the phrase “supports the Government of Yukon’s creation of a” with the phrase “urges the Government of Yukon to table by the 2027 Fall Sitting of the Legislative Assembly the government’s”; and

(2) adding after the word “framework” the phrase “and a summary of the input on red tape reduction received from Yukoners”.

Justin Ziegler: This amendment is simple despite what it looked like, and I want to be clear about what it does and what it does not do. It does not change the motion. We still support the creation of a red tape reduction framework. It does not tell the government what to put in the framework. It asks for two things only: that the framework comes to this House and that Yukoners can see a summary of what they told the government.

On the timeline, what the government called the “discovery phase” started in April 2026. The 2027 Fall Sitting is a year and a half from that. We’re not expecting government to be finished cutting red tape by then — and I think nobody is — but we’re expecting a plan to be tabled by then. On the summary of input, I’m not asking for names or private submissions; I’m asking for the themes: What did Yukoners and businesses say? Where do they see the most burden? — all of that being information that the government is already collecting since April 2026.

The government page itself says that input may help future improvements. It does use the word “may”. In French, we would call this kind of commitment rather tepid, lukewarm. I’m not sure how this translates into English, but I said it.

The issue at hand, really, is that Yukoners who fill out the form should not have to guess whether anyone read their submission. If this framework is good, the government should be proud to table it here and let us debate it — and I would be happy to debate it. If members on the other side support a red tape reduction framework, I do not see why they would oppose bringing it into this House. I hope all members will support this amendment.

Hon. Currie Dixon: I appreciate the member putting forward the amendment. However, I feel that, in discussion with the mover of the motion initially, this amendment does change the intent of the motion, and so we won’t be supporting it. I will note that the minister does intend to table the framework eventually. That will certainly happen, but at this point, we’ll disagree with the amendment.

Kate White: In speaking specifically to the amendment, I actually believe it really strengthens the point for all the reasons

that my colleague listed. We’ve been in here in debate, and we’ve heard different government ministers talk about red tape reduction or what is or is not red tape and the importance of this framework and the importance of making service delivery better for Yukoners trying to access things. We don’t disagree.

We believe that, by adding this language to the existing motion, it strengthens it. What it does is say to Yukoners that government is committed to making sure that the framework comes here in a timely fashion and that all that information that people are putting in online is actually being honoured. It’s being collected, it’s being tabulated, and it will help influence what that framework looks like.

So today, I see this as an opportunity for government. They have said before that they hear good ideas from all sides. Well, here’s a good idea. This is an opportunity to take a framework that is pretty vague, to put some more details on it and some timelines, and to make sure that there’s deliverables behind it.

I’m happy to say that I’ll be supporting the amendment when we get to the voting portion, and I hope that some of the government members change their minds.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question on the amendment?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Currie Dixon: Disagree.

Hon. Scott Kent: Disagree.

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Disagree.

Hon. Linda Benoit: Disagree.

Hon. Ted Laking: Disagree.

Patti McLeod: Disagree.

Hon. Laura Lang: Disagree.

Hon. Jen Gehmair: Disagree.

Hon. Wade Istchenko: Disagree.

Adam Gerle: Disagree.

Doris Anderson: Disagree.

Tyler Porter: Disagree.

Kate White: Agree.

Lane Tredger: Agree.

Brent McDonald: Agree.

Linda Moen: Agree.

Carmen Gustafson: Agree.

Justin Ziegler: Accord.

Debra-Leigh Reti: Agree.

Clerk: Madam Speaker, the results are seven yea, 12 nay.

Speaker: The nays have it.

I declare the amendment defeated.

Amendment to Motion No. 174 negatived

Speaker: Is there any further debate on the main motion?

Hon. Jen Gehmair: I rise today in support of Motion No 174.

Red tape is not an abstract idea for the person trying to get something done. It can mean repeating information from another form, multiple assessments, waiting for a process to move forward, meeting with multiple departments or programs for the same issue, trying to figure out which office to contact — and the list goes on and on. Each step takes time, and time is valuable.

Accountability and reducing red tape are sometimes treated as competing goals, but they aren't. They need both if they want programs and services to work well for the people who rely on them. Accountability means being clear about what the program is meant to achieve, using resources responsibly, and being open about whether we are getting the results we promised. It means learning from what works, addressing what doesn't, and being willing to explain our decisions. The people who depend on public services and the people who deliver them deserve the consistency and confidence.

But accountability should not be a burden for its own sake. When too much time is spent navigating duplicative forms, approvals, and reporting requirements, less time goes toward supporting clients, solving problems, and improving services. The goal is not to remove safeguards or lower standards; it's to make sure that every requirement has a clear purpose: protecting people, supporting good decisions, upholding fairness, protecting the public purse, or demonstrating how programs are making a difference. If a process or requirement does not serve a defined purpose, we should be willing to reconsider it and understand the implications of that decision. That calls for practical accountability, clear expectations, collecting information that helps us understand results and using it for that purpose, reporting proportionate to the size of the risk and program, giving front-line staff the guidance and authority they need to respond to people's circumstances, and reviewing processes regularly and being able and willing to change them when they create more friction than value.

When we get that balance right, accountability strengthens service delivery instead of slowing it down. We can be transparent about the outcomes while giving staff more time to deliver. We can protect public resources while making services easier to access. We can build trust by showing that not only do we follow the rules, but our rules help serve the people of Yukon better.

The most important part of our efforts in red tape reduction is that we take the time to listen. Those delivering those services and receiving the services are best positioned to share feedback and observations through their own experiences. What management needs from program delivery differs dramatically from day-to-day program administrators, finance administrators, and the program recipients. It's important that we understand the paths these programs take as we look to simplify, modernize, and implement changes. If we can meet our accountability requirements without making people go through multiple steps or if we can coordinate internally so that someone only has to share their information with one person, we should act on that. This is also why we've created a feedback portal for Yukoners to share their experiences or ideas on how we can reduce red tape.

While I have my own ideas on what we should do to reduce red tape burdens, I am confident that so too do many other Yukoners, businesses, fund applicants, and public servants.

Over the course of the past several months, we've received many suggestions on how to reduce administrative burdens and challenges associated with navigating government services and programs. Through this process, every submission is reviewed, directed to the appropriate department, and considered for further action. Each department has identified representatives who ensure that the submissions are reviewed and, where needed, followed up as required.

To give this House a sense of these submissions we've received through this feedback portal, of the 170 submissions we've received so far, 29 percent have submitted as unnecessary requirements, 22 percent have been identified as outdated processes, 19 percent as too complex, 19 percent as too restrictive, and 11 percent associated their concerns to "other".

In addition to understanding and addressing the day-to-day red tape challenges for Yukoners, we are also working toward reducing barriers for Yukon businesses selling goods across Canada. Ministers responsible for trade across this country have been meeting regularly to finalize the mutual recognition agreements and streamline goods approved for sale in one province or territory to generally be sold in another without additional testing. This means that if a product is approved for sale in BC, we don't require additional testing for its resale in Yukon. While this simplifies the flow of goods within our own country, it also saves duplicative administration costs within our own government. This is a good example where industry professionals engaged in regulating goods have worked together to reduce unnecessary steps to support the consumer market while still upholding the standards for health and safety we expect from our provincial and territorial governments.

While opportunities to simplify accessing government programs and government-regulated products and services is probably endless, I'm proud of the process we've achieved so far. The feedback on reducing barriers and burdens while upholding critical standards and accountability has been meaningful in understanding where to start. But our government has also adopted red tape reduction as part of our culture and decision-making and prioritizing. These practical examples demonstrate our practical approach to understanding the problems and ensuring that they are addressed promptly and appropriately.

In the coming weeks, I will share the work we have done in reducing red tape and deliver on our commitment to a red tape reduction framework with this House. And with that, Madam Speaker, thank you, and I will be obviously supporting this motion.

Debra-Leigh Reti: Well, I will start by saying that I support the idea behind this motion, and what's happening here today in the House is Opposition calling for accountability on the Yukon Government's own motion. I'll say that I think that we all have experience or have heard from others how navigating government can be a tremendously frustrating burden. Reducing unnecessary red tape and government complexity is a goal I believe every member of this House can share. We want the government to provide good services in the simplest, most cost-effective way. It's hard to accomplish, to be sure, but I think the goal is fairly universal. That said, I do find myself asking why we are debating this motion at all.

This is not the first time this House has been asked to support red tape reduction. A similar motion came before us in the spring. It was not debated at the time, but it was put forward by the government. The Premier has spoken about red tape at length. The mandate letter for the Minister of Economic Development, Tourism and Culture directs the department to prioritize the development and implementation of a red tape reduction framework. In May, the minister travelled to Toronto for the federal, provincial, and territorial meeting of ministers responsible for red tape reduction. The government has also set up an online portal for Yukoners to report red tape. So, there has been a great deal of discussion and commitments by this government but presumably not a lot of tangible action if we're still talking about a future framework.

In the spring, the minister told the House that the commitment to reduce red tape and improve service delivery is welcome but that it must translate into tangible changes on the ground, and I agree. I would ask: What tangible changes Yukoners have seen since then? Which approvals are faster? Which funding processes are simpler now? Those are answers that I still have not heard.

Instead, we are being asked to support the creation of a framework that the government had already promised and the minister already directed the department to deliver. This is a motion urging the government to keep doing what it says it is already doing. To me, that sounds like a distraction and ironically feels like the type of circular logic that is at the centre of so much red tape frustration in the first place.

I also want to draw attention to how this commitment has changed over time. During the election, the Yukon Party promised a red tape reduction strategy that would measure and report on the current burden, set targets for reductions, and begin slashing unnecessary regulations. It also promised a one-for-one rule requiring government to remove one existing regulation for every new one it imposes. By the time the mandate letters were written, the strategy had been turned into a framework with no mention of targets, and I haven't heard anything about the one-for-one rule.

Moreover, later today, this House will debate a motion urging the government to regulate the iGaming market. That would mean an entirely new regulatory regime. If the one-for-one rule were in place, I would want to know which existing regulation is being removed to make room for it. But as far as I can tell, this government has added more regulation than it has taken away and red tape is the same as it has ever been.

The Premier also committed last spring to legislation that would embed red tape reduction and accountability in the work of the government. We have heard nothing since about what that legislation might look like or when it might be tabled.

As I said before, I will support this motion because the goal is generally a good one. But the next time the government brings up red tape reduction in the House, I hope it comes with actual actions that we can discuss and a clear answer for all Yukoners on what progress has actually been made.

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

Patti McLeod: I want to thank all members who have shared their thoughts on this motion. I must say that I look

forward to the completion of the framework that will reduce some red tape and benefit all Yukoners.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?
Motion No. 174 agreed to

Motion No. 171 — Online gaming regulations

Law Clerk: Motion No. 171, standing in the name of Adam Gerle.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Porter Creek South: THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to ensure safety for users by regulating the iGaming market.

Adam Gerle: Madam Speaker, technology continues to shape how we live, work, and spend our time and money. We have seen a rise in online gambling in Canada and internationally — online casinos, sports betting, virtual poker, and more. Individuals can access iGaming via smartphone, tablet, and computer virtually anytime, anywhere.

Across Canada, governments have begun looking at how online gaming can be brought under a regulated framework that provides greater oversight, stronger consumer protections, and potential new sources of public revenue. Ontario has established a regulated iGaming market, and Alberta has been developing its own approach. I believe there is value in examining what these jurisdictions have done, what has worked, and what lessons the Yukon can take from their experiences.

I want to emphasize that this motion is not about encouraging Yukoners to gamble; it's about examining whether a regulated system could provide greater accountability, better protections, and economic opportunities for our territory. We know that online gaming platforms are accessible to Canadians. The question we need to consider is whether Yukon should explore a framework that allows greater oversight of this activity rather than leaving Yukoners to navigate online gaming platforms that may operate outside Canadian provincial or territorial regulatory systems. Consumer protection and safety is top of mind when considering iGaming. Any discussion about expanding gaming opportunities must recognize the very real concerns surrounding gambling addiction, financial hardship, and the impacts these issues can have on individuals and families.

If the Yukon is going to examine regulated iGaming, then responsible gambling measures must be at the centre of that discussion. That includes age verification, spending limits, advertising restrictions, and appropriate resources to support individuals experiencing gambling-related harm. It would make sense to examine how existing responsibilities and programs through the Yukon Lottery Commission could inform any future framework.

The potential of economic benefit to the territory is another aspect of iGaming to touch on. We recognize that the Yukon has a relatively small population and a limited revenue base. That means we need to be willing to examine opportunities to diversify our revenues where it makes sense and where it can be done responsibly. A regulated iGaming framework could potentially generate revenues that support programs and services benefiting Yukoners. The development of this framework could look at cost, administration, potential

revenues, and benefits to the territories. And we need to consider what this would mean for our communities. MLAs have spoken many times about the challenges facing rural Yukon and the remote communities across our territory. Recreation facilities, community programming, infrastructure, and essential services are all important priorities for our Yukon communities. If a regulated iGaming framework were to generate additional public revenue, we should consider whether some of that revenue could be directed toward initiatives that provide tangible benefits to communities throughout the territory.

Of course, this will take time and work to complete the necessary consultations, cross-jurisdictional research, and more. We need to understand whether such a framework is feasible or suitable for a jurisdiction our size. This motion is intended to begin that work. It's an opportunity for this House to consider whether a regulated iGaming framework could be developed in a manner that protects Yukoners, respects our communities, and serves the broader public interest.

Justin Ziegler: I will start by saying I'm rather confused about what the member just mentioned.

Motion No. 171 states "THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to ensure safety for users by regulating the iGaming market", and the member just talked about creating a framework, so I'm just confused if what we're looking at here is creating a framework or regulating. I believe this would be two different exercises, but what do I know? Also, "framework" is hard for me to pronounce, so I'd rather talk about regulating right now.

I rise today as the Official Opposition critic for Yukon lotteries to speak to this motion. The motion asks the government to ensure safety for users by regulating the iGaming market. Again, the member also spoke about economic opportunities. What I read here is only "safety for users", so that's what I'm going to be talking about. I want to focus on the first part of the sentence, as I said, "safety for users". Users are people, they're Yukoners, they're our neighbours, our friends, sometimes our family, and sometimes ourselves. I want to spend my time today talking about them.

Right now, the Yukon does not run its own online gambling platform, but that does not mean Yukoners are not gambling online; they are. Anyone with a phone can open a betting app or an online casino in seconds at any hour of the day or the night. Most of these sites are run and regulated far outside the territory, and some are not regulated at all. Online gambling is especially popular with younger adults. There are numbers to back this up. Older adults are much more likely to gamble in person the old-fashioned way. This tells us something important: The people most exposed to online gambling are young people who grew up with a phone in their hand or in their pocket.

In a physical casino or at a bingo hall, there are rules, there are hours, and there are staff who can see when someone is in trouble. We regulate gambling in physical spaces because the harms are well known. Online, many of those protections disappear. The game is in your pocket. It never closes. It even sends you notifications, and it is designed to keep you playing constantly. Some would say it is even more dangerous.

The Lancet Public Health Commission on gambling has warned that the fast growth of online gambling is making the harms we already know about gambling even worse. Constant access, aggressive marketing, and smartphone-specific designs increase the risk for vulnerable people. When gambling happens in unregulated markets, it is individuals and communities that pay the price. That can mean serious financial losses, fraud, underage gambling, and addiction. When someone loses their savings or their rent money, the impact does not stop with them. It reaches their partner, their children, their employers, and their entire community.

I agree that we need to act, but I want to be clear about one thing: Regulating a market and protecting people are not automatically the same. Regulation can mean opening the door to more operators, more products, and more advertising. If we do this, we need to decide first what it is for.

If we look at Ontario, Ontario created a regulated online market, and it has put in place some useful protections: Self-exclusion programs is a good one, deposit and spending limits, reminders about time spent playing, behavioural monitoring, and age verification. Ontario also launched a central tool so people can opt out of online gambling across all licensed sites at once. So, there are good ideas that the Yukon can learn from, but Ontario is also warning that many Ontarians saw a large increase in gambling advertising after the market opened to the point actually that the regulator had to step in to restrict the use of athletes and celebrities in ads. I think that if we follow Ontario, we should learn from what worked and also from what they had to fix later.

There will be revenue questions in this debate. Online gambling could bring new money, as the member stated, but I believe that this motion is about people. If this motion is actually truly about the safety for users, then public health should lead. Any framework should be developed with public health experts, not only with finance and industry. That's what I believe.

Additionally, Yukoners must be consulted. This is an ongoing ask that we're going to have, and that includes young people, First Nations, rural communities, and people with lived experience of gambling harm. Strong protections must be built in from the start: self-exclusion, deposit limits, real age verification, and clear limits on advertising. Once in place, a fair share of any revenue should go directly to prevention, education, and treatment. If we build this in from the start, then I think this is a useful tool, because people deserve to understand the games they play and the risk that comes with them. Research actually shows that players who set spending limits and understand the games report a better experience.

Lastly, we need to look at the evidence and the legal framework carefully. Under the *Criminal Code*, legal gambling in Canada must be conducted and managed by a province or a territory, and that gives us a real responsibility and a real choice to make. But also, it's a real opportunity to protect people right away.

I believe we will support efforts that put the safety of Yukoners first, and this is what this motion is saying. I just want to quote the motion again: "THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to ensure safety for users by regulating the iGaming market." I'll just be watching to make sure that when we talk about regulating iGaming, we keep talking about the people who are on the other side of the screen.

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Online gaming is already happening in the Yukon, as mentioned, through unregulated apps and websites. The choice before us is not whether it exists but whether it should operate under a framework that protects Yukoners.

A regulated iGaming system would provide player protection and responsible gambling measures, including tools that help people manage their play and reduce harm. It would also establish rules for advertising, marketing, and promotions to better protect minors and other vulnerable populations. Regulation would also allow government to direct players to safer, regulated platforms and could create new revenue opportunities, as mentioned, through licensing and regulated operations, ensuring Yukoners' dollars remain in the territory and are available to support programs and services for Yukoners.

Ultimately, regulation could make an existing activity safer, more accountable, and more beneficial to Yukoners and Yukon communities. Thank you to the Member for Porter Creek South for bringing this important motion forward.

Debra-Leigh Reti: As anyone who has watched sports in recent years knows, online gambling is most certainly here — I saw all of the ads while watching the FIFA games this past spring — and that's just one form of it. Yukoners are using a whole range of sites and platforms.

I recognize that Ontario and Alberta have moved to regulate their iGaming markets and that there have been some early signs of success, although it is still early days in both provinces. In principle, I support government safeguards for activities that can be addictive and harmful, and I believe a portion of the profits from those activities should come back to the public.

That said, I do question whether a jurisdiction the size of the Yukon should be trying to build a regulated iGaming market. Writing the regulations, staffing and overseeing the system, and keeping pace with technology that changes constantly would, I would think, be a significant and ongoing cost. Ontario and Alberta can spread that cost across a big population and generate revenue from that system. We cannot. I would be far more interested in seeing the Yukon pursue a shared approach with other jurisdictions or a national system that spreads that burden.

As I said earlier, I do find it ironic that earlier today this House debated a motion on the government's red tape reduction framework. The Yukon Party campaigned on a one-for-one rule, removing one regulation for every new one it introduces. Now we are being asked to urge an entirely new regulatory regime.

In the end, this motion asks us to support regulation without telling us anything about what that regulation would look like. Without a plan or any meaningful detail, I'm hesitant to support this motion. If I think about the Yukon and my own community's top priorities right now, there are a lot more pressing issues that we need to deal with, so at this point, I do not support this motion.

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

Does any other member wish to be heard?

Adam Gerle: Again, I'd like to thank my fellow members for their thoughtful comments on this important issue.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Currie Dixon: Agree.

Hon. Scott Kent: Agree.

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Agree.

Hon. Linda Benoit: Agree.

Hon. Ted Laking: Agree.

Patti McLeod: Agree.

Hon. Laura Lang: Agree.

Hon. Jen Gehmair: Agree.

Hon. Wade Istchenko: Agree.

Adam Gerle: Agree.

Doris Anderson: Agree.

Tyler Porter: Agree.

Kate White: Agree.

Lane Tredger: Agree.

Brent McDonald: Agree.

Linda Moen: Agree.

Carmen Gustafson: Agree.

Justin Ziegler: Accord.

Debra-Leigh Reti: Disagree.

Clerk: Madam Speaker, the results are 18 yeas, one nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it.

I declare the motion carried.

Motion No. 171 agreed to

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 8, *Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act (2026)* — Second Reading

Clerk: Second Reading, Bill No. 8, standing in the name of the Hon. Cory Bellmore.

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I move that Bill No. 8, the *Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act (2026)*, be now read a second time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that Bill No. 8, entitled *Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act (2026)*, be now read a second time.

Hon. Cory Bellmore: It is my privilege to introduce Bill No. 8, entitled *Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act (2026)*. This bill makes targeted changes to better balance the rights and obligations of landlords and tenants in the Yukon.

In 2025, the Yukon *Residential Tenancies Act* underwent a series of amendments. These amendments limited landlords' flexibility with their rental units. We've heard that the impact of these changes has driven landlords out of the market. The Yukon needs landlords, who play a key role in the rental

market. We recognize the impact that the rental market has on Yukon's housing supply. It's an important option for people in all stages of life and in all income brackets.

I've spoken with Yukoners and I've heard their concerns about housing. I recognize the need to support a more balanced rental market and to encourage landlords to continue making units available to Yukoners. The amendments to the *Residential Tenancies Act* proposed in Bill No. 8 will support landlords who have found the recent amendments to be overly restrictive.

The rent caps introduced in 2025 limited a landlord's flexibility to adjust rents to match changing costs. The bill before you today proposes to repeal the sections of the act that enable a rent cap. This would allow landlords to adjust rents by the amount they determine necessary. Existing protection would remain in place, limiting landlords to one rent increase every year.

I appreciate that tenants need time to adjust to the changes in rent, and that is why the bill also proposes extending the notice period for rent increases from three to six months. We anticipate that this change will improve efficiency at the rental tenancies office and reduce wait times for adjudication. Both landlords and tenants will benefit from the certainty of quick answers to their questions and resolution of their concerns.

Another common concern was the act's changes to the eviction process. The changes limited how landlords could end a tenancy. As it stands now, landlords must determine a reason to end a tenancy that falls into one of the legally allowable options. This means that if a landlord chooses to end a tenancy, they must have a specific reason. I've heard from landlords that this is restrictive and limits their ability to manage their financial asset and has caused some landlords to stop renting their homes and exit from the market.

As I said earlier, we know that there is a need for more housing options in the territory. To encourage landlords to stay in the rental market, the proposed bill introduces an option to end a tenancy agreement without a prescribed reason. As noted, with the removal of rent controls, ending a tenancy can be impactful for a tenant. To support tenants and give them a reasonable amount of time to find new housing if necessary, Bill No. 8 proposes that a six-month notice period be required when a landlord is ending a tenancy without a determined cause.

Should a landlord have to end a tenancy, the reasons for eviction and notice periods currently listed in the *Residential Tenancies Act* will all remain. If the proposed bill passes in this Assembly, landlords will have the option to evict with no cause in addition to the existing reasons that are identified in the legislation. Currently, there are several allowable reasons to end a tenancy. A for-cause eviction can be used if it is an ongoing issue, and this type of eviction requires 14 days' notice. This could include rent that is repeatedly paid late, failing to comply with the tenancy agreement, disturbing another tenant or occupant, jeopardizing the health and safety of another, putting the landlord's property at risk, and engaging in illegal activity.

Likewise, there are no proposed changes to a landlord's ability to end a tenancy for reasons such as renovating the property or personal use of the property. These reasons have notice periods that are less than six months. Adding a no-cause eviction option to this list allows owners of a unit to end a

tenancy if they choose even if their reason for ending the tenancy does not fit into one of the current grounds. We have heard that this is an important option for landlords and have included it in the proposed amendments to encourage more landlords to continue renting their units and to stay in the rental market, as I've already mentioned.

If passed, the proposed amendments will come into effect on December 1, 2026. The dedicated team at the residential tenancies office will have information for landlords and tenants to explain how these changes will work. Staff are also on hand to answer questions and help resolve disputes that may arise.

Before my closing remarks, I'd like to acknowledge the importance of stable, safe, and secure housing. We recognize that building more homes is an important part of stabilizing the housing situation too. Land development projects are making more lots available in Whitehorse and rural Yukon. As we continue to build more options for housing, we are also addressing government systems that can help, such as employee housing programs, affordable housing to support renters, seniors, and vulnerable Yukoners, and land strategies to increase opportunities for private development.

The amendments in Bill No. 8 are part of this government's efforts to increase housing supply and affordability across the housing continuum. A viable market is an important part of the housing solution in the Yukon. To ensure that it is possible for landlords to remain in the market and for tenants to have access to suitable homes, we as a government must ensure that the legislation supports both landlords and tenants.

The amendments made in 2025 and leading up to the 2025 changes in the act led to confusion around how and when to increase rent, disputes between landlords and tenants about the viability of eviction notices, and concern from the landlord community about their ability to control their financial asset. No landlord should remove their rental unit because of problematic legislation.

Bill No. 8 proposes amendments to remove maximum rent increases and extends the minimum notice period for rent increases from three to six months. It also provides for another method of ending a tenancy in which a landlord can provide notice to end a tenancy effective after six months without a particular cause. By proposing the amendments in Bill No. 8, we are working to create a strong and clear piece of legislation that reflects the needs of landlords and tenants.

I thank the officials from the Department of Justice and Community Services for their work preparing this bill, and I thank all Yukoners who shared their concerns over the course of this project and contributed to this piece of legislation. I believe that the bill before us today reflects the needs of Yukoners.

Kate White: I'm not actually rising in pleasure today to speak about Bill No. 8, the bill to amend the *Residential Tenancies Act*.

I appreciate that the Member for Watson Lake-Ross River-Faro mentioned that it has been 15 years since her election, because it has been the same for me and a couple other folks in this Assembly. I think about all of the time and all of the folks whom I've heard from, spoken to, listened to, and then when we get around this issue around the *Residential Tenancies Act* — this story is long, far before our time, far before my time —

and I think it's important that part of that be included in the conversation today.

I'll note that the first indication I found of reviews of what then was the *Landlord and Tenant Act* was from March 2008 by the consumer and protective services of the Department of Community Services. At that time, there was discussion on what a *Landlord and Tenant Act* review would have, and there are some things to note in this and some that are probably less relevant, but it does say — and I'm quoting: "The concept that tenants should have some security against arbitrary eviction has been suggested. A comparison of Canadian jurisdictions shows a range of statutory notice periods required for termination of tenancy. In many cases, the length of notice corresponds with the reason for termination. In other jurisdictions, there is normally a 2-3 month notice requirement for a landlord to end a tenancy agreement without cause ... In several jurisdictions, termination without cause is not allowed." I'll note that this was in 2008, and as of today, there are two other jurisdictions in Canada that allow evictions without cause. So, in 2008, the question was going on.

In 2010, it's interesting, because there was a select committee — the Select Committee on the *Landlord and Tenant Act* — and they issued a report in November 2010. For folks who are interested, it's quite easy — you can go online and you can look for it. You can look for it online, because I think it is of interest — it should be of interest: the Select Committee on the *Landlord and Tenant Act*. At the time, there were three members: the chair was the Yukon Party; the vice-chair was NDP; and then there was a Liberal on there as well. It talks about the report. They have an internal review from 2008 — the one that I mentioned — and they have their own report on the *Landlord and Tenant Act*. They went out and had public hearings, they put together a discussion paper, and there are also submissions online.

I'll note that in 2010, the Select Committee on the *Landlord and Tenant Act* had this as recommendation 4 — it says: "The act should state that when a landlord evicts a tenant, there must be a cause for the eviction, and those causes should be clearly identified. Evictions based even in part on any of the personal characteristics protected under the human rights law, such as source of income, family status, disability, et cetera, are discriminatory."

I note that in 2010, prior to that drafting of the 2012 *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act*, the select committee agreed on a recommendation that there should be no evictions without cause.

As one can imagine, there are submissions from lots of NGOs that we recognize still. For example, the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition spoke, the Yukon Human Rights Commission spoke, and the Status of Women spoke. But it's interesting, because back in 2012, there was an organization called the Residential Landlord Coalition. The reason why I say that is because they put in a submission on September 30. It's interesting, because I'll note that in point 3, they said: "Increase of rental rates" — this is what the landlords themselves say from the Residential Landlord Coalition submission — I'm quoting: "There is currently no limit on the amount that rent can be raised by or how often this can be done following the first year of a tenancy." This is the real clincher: "We would like to suggest that there be a limit on rent increases to a maximum of

10% per year. Under special circumstances (renovations, major cost increases, etc), a landlord can increase the rent above the 10% amount, providing there is proof to justify such increase."

In 2010, the Residential Landlord Coalition was saying that there should be some kind of rent control. There should be rent control, because in 2010 — guess what — we were in a housing crisis. So, in 2010, the Residential Landlord Coalition said that there should be rent control — interesting.

There are other landlords — just to quote one, it says, "I agree that rental price increases should have some controls on them as in BC..." Right — so that's a landlord saying that there should be rent control. As you can expect, organizations that talked about tenants did definitely say that there should be protections for eviction and there should be a look at rent control.

The reason why I think this is relevant is because it predates my time and it predates the Premier's time of being elected. It's interesting, because as I go through all the information and the history here, there will be times when the Premier was then the Minister of Community Services and he and I were having conversations about rental protections. So, this existed before I was in this Assembly. This has been an issue that has been brought up by others. Again, I'll note that landlords in 2010 said they recognize that there should be some protections around it, and I do think that's important.

And I'll note that, moving us toward 2012, there was the tabling of the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act*. It's interesting, because I said on CBC at the time, "Well it's 100 percent better than what was there before." And interestingly enough, I got to wear that too. Because then one of the ministers who actually is still in the Assembly now said that I said that it was really positive. Sure, it was positive; it was better than nothing. It was better than nothing. So, if folks are ever wondering how come there's not nicer things said, it's because often it gets weaponized, and that makes you decide whether or not and how you're going to talk about things.

The *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* came forward in 2012. It's interesting, because there have been changes in this Assembly that I think are really good, including the limits on the amount of time a member can respond, but at the time — I'll be super frank — the Minister of Community Services, who was debating this legislation — 40 minutes every time, 40 minutes — because there wasn't a conversation. I wanted to have conversations about rent controls. I wanted to have conversations about no-cause evictions. I wanted to have conversations about putting in the ability for landlords to charge a deposit for pets to encourage people to allow pets to live in places, because at the time, we were seeing that was really problematic.

The *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* in 2012 came forward, and it was not a pleasant time. Anyone who wants to know how unpleasant it was, I welcome them to go back and look at Hansard and my experience at the time, because there are a lot of pages. There are a lot of pages about it. I wasn't really the one talking, but there are a lot of pages about the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act*. We were optimistic; we thought that: Well, it's going to be better. But there was some real concerns — right? Like, again, there was the ability to increase the rent to an unlimited amount once a year and, of course, there were eviction clauses, and that wasn't good. I'll

note that in 2012, my NDP colleagues and I voted against the legislation. We did, and it's interesting, because when I go back and I read you some things for Hansard, you're going to hear a minister telling me that I did indeed vote against it, and I did. I did, because it didn't capture what people were going through at the time. It didn't — like the amendments on the floor today don't capture what people are going through at all.

It was so fascinating for me today, because I thought about debating a motion about country residential lot development, and I thought about — wow, the Member for Porter Creek South has aspects that used to be in my riding. My riding used to be called Takhini-Kopper King, which covered the Takhini bench — I call it that where the old Army duplexes are — and it went as far as Takhini Trailer Park, it went into Crow and Swan streets from Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and it covered Northland and had a couple of condo corporations, but then it went across the Alaska Highway and it had the Prospector Trailer Park, the Kopper King Trailer Court, and it went all the way down the Fish Lake Road. With the redrawing of the boundaries, I no longer represent Northland, Prospector, or the Kopper King trailer parks. I spent a lot of time in those spots — I did.

It's interesting to me that the Member for Porter Creek South — who represents at least 206 households in Northland, probably about 75 in Prospector, and definitely less than 48 at this point in time in Kopper King, because the Kopper King Trailer Court has changed — but that member didn't think at all about what removing the rent cap would do for mobile homes. And maybe the member isn't familiar, but let me just bring some education. I also note that those aren't the only parts that aren't in the riding of Takhini. We have the Lobird Trailer Park, which is represented by the Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation, and then we have the Baranov and the Benchmark trailer parks, and those are represented by the Member for Porter Creek North.

It's interesting, because way back in 2012, there would have been another park in Porter Creek North called the Casa Loma Trailer Park, but they faced mass evictions and that park was gone, and there was nothing that could be done to stop it — nothing that could be done to stop it.

I'm going to go back in time, because as soon as the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* came into force, we started to see the cracks, and the cracks really came out hard about mobile homes. On April 15, 2014, I asked this question: "Yesterday I pointed out that some mobile home owners have seen pad rental increases of 44 percent since 2007. All the minister could say is that the new *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* ensures that those unlimited increases happen only once a year ... But even when the law comes into force, it will not put an end to unlimited annual increases for mobile home owners ... Can the minister explain to Yukon mobile home owners how having their rent increased by \$100 once a year is going to be better than having their rent increased by \$50 twice a year?"

So, the minister at the time said, "I appreciate where the member is coming at this from but, as I pointed out to her yesterday, the evidence is quite clear in areas that have tried to put in place rent controls. The net effect over a long period of time is that it actually decreases the availability of affordable housing." I disagree. But we're talking about mobile homes, so

I say again in my next question: "The minister's answer will be little comfort for mobile home owners ... Jurisdictions across Canada have put reasonable annual limits on pad rent fee increases. It's a fair and simple way to balance the interests of both the landlords and the mobile home owners. Nova Scotia, P.E.I., Ontario, Québec, Manitoba, and BC all have these limits, and they're for good reason. It's a very fair request ... Why is the minister refusing to help Yukon's mobile home owners by ensuring there is a reasonable annual limit on pad rental increases?"

So, the minister at the time tells me I'm wrong, and he says, "We believe more effective methods are the ones that have been tried and proven successful in other jurisdictions..." Disagree.

The minister was telling me about other jurisdictions, and I point out in my third question — I said, "The minister continues to refer to unnamed jurisdictions, whereas I have just listed six Canadian jurisdictions where they have these limits on increases.

"Mobile home owners are in a precarious situation. Like renters, they are vulnerable to decisions made by their landlords, including unlimited annual rent increases, but like homeowners, they have the responsibility to pay their mortgage for their mobile home. If you are the owner of a mobile home, you can't just pack up and leave. There are virtually no vacancies in other trailer parks where mobile home owners can move if they cannot afford the pad rental increases. It turns out that mobile homes in the Yukon are not that mobile. Where can mobile home owners go to find protection from unreasonable and unfair pad rental increases that threaten to make their mobile homes unaffordable?"

The minister pointed out that "...the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* is a piece of legislation..." It's true, and then he goes on to say, "We are seeking input from landlords, tenants, and indeed all Yukoners who wish to comment, because changes to this legislation have an effect on all Yukoners who are either landlords or tenants and we are focused on proceeding in a balanced manner." I love that. The minister at the time says that the government was going to have conversations around regulations, that the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* wasn't going to come out until regulations are ready, and mentions that they're "seeking input", so that's interesting; I like that: "seeking input". And then he goes on to end the question with, "No, we will not be adopting the approach the member advocates...", which is to put on a cap on mobile home pad rents.

For those of you who are new, I will tell you that I asked this a lot. On May 12, 2014, I gave a notice of motion: "THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to recognize mobile home owners as a distinct category in the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* in order that there be a maximum annual allowable rent increase for mobile home communities set out in regulations." The reason why that's important is because I'm using the tools at my disposal to the best of my ability.

On May 12 — the same day of that year — I had another question about mobile homes. I'm going to quote myself: "Mobile home owners are a hybrid class: part homeowner and part renter. They own their home. They pay home mortgages, property taxes, expenses and upkeep and, unlike other homeowners, they also pay a rental fee for the land on which their home sits. Under the new landlord and tenant legislation,

this Yukon Party government views mobile home owners in the same light as they view the average apartment renter. Like renters, mobile home owners are vulnerable to decisions made by their landlords, including unlimited annual rent increases. But unlike renters, they also have no options if they disagree with their landlord's management. Does the minister believe that someone who owns a mobile home should be treated the same as someone who rents an apartment?"

Again, the minister says, "We began with an all-party committee that conducted public consultations." That's true — the 2008 all-party committee. Maybe I'll go back. One thing the minister was reminding me of is the context of this: "In fact, the legislation — the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* — has updated legislation that was 50 years old. Previous governments, including three NDP governments, did not take action to update the act; we did." So, this is important: "We began with an all-party committee that conducted public consultation. That led to a report and, following that report and building on it, there was additional consultation conducted by government in the development of the legislation. Following that, in the development of the regulations, there has also been additional consultation, which has recently concluded."

He goes on to say, "Under the provisions of the act, if a tenant renting a mobile home pad receives a notice of a rent increase from the landlord, the tenant may choose not to accept it and so has 12 months to vacate the mobile home pad. I recognize that can be a challenge for people, but again what the member consistently fails to recognize in providing her comments at this late stage in the development of the legislation is that there has been extensive public consultation and opportunity to hear from all viewpoints in developing this."

The irony right now is just — I can't even. So, 2014 — again, I go back at it. I ask again, "The failure of the minister to acknowledge the differences between renters and homeowners shows poor understanding of the facts. Mobile home owners are in a Catch-22 situation. If their landlord is raising the rent too much, they have no options, as there are next to no other lots to move to, even if they could move their trailer. The minister wants to leave mobile home owners in this Catch-22 because he is ideologically opposed to what his colleagues in P.E.I., Nova Scotia, Ontario, British Columbia, Quebec and Manitoba are doing, which is placing a reasonable limit on annual pad rent increases."

So, then I ask the question: "Will the minister responsible either implement a reasonable limit on annual pad rental increases or commit to working with the City of Whitehorse to make more affordable trailer lots available?" In response — I'm quoting again: "Recognizing that any move can have an impact on families, I would again remind the member that the entire development of this legislation was based on hearing from all affected people in this — both renters and tenants. Consideration of the effect on mobile home owners was a part of this. There has been extensive public consultation that began with an all-party committee doing the work, followed by consultation on the legislation, followed by consultation on the regulations and we are still waiting for a final report on consultations on provisions to the draft regulations ... I can very much appreciate that any time rents go up — whether it be rents for apartments or pad rental fees — there is an impact on citizens."

But I'll note the consultation. In 2014, a group called the Mobile Home Owners Association got together and wrote to the minister — and I'm quoting from that: "We are looking for results. We cannot just up and rent somewhere else. The cost of moving a trailer is way above what most people can afford. Even if they could, most units cannot meet the new building codes required to resettle in Whitehorse. Mobile home ownership provides a needed housing solution to the middle class. The new draft of the *Landlord and Tenant Act* unfairly classifies mobile home owners as renters. We need this changed. Unless we begin to get support from the government, there will be a housing crisis like no other when 1,200 families come looking to you with nowhere to go when they are priced out of the trailer parks." I asked if the minister recognized the difference between renters and mobile home owners and if they should have a distinct class. Then he went on to tell me that they did consultation. I appreciate that there was consultation.

What started to happen in 2014 and why this was an issue is because folks in mobile homes started to see really big increases. So, in 2014, I went door to door, as we will here go door to door. I didn't just knock on doors in the parks that I represented at the time — that was Northland, Takhini, Prospector, and the Kopper King — I went to every mobile home park and to every door.

On December 2, I tabled this petition that read:

THAT the Yukon's *Landlord and Tenant Act* continues to treat mobile home owners the same as renters;

THAT mobile home owners have been subject to unreasonable pad rent increases over the years; and

THAT mobile home ownership is an important part of Yukon's housing continuum as it offers affordable home ownership.

Therefore, the undersigned ask the Yukon Legislative Assembly to adopt landlord and tenant legislation that:

(1) recognizes the difference between mobile home owners and renters, and

(2) implements a maximum annual increase for mobile home pad rents.

It had 354 signatures. The thing about that is that every single person I spoke with when I had that petition — every single mobile home owner signed it because they recognized the changes that they were facing. They recognized the changes that they were facing. It won't surprise folks, I don't think, to say that when the minister responded, it wasn't good for mobile home owners. He mentioned, "The new *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* limits rent increases to no more than once per year" and the need to provide notice, but then he goes on to say, "The act was developed after considerable public input, including the Yukon-wide public meetings held by the all-party select committee of this Legislative Assembly ... I recognize that mobile home owners, who did not, in most cases, participate in the public consultation that developed the act, have expressed an interest in seeing changes made to the legislation. Following completion of the regulation, government is open to reviewing the provisions of the act specific to mobile homes. That would require consultation with both mobile home owners and park owners because of course it is important that we balance the interests and rights of both parties, which is the central premise of a new *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act*."

So, 354 people said they needed the support. Now, I think there was a ministerial change — in 2014, the minister at the time was the Member for Lake Laberge, and in 2015, my conversation with Community Services is with the now Premier. This is a conversation from April 21, 2015 — and I'm quoting myself: "Last fall, I tabled a petition highlighting some of the unique challenges of mobile home owners. It's super interesting, because the new minister represents a mobile home park and the minister for the Porter Creek South riding also has two mobile home parks within his riding. What has come to light — kind of in the last number of years, especially since we passed the legislation in 2012 — is that mobile home owners face unique challenges and, under the act, those challenges seem to be exacerbated in some cases. Under the new act, when it gets enacted — which I have a question about as well — mobile home owners are viewed solely as renters, but we know that when you own the asset on the piece of property, there is concern about kind of planning long-term futures. I guess my question here is: Has government looked at engaging mobile home owners to discuss the unique challenges that they face with the current *Landlord and Tenant Act* or the one we passed in 2012...?"

The Premier said, "In terms of protection and certainty, it will limit pad rent increases to no more than once per year." He goes on to say, "While there are new protections, new tools and new options for mobile home owners built into the RLTA, the act does not provide for the type of rent control that I know members sought previously in discussions. I would note, though, that, as we move forward with the implementation of the act — if it becomes apparent, as we move forward both with the act and the regulations, that there's a need for some additional measures relating to mobile homes, then I can commit to revisiting tenancy laws between mobile home owners and park owners at a future date and, yes, that would include discussions with the mobile home owners." Excellent.

I go on to highlight what would happen with rent increases, whether you were a tenant in an apartment and about being able to move, and then I asked the question, "Does the minister recognize that there is a difference between being able to move the contents within a place with three months' notice, as opposed to moving an entire place — like the home itself?"

The Premier said, "Yes." I thank the minister for that response and then I go on to say, "So recognizing that difference, is there not a value in having a conversation now with mobile home owners? We have six [parks] within the City of Whitehorse; I would guess there are more than 900 homes. They have different management; they have different expectations. One park, if you pay within the first three business days of the month, it's \$400; if you pay after the first three days, it's \$480. We have seen substantial increases in those park fees. We have seen those increases tied to promises of increasing services, but we have not seen that. So would the minister consider having that conversation sooner rather than later?"

The Premier said, "Obviously we just passed this bill relatively recently, so not we're keen to make amendments at this time. But, as I indicated, if it becomes apparent as we move forward with the implementation of the new regulations and legislation that there is need for some additional measures relating to mobile homes, then I can commit to revisiting

tenancy laws between mobile home owners and park owners at a future date. ... yes, we will take the matter under consideration and consider the member's comments as we move forward."

When I use the cost there at the time of \$400 a month, otherwise it was \$480 — that specific park is up to \$700, and there are parks who charge more than \$700 a month in pad fees. They are not mobile, unfortunately. So, that was in 2015 — it's not new.

That was April 21, 2015. On May 28, 2015, I have a question for the now Premier: "This week, local mobile home owners were notified about another pad rent increase. This most recent increase has seen the rent go up by 10 percent since 2013." So, 10 percent in two years. "Mobile home owners need more than and different protections from traditional renters ... Does the minister agree that mobile home owners are a distinct class of tenants and the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* doesn't properly reflect that reality?"

The Premier says, "We do recognize that there are some unique features to mobile home ownership and, as I have indicated before in Committee debate, if it becomes apparent as we move forward with the implementation of new regulations and legislation that there is a need for some additional measures relating to mobile homes, then I can commit to revisiting tenancy laws between mobile home owners and park owners at a future date."

At the time, I'll note that the Premier did represent the Lobird Trailer Park, but it is different now; it's now represented by the Minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation.

So, I say in another question, "I know that the minister has constituents in his riding who live in mobile homes and that he knows just how precarious their situation is when it comes to pad rent increases and the fear of eviction.

"The fact that hard-working Yukon home owners who live in mobile homes have next to no protections for pad rent increases or evictions is unacceptable ... no one in the City of Whitehorse has their taxes go up by five percent a year."

So I ask: "What options has the minister considered to protect mobile home owners from unfair increases in pad rent and the threat of eviction?"

There are lots of words, and at the end of the response, he says, "While there are new protections, new tools and new options for mobile home owners built into the RLTA, the act does not provide the type of rent control that is being sought by the opposition but, as I've noted, we can look at options going forward..." — 2015.

We all know that there was an election in 2016. There was a government change, and that brought us to some more exciting advocacy.

After the 2016 election, I thought: Okay, well, here's an opportunity for me to sit down with two newly elected colleagues to have a conversation. Actually, I'm just going to check to make sure that was two newly elected. So, I thought there was an opportunity to sit down and have a conversation about — oh, yeah, that was two newly elected — I didn't want to say that the Member for Porter Creek North at that time hadn't served before — but elected in 2016.

So, there were two newly elected MLAs in the House in 2016, and I thought: Okay, well, here's an opportunity to have a conversation with each of them who represent mobile home

parks and to lay out the challenges. At the time, the member who represented Copperbelt North — the riding where the Premier had been elected previously and didn't run again — and Porter Creek North — so, that is representing Lobird, Baranov, and Benchmark trailer parks, and, of course, I represent the other ones.

So, the reason I think it's important — and it might be fascinating for folks to know, but it was actually the Liberal member after conversations and meetings who decided not to jointly write a letter to one of the Liberal government ministers. But the Yukon Party Member for Porter Creek North did, and I have an e-mail exchange between her and me in 2017, and it's a collaborative letter. I sent over a draft and I said, "If you're happy with it, can we sign it today?" She responds, "Looks good, but how about we add a sentence at the end?" The sentence that was suggested is, "We look forward to your thoughts on our discussions and to a favourable outcome for all mobile home owners."

There's more discussion in e-mail exchanges between the Yukon Party Member for Porter Creek North and me. We go back and she makes a suggestion about a line — and this is the line that she suggests: "It is our hope that the Government of Yukon will promptly move to address these shortfalls in the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* by working with all stakeholders to be fair and equitable to all concerned."

So, really, it got us to a point where we signed a joint letter to the Minister of Community Services at the time, the Liberal Minister of Community Services, and it was titled *Mobile Home Ownership and Protection*. And I'm just going to read from that letter. It says, "After the suggestion that all members who represent mobile home parks meet to discuss and find common goals, the two of us met with your colleague ... MLA for Copperbelt North, on a number of occasions to discuss the issues. While [your colleague] has declined to add his name to this letter, we believe that the consensus we have reached is reflective of the concerns shared by Yukon mobile home owners. Unlimited yearly pad rent increases and evictions without cause need to be addressed by the Government of Yukon. Under current legislation, these home owners are not afforded adequate protections in both situations. We suggest that Government of Yukon, while balancing the rights of all parties, examines Nova Scotia and their legislation for the rent increases in land-lease communities. These increases are set to inflation and published yearly by the Residential Tenancies program. We also suggest that mobile home owners should not face eviction without cause as permitted under current legislation. It is our hope that the Government of Yukon will promptly move to address these shortfalls in the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* by working with all stakeholders..."

The reason why it's interesting is because a Yukon Party MLA for Porter Creek North agreed that mobile home owners should have protections from annual rent increases, that they should know what was coming, and that it shouldn't be unlimited. So, that was in 2017. The response from the minister is directed to two of us — MLA for Takhini-Kopper King and MLA for Porter Creek North: "Mobile Home Ownership and Protection" — "Thank you for your work on the issue of mobile home tenancies. This government appreciates the collaborative approach that has been taken by Members of the Legislative Assembly whose constituents have been affected by this issue.

Your feedback continues to be helpful in determining the path forward.

"This government is committed to building vibrant communities and finding local solutions to local problems. To further these goals, we have released the results of the mobile home consultation carried out by the previous government. The *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* is relatively new with regulations having come into effect last year and the minimum rental standards on January 1 of this year. We know that this issue is important to Yukoners, and having access to the survey results is an important part of the decision ... Feedback from the mobile home survey shows that mobile homes do provide a low-cost home ownership solution for Yukoners. We understand that mobile home rental pad tenancy relationships and challenges are different from traditional residential tenancies. We are determining how best to use the feedback from the mobile home tenancies survey conducted by the previous government. The survey results revealed that 82% of respondents were mobile home owners, while 58% of those responding felt that the current 12 months advance notice is an appropriate timeframe to terminate a mobile home pad tenancy agreement."

It's interesting, because there's no mention of rent control, but I'll get to that. So, that brings us up to 2017, and it's interesting, because I've heard the Premier say at different times that it's about going back, it's letting the free market decide. And I think about all the people I've met since I've been here in 2011, and I think about all the people — all the people. In 2012, the leader of the Yukon NDP at the time brought forward this issue in Question Period — I'm quoting from 2012: "One constituent recently told us their rent had gone from \$1,100 to \$2,000. This huge jump of \$900 a month represents an increase of over \$10,000 a year. Who can afford that? Another constituent told us their landlord gave one month's notice of a rental increase of \$500 a month or \$6,000 a year ... these are not isolated cases. My question for the Premier is this: What is this government doing to level the playing field ...?"

Then we hear from the Minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation. He says, "I think the key to stabilizing the rental market is to add units. It is our choice to engage the private sector, to engage First Nations, to engage municipalities to work to that end."

I'll note that the Yukon Party government between 2011 and 2016 did not add very many units to the market. My colleague goes on to say, "The March 2012 rent survey showed that the vacancy rate is still critically low at 1.3 percent. That is despite a 20-percent increase in the number of rental units. This past year, the median rent has increased by 6.5 percent to \$825 a month. That is the median rent ... not average, which means that many people are paying much more ... Other jurisdictions have mechanisms that offer some protection to renters." She asks, "What mechanisms does the government have and will it use to protect tenants from rental increases now that are driving people out of their homes and adding to the housing problem?"

We asked a lot of questions about rent and how rent was going and how things were changing and what was happening. In 2012, I think about the person who told me that their rent was going to be doubled, and that was the Yukon Party government, and that was the free market. So, they were given some notice that their rent was going to double, but there was

nowhere for them to go. There was nowhere for them to go — and that carried on. It carried on and it carried on and it carried on.

So, 2016, there's a new government. They were still seeing problems, so the NDP were still asking questions about housing affordability and support for tenants and what's going to happen, and it's an issue — it's an issue.

I think about how this government has talked about consultation. I appreciate that I read all these things. I also appreciate that the Premier at the time did trigger a survey for mobile home owners. I found lots of other things, because it was challenging for people to find and there weren't paper copies, and there wasn't a lot of uptake, and people were quite confused about it, but there was a survey done. There was an engagement done, and overwhelmingly, the engagement said that people wanted rent control in mobile home parks, that there was a distinct difference between mobile home owners and a person who rents an apartment.

I asked questions since the last territorial election about whether or not this government recognized the differences between mobile home owners and renters, because this was broadcasted — the Yukon Party said that this was what they were going to do, and I wanted to make sure that I got ahead of it — that mobile home owners were part of it. I wanted to make sure it was known that there was a difference. It was so important that a Yukon Party MLA who represented mobile home parks co-signed a letter with me. It's not often that the Yukon Party and the Yukon NDP agree, but we sent a letter together asking for protections for mobile home owners, because mobile home owners have shown that there are challenges that don't exist in other places. When I was talking about rents being \$400 a month — in some cases, they're closer to \$800 a month.

When I think about the MLA for Porter Creek South and I think about the people in Northland, I wonder if he thinks about the same seniors that I do, knowing that this is coming in place, knowing that I fought and they fought and so many people advocated for protections around mobile home pad rent increases because of what people face there. Does he see my friend Linda when he recognizes what is coming with this — the fact that there can be unlimited increases? I think about all the people that I know in the Kopper King Trailer Court or in the Prospector Trailer Park and knowing that the MLA for Porter Creek South represents them and he's seen them, he's knocked on the door, and he's asked for their support and that, come December 1, there will no longer be protections for the rent increases that they face. How does that sit? How does that sit in telling hundreds of people that something they came to depend on is going to be changed?

I think about the folks in Baranov and I think about the folks in Benchmark. Benchmark Trailer Park was the first place where I recognized that evictions without cause in a mobile home park — it didn't matter; you couldn't move the home. Essentially, you were being asked to leave it behind. It was the Benchmark Trailer Park, Porter Creek North. It's the last trailer on the middle row that has the bank that sluffs into it. And how do I know this? Because I was there more than one time.

I think about all the folks who were both in the Baranov and the Benchmark trailer parks. They're represented by the Member for Porter Creek North. How is that going to be

communicated — that something that used to have a certainty and ability to plan doesn't exist anymore? I'll note that previously it was the Premier and now it's the Minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation who represents the Lobird Trailer Park. At last count, it was like 80 mobile homes — so 80 different families. How does that affect them? What's going to happen? What's going to happen?

In 2021 — it shouldn't surprise anyone, because at the time, we were talking about rent control; we were talking about putting mechanisms in, at the time, the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* because it had become very unfair — and it shouldn't surprise anyone. It shouldn't surprise anyone.

It's so interesting, because I really believe that we in this Chamber should have the ability to say when something didn't work out the way we thought. And the interesting thing is that I'm no longer held by the confidence and supply agreement, and I no longer have the breaching of the confidentiality of that. I will say that it was a nightmare — it was an absolute nightmare. Because in 2021, when that document was signed, there were mechanisms to put in to make the transition for rent control — one that would be easier for everyone, and if folks remember who the Minister of Community Services was at the time, you will know that we are not friends. We are not friends. I got told at the time that I should have put it in the agreement, and

I said, "You're going to hurt people", and he said, "You should have put it in the agreement." So, I did — I said that I recognized that there were problems; I did say that. So, when it comes back and it's weaponized — and I encourage everyone in this Chamber to know that you should be able to apologize; you should be able to recognize — but when it gets weaponized here in this way constantly, then it means that instead of learning and saying that, yes, this should have been done, could have been done, should be done in a different way, what we say is that no longer will we take accountability, no longer will we say yes. So, I did say I recognized — I did — and it's because it wasn't done in a way that I would have done, that the NDP would have done.

But I will note that in 2024, there was an engagement on the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act*. There was a review. And the reason why I say 2024 is because it means that rent controls had been in place for just about two years. I signed the confidence and supply agreement in April of 2021, and the engagement was in February 2024. I recognize that it was not perfect, but I stand by the fact that tenants need protections, and I still stand by it.

In the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* review from 2024, I'm going to point out that it was the shortest month of the year — it was February. The engagement went from February 1 to February 29, so it was the shortest month. The reason why that's important is because in that shortest month of the year — in that shortest month of the year, 1,420 Yukoners responded to an online and paper survey developed in partnership with the Yukon Bureau of Statistics — 1,420 Yukoners. I want to focus a bit on the date, because I have to tell you that's the shortest month. That is the shortest month — the shortest month.

The firearms engagement that was conducted from July 2 to August 7 had a total of 268 formal responses — 268 formal responses in what probably works out to over, I don't know,

eight days longer. So, firearms legislation, which is a priority, had 268 formal responses, and the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* review from 2024, between February 1 and February 29, had 1,420 Yukoners who replied to the survey.

It's important to note that an additional 120 Yukoners participated in the public engagement events, including nine facilitated in-person sessions held in Whitehorse, Haines Junction, Dawson City, and Watson Lake, along with two online public information sessions. Madam Speaker, I was at the ones in Whitehorse. It goes on to say that approximately 100 additional people participated in 12 stakeholder meetings held with First Nations and municipal governments, not-for-profit organizations, and other stakeholders. That's more than 1,420 people.

Again, I pointed out today that the Yukon Party, when they were in Opposition, were really critical about consultation on government legislation, and I'll note that we have legislation in front of us that has zero recent engagement consultation. And I'll note that in 2024 — almost two years after rent control came in place — 1,420 people responded in the online survey. I'll note that at the top it says that more than 1,500 Yukoners shared their suggestions and participated.

So, let's dig into it. It's so interesting — I appreciate the Bureau of Statistics so much. It's interesting, because it divides things. It talks about all respondents and then it says landlord respondents and tenant respondents. At the time, you could identify if you were a landlord or tenant. It's important to note. There are all sorts of questions.

This is from landlords: "Approximately one quarter of the comments supported 'without cause' evictions, articulated in ways such as 'without cause with sufficient notice' and 'for any reason. It is the landlord's property and investment.'" That is approximately one-quarter, and that's coming from landlords. That means that wasn't an overwhelming amount of landlords.

I actually really hope that members have read this. I encourage everybody to read this, because it wasn't done by me, but I think it's important. I encourage folks to take a look the *Summary of Engagement — Residential Landlord and Tenant Act Review* from February of 2024. There are different things in here. When it's talking about ending a tenancy, the way this is formatted is in a square on the top of page 9, and it says, "Feedback from the Canadian Centre for Housing Rights highlighted the need to consider evictions as a last resort. 'In particular, in order to meet international human rights standards, a household should only be evicted if all of the following are true: The eviction must have a legitimate objective. Eviction must be necessary to achieve the objective, and there must be no reasonable alternative. The consequences of eviction must be proportionate to the objective.'" It sounds like they're saying that there should be reason.

Right below that, it talks about rent control. It says, "The Yukon currently has a rent index based on the Consumer Price Index ... The allowable increase is adjusted annually based on the previous year's inflation. The index is capped at a maximum of 5% if the CPI for the previous year was over 5%, and a minimum of 2% if CPI for the previous year was less than 2%. A rent index was first introduced in 2021 and implemented in its current form in 2023. There is currently no restriction on the amount that landlords may raise the rent if a tenant leaves a rental unit, and a new tenant starts a tenancy agreement."

So, this says, "Feedback from participants on rent control: A participant noted that rent control can strongly influence tenant stability: 'When I lived in a rent-controlled apartment, it was a nice place and affordable. I had security.' A tenant also articulated the different experience of being a landlord or a tenant: 'Affordability of rentals, at the moment, is stressful for all income brackets. If you own several homes, you are in a different position.'" It's interesting.

It has the tables — on page 10, it says, "Response to questions [regarding] rent control: C1a. Rent that increases at the same rate as inflation is fair to both landlords and tenants." That is a question. I'll note that people could say that they strongly disagree with that statement, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, strongly agree, or not sure. Okay, so it says, "Rent that increases at the same rate as inflation is fair to both landlords and tenants." I want to note that, in total respondents, 19.86 percent strongly disagreed, 23.03 percent disagreed, but 28.8 percent agreed, and 12.61 percent strongly agreed.

Maybe you want to know why that matters. Because landlords — this is the interesting thing — only 22.63 percent strongly disagreed with that statement, 17 percent disagreed, but 32.66 percent of landlords agreed with that statement that rent that increases at the same rate as inflation is fair to both landlords and tenants, and 13.87 percent of them strongly agreed. They strongly agreed — they agreed to rent control; they agreed. It's fascinating. So, a lot of people — way more than the firearms legislation.

I'm quoting from the report on page 11: "Approximately one third of respondents supported some kind of rent control. Less than one third of respondents to this section were against any kind of rent control ... Approximately half of respondents" — so that's more than one-third — "Approximately half of respondents that supported some kind of rent control supported a Consumer Price Index based rent control."

They said things like: rent could be controlled to industry cost; linked to the size of the unit; should be limited to the rent cap in between tenancies; that rent control should not apply in between tenancies; rent control should be linked to the amount that a tenant can pay. I'm not going to argue with that.

In the box, it says, "Meetings with the Yukon Residential Landlord Association". They had their point. They talked about costs that were outside the control of the landlord.

Then on page 12, we get into an interesting part — we get to mobile homes. I'll note that mobile homes in the *Residential Tenancies Act* — the one that's being amended — have protection with rent control. It's an annual amount; it's tied to CPI.

"Of the 1,420 respondents who completed the survey, 589 opted to answer six questions about mobile home site tenancies." So, 589 answered this. That's way more than the 200-something for firearms — 268, I think. So, quite a bit more people wanted to talk about mobile homes.

"Over 50% of all respondents agreed or strongly agreed that rent control for mobile home sites should be tied to CPI" — over 50 percent of all respondents. I'll note D4a. The question is: "Mobile home site rent should only go up based on the Consumer Price Index from the previous year." In the landlords, 29.41 percent agree and 16.34 percent strongly agree, and that is more than the percentage that disagreed. So,

20.9 strongly disagreed and 18.95 percent disagreed. The landlords recognize that mobile homes are different.

“Other comments on mobile home site tenancies: One hundred and eighty-six ... respondents added comments under the ‘other comments about mobile home site tenancies’...”

We all know that it takes time to put in other comments. You have to type them out; it’s not giving you options — it means you’re putting your ideas down. And to know that 186 out of 589 people chose to add other information is important to note. The report says, “Approximately half of the comments were about rent control and security of tenure. Rent control comments were generally in favour of limiting rent increase for mobile home sites. Security of tenure comments focused on limiting change in use evictions for mobile home parks as well as increased notice periods to account for the difficulty in moving mobile homes.”

Mobile homes in the territory are most often not mobile. We saw that with the Casa Loma. We saw with the Casa Loma that three out of 12 trailers were able to move — three out of 12. Three families were able to relocate, and everybody else walked away and their trailers got knocked down. They went from being securely housed to not securely housed.

I had conversations with the previous Yukon Party Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation, who was then the MLA for Pelly-Nisutlin. When I finally got to the point where the minister at the time said — because I asked, “Well, does the Yukon Party recognize that housing is a human right?” and I finally got to a point where I could understand why the decisions were being made between 2011 and 2016 like they were when he said no. So, I guess that question stands: Does the Yukon Party believe that housing is a human right? Should people have access to housing? Should they have access to safe housing? Does housing matter? I think it matters.

I wish I had more relevant or more timely census information, but in 2021, the Yukon Bureau of Statistics said that at the time there were 5,530 renters in the Yukon, and out of that, 1,325 or 24 percent lived in subsidized housing. That meant more renters were outside of subsidized housing than in subsidized housing renters. So, we’re looking at 5,000-ish. In another one, it says that in 2021 there were 16,530 owner and tenant households in Yukon. Of those, 11,000 were owner households and 5,530 were renter households. Of the renter households, 4,205 or 74.9 percent were not subsidized.

We’re talking about changes to something that’s going to affect more than 4,000 people right now, with no engagement or consultation. Today in Question Period, I heard the Premier say they ran on a campaign. Do you know who else I heard say that? I heard that from the Premier in 2011 when it came around issues of the Peel. We ran on this campaign; therefore, we can. It didn’t go very well.

I think about when the Minister of Community Services was on the radio, and this is a quote — I listen to the CBC a lot — and I quote: “I’ve talked to tenants, and they are anxious about the changes, but I haven’t heard a lot of advocacy against them.”

So, it’s interesting, because I’ll note that I’ve gotten e-mails that were also sent to the minister. Because when I got an e-mail when someone was concerned about it, I was like, “Please e-mail the minister, because the minister needs to hear

from you.” So, I know that the minister has heard from people because I have the e-mails.

I think about people saying, “I’m proud to live and work in the Yukon and contribute to my community. However, if housing and living costs continue to rise while tenant protections are reduced, I fear I may eventually have no choice but to leave Yukon. This would not be due to lack of commitment to the territory, because it would become financially unsustainable to remain here.”

I know the NDP aren’t the only ones who have heard concerns around the cost of rental housing and what it means. I think about departments for Yukon Government who are trying to recruit people and then they accept jobs and then they don’t come because they realize the cost of rental housing and lack of availability of rental housing. I think about the person who told me that last month that their landlord came to them and said they wanted to raise their rent by 25 percent.

I’ve already shared the story about my friends who were talking about how much of a rent increase they can absorb. Both work for Yukon Government. How much could they absorb? Is it going to be \$500 a month? Is it going to be \$700 a month? Because there’s going to be some of those.

On October 9 — I know this e-mail went to the minister, because it got sent to me, so I’m going to quote from it: “The proposed changes will not solve Yukon’s housing shortage. They will allow landlords to charge more for existing, ageing housing and evict tenants who have done nothing wrong, without requiring a single new home to be built. That is the fundamental problem. The government is promising an uncertain increase in future supply while giving landlords immediate power to impose unrestricted rent increases and no-cause evictions. Tenants bear the immediate cost; landlords receive the immediate benefit.

“Higher rent on an existing unit does not create a new unit. Nothing in the proposal requires landlords to use additional rental income for construction, repairs or maintenance. A landlord could sharply increase the rent on a deteriorating property, keep the additional revenue and contribute nothing to Yukon’s housing supply. The existing system already permits annual rent increases based on the two-year average of the Whitehorse Consumer Price Index. Landlords facing extraordinary expenses may also apply for increases above the index. Yet annual increases are not tied to adequate maintenance or improved living conditions.

“Buildings age and deteriorate. Tenants already pay more each year for housing that is becoming older and may be in worse condition. Removing the cap would allow landlords to demand even more without repairing, improving or building anything. The government would remove the limit on price while imposing no corresponding obligation to maintain quality. This is especially indefensible in Yukon’s shortage market. Yukon’s population reached 48,453 in March 2026, increasing by 2.5 per cent in one year and 27.2 per cent over the previous decade. Whitehorse’s vacancy rate was only 1.5 per cent for buildings with three or more rental units in April 2026, while apartment vacancies across Yukon were just 1.0 per cent.

“Tenants therefore cannot simply reject excessive rents or poorly maintained housing. Even inadequate units are quickly taken because people need somewhere to live. Removing the

cap in this environment will not produce competition. It will let landlords exploit scarcity. No-cause eviction has even less connection to housing supply. Landlords can already end tenancies for non-payment, safety risks, property damage, owner occupancy, major renovations, demolition and changes in use. Allowing them to evict tenants who have done nothing wrong creates no housing. It makes it easier to remove lower-paying tenants and re-rent the same units at higher prices.

"A six-month notice period does not solve this. In a market with almost no vacancies, it merely tells tenants earlier that they may have nowhere affordable to go. The government calls this 'balance', but the outcome is plainly one-sided: Landlords can raise rents without a limit. Landlords can evict tenants without cause. Landlords are not required to build new housing. Landlords are not required to improve ageing units. Tenants receive no additional protection beyond advance notice of displacement.

"The current legislation took effect only on September 1, 2025. Approximately 15 months is not enough time to finance, approve and complete a significant rental development. The government cannot credibly blame the rent cap without separating its effect from construction costs, financing, land availability, infrastructure, approval delays and labour shortages. If the government claims this policy will create affordable housing, it must publish: how many new units the policy will produce; what those units will cost; when they will be completed; how unrestricted increases on existing units will lead to construction; how tenants will be protected from eviction for the purpose of charging higher rent; and what maintenance standards landlords must meet before increasing rent.

"Without those answers, this is not a housing-supply policy. It is permission to charge more for an ageing housing stock and remove tenants who cannot pay. The government is using an unproven promise of future housing to justify an immediate transfer of money, security and power from tenants to landlords.

"Sincerely, Yukoners who cannot afford to own a home and are now being priced out of renting, leaving homelessness as the government's next available housing option".

So, that was sent to the minister last week, and sent to me as well.

I think about the government's assertion that people haven't invested, that there hasn't been investment in the rental market, and then I think about my conversations with the Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation and the Housing Initiatives Fund that has had 972 units, I think, built since 2018. Unfortunately, I asked for the breakdown since 2021, and we haven't gotten it yet. But, Madam Speaker, I am confident that people have built rental housing since 2021, since 2022. I know that to be true. Today, we heard about the 150 units that are coming online from Da Dagahay, and that's rental housing.

So, when I look at this as a whole, this isn't about engagement with Yukoners. I was thinking about when the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources said we were ideologically voting, and I think: Well, what is this? What is this right now if not ideology? Right? It's not grounded in fact. I can't find an engagement. We have an entire piece of legislation in front of us with 268 people who participated,

whereas the last review of the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* had 1,500 people who participated, and they disagree with the premise of everything I have in front of me right now. They disagree.

I think about the people who are telling me right now that they're afraid of what comes next and if they can even afford to live here. I think about the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce and the communication that was sent recently to, I'm sure, not just myself and my colleague the Member for Riverdale South but the Premier and probably the Minister of Economy, Tourism and Culture. The number one concern and priority for the business community was the ability to recruit and retain employees. What's going to happen when rent increases, when there could be an unlimited amount of rent increases?

On October 14, CBC — it's titled: "No new help for tenants facing end of rent cap, Yukon premier says." So, I'm quoting from this: "The territory's rental vacancy rate was 2.4 per cent, though it was just 1.5 per cent in Whitehorse. In real numbers, there were just 57 vacant units for the whole territory." Fifty-seven vacant units. That gives mobility, for sure, to tenants, absolutely. It's going to be like *The Hunger Games* to try to find a place, Madam Speaker.

So, the article goes on to say, "That scarcity suggests rents are primed to spike once rent control ends. But even the head of the Yukon Residential Landlords Association, who supports the end of rent control, is urging landlords to go easy on rent increases.

"It's important for landlords to not go out and be like, 'I got screwed over last time. I'm going to go jack rent up to what market [rent] is.'"

This is the president. This is the president of the Yukon Residential Landlord Association — because it's not self-governing. His quote is: "It's important for landlords to not go out and be like, 'I got screwed over last time. I'm going to go jack rent up to what market [rent] is.'"

Do you know the problem, Madam Speaker? They're not self-regulating. The landlord association doesn't tell their members what they can increase their rents to; they're not self-regulating. So, we're here debating changes to a piece of legislation that the Minister of Community Services has done no consultation on since being elected last year. This matters, because how many times did I read off "consultation" in all the questions that I was reading out from 2012 to 2016?

I note that the previous member — the MLA for Porter Creek North — co-signed a letter with me asking for rental protections for mobile homes. That was included in the *Residential Tenancies Act*. That is included in the *Residential Tenancies Act*. When I asked this government, this newly elected government — because they had indicated this was going to happen — I asked if mobile homes would be treated differently. The answer is here, which is that they're not.

So, I ask the other members here who represent mobile home parks: What are you going to tell the people you represent? What are you going to tell them when they call you and say that they can't afford the rent increase and they can't afford to move their home? Even if they could, where would they move it? Because for folks who remember what happened at the Casa Loma Trailer Park, it was devastating. It was devastating. Three people moved homes; nine people — they

just got knocked over because they couldn't afford it. They couldn't move it; they weren't mobile; they didn't have the money to move it; there was nowhere to move it.

I think about the changes here right now, and I think about what the Minister of Energy, Mines, and Resources said when he said we were voting against a motion for country residential lots and that our position was ideological. I ask myself: What is this that we're debating right now if it's not ideology? Because it's not grounded in engagement; it's not grounded in consultation. It doesn't even have the 268 people who participated in the *Firearms Act* to justify a new piece of legislation. It doesn't even have that. It disregards the 1,500 people who participated in 2024 and, again, I note, almost two years after rent control had come in.

This government is telling people to trust them — trust them. Well, people trusted before and that's why we're here. In 2021, I didn't move to have rent control because there hadn't been a problem before. It didn't work. It didn't work then and it's not going to work now. Without any consultation — without any consultation with Yukoners, this government is going to make changes that are going to affect 5,000 households at least, and it's going to be way more, because 2021 is ages ago. So, thousands of renters are going to be affected by this. Thousands of people are going to be affected by this.

When I asked the Premier if there were additional mechanisms in place, if there was going to be more money for rent subsidies to support tenants who can't afford their rent, the CBC article says it all: "No new help for tenants facing end of rent cap, Yukon premier says." No new help for tenants.

I think about the letters that we've gotten, I think about the conversations that we have, and I know that they can't just be happening with us. I think about all of the conversations that got us here. I'll say that it was the Yukon Party's actions between 2011 and 2016 that got us to rent control in 2021. It was the inaction of the Liberal government between 2016 and 2021 that got us to rent control. Because I was asking questions about the 40-percent rate increase that people in Porter Creek Centre were seeing at the time — rent increases that no one can absorb. But we have a government that says that they're doing it. And if this isn't driven by ideology, I am not sure what is.

Because there's an opportunity to push pause. There could be a consultation. There can be an engagement with people. The Minister of Community Services can put this out and ask two questions. Do you support no-cause evictions? It's a really easy question. Do you support rent control? Yes or no? You could ask people to identify if they were a landlord or if they were a tenant.

But mark my words: With thousands of people who are renting in the territory, there are far more tenants than there are landlords. When this is felt and it goes out and we're sending casework letters across the way asking for support for people who can't afford where they live and there's nowhere for them to go, that's going to be a challenge. Because there's an opportunity right now to push pause. This is not a new issue. This is not a new issue. In 2024, 15,000 people weighed in on this issue. Again, just about two years after rent control came into effect and more landlords were in support than were not.

The challenge with a majority government is that you can come in and it doesn't matter what you say or how hard you

fight or all the stories you have in your head or all the things you want to share, it doesn't change the outcome. It doesn't change the outcome, and that's brutal, because when I think about the people who tell me they're going to leave the territory because they can't afford to live here, I can't stop that. When I think about the e-mail from the person telling me that their landlord told them they wanted to increase their rent by 25 percent, I can't stop that.

But there are people in this room who can make a change. The government has the ability to pause it. They have the ability to go out for consultation. Man, I would love if the three members that represented mobile home parks went and asked about the difference between the last years with rent control for pad rent increases — if that's made a difference, because I know it has.

I think about every tenant I've ever met. I think about landlords that I've met. There's lots of interesting things happening online right now, including landlords saying that they don't support this. But there hasn't been a public consultation or an engagement process. There hasn't been an avenue in which to tell this to the minister. The minister said at CBC that he hadn't heard, but I know that's not true, because I read an e-mail from last week.

So, it doesn't matter what we say or how we say it or where it comes from. It doesn't matter about my friend Linda or my friend Marion in mobile home parks. It doesn't matter about all those people, because it turns out that this government knows best without ever once asking, even though when the Premier was the Minister of Community Services, they did trigger a consultation with mobile home owners who did say that rent control was important.

I'm so deeply saddened to be having this conversation and I'm so worried about what's going to come. Right now, there are people who can stop it. I just wonder what they're going to tell tenants — what every Yukon Party representative is going to tell tenants — that this is bringing fairness to the market — I'm sure that will be well-received: This is bringing fairness to the market. You can't afford to live, but it's going to be fair. It's going to be more fair. You have to leave? Don't worry; it's going to bring fairness to the market. I'm sure after a very long time, I feel like I've done my best to keep up to those before me. I'm sure you can guess at this point in time that we will not be voting in favour of these changes.

I thank folks who continue to share their stories and their worries. I'll encourage them to send them to the minister, because there has to be an understanding of what these changes will mean to people, and I'm concerned that the government doesn't understand.

Debra-Leigh Reti: I rise to speak to Bill No. 8, the *Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act (2026)*.

I appreciate the comments from my colleagues on both sides of the House on this bill. I appreciate the history that was talked about just before me. I greatly appreciate that. Housing is certainly one of the most pressing and top-of-mind issues for people across the Yukon, which is why there has been as much interest in the changes that are being proposed here as we've seen and why this has been such a pressing debate for several years.

It is no great revelation to say that housing is complex and there is no single policy that will fix it. But Yukon renters are struggling. Rents here are extremely high, comparable to the biggest towns in the country. In a market as tight as in the Yukon, the balance of power already sits with landlords. So, I do believe that strong protections for renters are essential. That said, though, rent control isn't perfect. It is a blunt tool that tries to navigate the relationship between supply, demand, and price, and it will always carry consequences.

In a recent review I read by the CMHC, the authors note that rent control can keep rents from rising too much for current tenants, but it can also push up rents on new and vacant units and reduce the number of units available. Recent academic literature reached similar conclusions. I'm not here to argue that the current cap was perfect, but I do think it was trying to address a real issue. We can debate whether the policy pendulum had swung too far in one direction, but now with these changes, the pendulum is swinging all the way back in the other direction. That kind of policy whiplash never works as planned, and I suspect we will be seeing and hearing about the consequences of these changes soon.

I do believe that moderate, progressive changes, building on what we have, correcting issues as they arise, and working toward solutions that work for those who most need them is the best path forward. In that spirit, I'm curious whether the government looked at anything other than removing rent caps entirely. There are other models. Manitoba and Québec exempt new buildings for a period so builders can recover their costs. A cap set somewhat higher could have prevented the worst kinds of abuse of a tight market while addressing the concerns landlords have raised. So, I wonder: Were any of these options considered?

Being new, I am also curious how the government managed potential conflicts of interest in making this decision. I know there are members on the government side, including members of Cabinet, who are landlords themselves. I think Yukoners do deserve to know whether or not the government sought advice from the conflicts commissioner about whether those members should be part of discussions on this bill.

Now, turning to no-cause evictions — if this bill passes, the Yukon becomes only the second jurisdiction in Canada after Newfoundland and Labrador where a landlord can end a tenancy without any reason at all. The interesting point here is that the current act already gives landlords many grounds to end a tenancy and real flexibility in how one is set up. The current rules are not the same as they were when no-cause evictions were in place before. I have not heard what problem this change solves.

In the end, it seems that this bill removes two protections at once from the people with the least leverage in this market. I believe it is a step backward for the territory. I look forward to the government's answers in Committee of the Whole.

Brent McDonald: When this subject of rent controls and no-cause evictions came up, I did some research the best I could, and while there's some anecdotal evidence I was able to find of the benefits of it, the vast majority of the information I was able to accumulate did not provide the evidence to support that the changes would be beneficial as they're stated.

I think about the potential effects this can have on my community up in Dawson City. We already have a vacancy crisis. Getting rid of rent controls might work in a free economy, but we don't have one. There is no available building lot inventory in Dawson City. So, when I hear about the supply of rental units increasing, my question is: Where? There haven't been new lots created in Dawson City for some time, and although there are plans for some in the future, they may be still years away.

I think about all the people in Dawson who are working two or three jobs right now just to support their current rents. I think about single parents and I think about families now who are struggling to afford where they're currently at and how increases in rents and possible eviction six months away will affect them and our whole community.

We already have challenges bringing in needed workers to Dawson City and new people to keep our community vibrant. We already know the challenges in education and that our school's experiencing. We're seeing an exodus of families, especially high school students. I know there have been medical professionals and teachers who have wanted to come to our community and were unable to due to lack of childcare, due to lack of rentals or anywhere to live. These are challenges that are already ongoing, and adding this circumstance to it is going to exacerbate that problem. When we're trying to bring people into our community for needed services, this is in a way one more nail in the coffin about why they might choose to go somewhere else or not come — or want to come and simply not be able to. These are people who are working in our schools, our hospital, our early childhood learning centres — they're tradespeople. This issue affects everybody.

When I think about what makes Dawson City so special, a lot of that has to do with a lot of people who are already living on the edge — creative people, our musicians, our artists, our people who are keeping the town running, shovelling snow. The potential of those people leaving our community is going to change the whole fabric of our existence there.

At the moment, it seems like it's a case of tenants needing to hope for the best but plan for the worst. No-cause evictions — they can be teachers, nurses, doctors — no reason. Everybody in the whole territory now who rents has no longer than six months' security in housing — the whole territory. The challenges we face are really significant, and I can't see how this is going to help. I could go on about affordability — we've heard lots about that — but it's going to affect our community if rents go up. There's nothing wrong with rents geared to inflation — that's to be expected — or maybe even a bit higher than inflation, but there should be some limits on that, because that can change. Especially in smaller communities, it can have significant effect.

But what concerns me the most, even beyond affordability, is no-cause evictions. And my main concern on this is the effect it's going to have on free speech.

Now, every tenant in the whole territory has to worry if posting something online, if they voice an opinion that differs from that of their landlord — you're out, evicted. If you don't like dogs, if you don't like cats, if you don't like a person's politics, now landlords, six months down the road — you're out. If you're a tenant, if this passes, now you have to be seriously concerned about what you say, how you act, or you

might be out of a home. That's way more serious than affordability — the ability to express yourself without fear of retribution. If this passes for tenants, that's gone. Can you imagine getting kicked out of your home because you voice an opinion? If you support guns — out six months down the road.

Freedom of speech is one of the hallmarks of being a Canadian. These changes challenge that. Everybody should be able to speak their mind anytime they want about any subject. No one has to like it, but you shouldn't be worried about losing your home over it.

We need everybody's voice to make better decisions. We need everybody's voice to be a part of our community. That single no-cause eviction, over everything else, puts everybody's voice at risk, including mine; I'm a tenant. If this passes, do I have to worry now about speaking my mind right here in the Legislature — that I might lose my accommodation here in Whitehorse? This is a big deal for everybody, and everybody should be concerned about it.

I haven't heard much talk about that, and I bring it forward now because this has potential to do far-reaching damage beyond just accommodation, rent control, and a landlord's ability to use their asset how they see fit. This bill, if it passes, can stifle a person's personal freedom. We should all think about that and consider it. I don't want my voice stifled. I don't think anybody else does either. I urge the government to reconsider.

Justin Ziegler: A lot has been said, and I think we all have a lot to say on this side, because I don't know if anybody else on the other side is going to speak. I try to give an opportunity for anybody else on the other side to stand up to speak, but it looks like nobody has anything to say about it. I just want to actually outline the fact that the Minister of Community Services spoke for slightly over six and a half minutes, and during those nearly seven minutes, she mentioned tenants three times and landlords more than I could count — probably over 15 times.

But the thing is, renters are 50 percent of an agreement with a landlord, right? And actually, overall, I think there are more tenants than there are landlords in terms of numbers. So, we're talking about a fairly large number of people who are going to be impacted by these changes.

As a matter of fact, talking about the rental market, the rental market needs tenants. If there are no tenants at all, there's no market. If there are no landlords, there's no market, there are no investments. I'm using vocabulary that I've heard in this Chamber.

Nobody expects the free market to regulate so many important institutions or systems in the Yukon. This government does not let the free market regulate health care, for example. This government does not let the free market regulate the food industry or agriculture. This government does not let the free market regulate highways or traffic safety. We talked about it today. This government does not let the free market regulate mining, even. This government does not let the free market regulate a lot of things, and the list can go on and on and on. So, I do wonder why this government would let the free market regulate housing.

We talked about gambling today. This is a big gamble. Counting on the rental housing market to be self-regulated by

landlords is a pretty big gamble. And we actually have a government that wants to regulate gambling too, so I think that's interesting.

It's also going to be a gamble to be a tenant — right? — like my colleague from the Klondike just mentioned. Does my having another child jeopardize my housing situation? Does my changing jobs jeopardize my housing situation? Does my making this post on social media jeopardize my housing situation? So, this is a pretty big gamble too.

There are a lot of studies and reports that have shown that no-cause evictions and no rent caps make things more expensive. The one example that comes to my mind — and I actually remember it — is Barcelona, Spain, which had gone into a rent cap housing market and then removed it and then pretty quickly after had to put it back on, because it was a nightmare for everybody.

I just want to quote the Canadian Centre for Housing Rights: "Eviction is a serious assault on dignity, security and may place health and life at risk, and all levels of government are required to prevent eviction wherever possible. Severe economic inequality and the failure of governments to regulate housing markets are systemic and structural failures resulting in potentially widespread violations of the right to housing."

And actually, this brings up the fact that when you rent out a place, you also have some sort of a responsibility to the people you rent it to, right? Because evicting people can change their life course. It can actually put the people you're evicting in a dire situation, and we know that we live in a place where losing housing can just put you at a lot of risk.

There's something else that I also want to talk about around a six-month eviction. I come from France; I lived there for 30 years, and I was a tenant. I've never owned a place in France. There is a law there that bans eviction between October and April. When you're a tenant, you know that you won't lose your housing during the winter months — and we're talking about southern European winter. What we're talking about is minus 5 degrees at most, and here we are potentially going to see some evictions, even with six months' notice, that could happen in mid-January, late February, early December, when losing housing is really the worst time of the year. Not that there is a better time to lose housing, but this should be taken into consideration as well. I think six-months' notice is not enough. There should be a seasonal aspect taken into consideration for that. Well, so many more things should be taken into consideration.

My colleague from Whitehorse Centre has brought forward multiple numbers and studies only to be told that the minister didn't have studies or numbers. The numbers are here. I mean, there are studies; there are numbers, and I wonder how one can make a responsible decision without seeing all the statistics and numbers. I guess when something doesn't fit into your worldview, it's rejected.

The same government recently talked about political interference. I just want to say that, when you only listen one side of the story and you just act according to only one side, I could question whether that is political interference or not. My colleague asked it and I will ask again: Who is this government working for? Certainly not the renters. They were barely mentioned in the minister's Second Reading speech, right? Just striking.

I do hope that the Yukon Party Cabinet receives as many e-mails and phone numbers and phone calls and visits as we do about the anxiety from renters regarding these changes to the *Residential Tenancies Act*.

And we also have to look at the context of when this is happening. The Yukon is a pressure cooker, and we have people who can't afford groceries, they can't afford energy, and they're now about to potentially not be able to afford their rent. So, things are about to become more unaffordable for renters in order for landlords to get some of that pressure released on their investments, because this is what this is about, right? It's about some people's investment.

I'm also really — I think it's really interesting when I see members from the other side. I only heard two members — minister for Community Services and the Member for Porter Creek South talking about evictions. It seems as though they focus on how it impacts the landlord only, right? So, that's why we bring up how it impacts renters. Because again, on a rental deal, there are two sides of the deal, and I think the danger of losing this deal is very different from both sides. Sorry, I'm just going through my notes right now.

So, again, housing is a human right, and I just want to quote the Canadian Centre for Housing Rights again. They say, "Evictions can be devastating for those who experience them. In too many instances, evictions can lead to experiences of homelessness..." And homelessness here in the winter is really dangerous. "It is our duty as a democratic society to protect everyone, irrespective of their income or circumstances, to live with dignity and in secure homes."

What these amendments are doing is just literally putting aside these protections in order to protect personal investments. Now, because this government has the majority, when this bill gets passed — and I've asked already since the beginning of this Sitting for members opposite to speak their truth and tell us their conviction — what brings them here and their political ideas. We need to hear all of this. When this bill gets passed and everything settles and the market is unleashed, I hope that every member of this Chamber who voted yes to this bill knows that they are responsible for what comes next, for the consequences. Every major rent hike, every without-cause eviction, every sleepless night after a six-month eviction notice lands, every Yukoner who has to move away because they can't find a place to rent — this can also be our family. So, I just want that to bear on everybody's conscience while we vote.

Linda Moen: I wanted to weigh in on what it is to be an everyday Yukoner, because that's what I am. I'm not a homeowner. I come from a single-family income. I've raised three children on my own on that single income, and I was lucky that I was a federal public servant for the last 21 years that afforded me that opportunity. But I also lived in a highly subsidized housing situation from Kwanlin Dün First Nation, which highly subsidizes me as a tenant. And if it wasn't for them, I really shudder to think where I would be. Because I guarantee you, as a single-income owner, you are living paycheck to paycheck. There's not a lot of extras. You're lucky if you have the necessities. Sometimes juggling which bills are a priority — electricity being one of them, groceries, paying my heat, do I need fuel?

I think about our civic responsibilities as individuals. And I've mentioned in this House that I'm thankful for my parents who taught me to be a critical thinker, how to think for myself, how to own those thoughts, the consequences that come with making your decisions.

From 2000 to 2004, I sat on the Whitehorse Housing committee and I learned a lot at that time. I also learned that there was an appeal process for evictions. I wasn't a part of that eviction committee, because it was separate, but I know that there was an opportunity even for people who lived in social housing at that time to be afforded a right to appeal an eviction. And there were tenants who did appeal them, and that was afforded by this government. You have a right to appeal almost every decision that is made in our country, even in the highest courts. You can go and appeal convictions. You can have them overruled. You have those opportunities. I sat on a housing committee in my community. I've attended all our general assemblies and I continue that. I wanted to be an engaged parent. I've mentioned in this House before: I am the first generation that has a say in my children's education. Can you imagine if I didn't, what would be happening in that system today? It's 2026, and I am the first generation that has a say about my children's education — publicly. I went and sat on my children's school council for six years. I didn't realize how political school council was until I sat there — and all of the decisions being made, the decisions that affected not just my children but all the children who went to that school. I tell people to get involved in their school council — it's highly political.

When I'm sitting here and I hear members opposite — many of them attend their school councils, many of them have been members on there, many of them made decisions on behalf of their children's education through those school councils, because it matters. We want to have a say; we're engaged; we're consulting; we're influencing administration. We're asking our MLAs to come. We're asking people to listen to what our concerns are.

When I hear a lack of consulting — as a First Nation person, I can tell you what the lack of consulting has done to a certain group of people. Lack of consultation — books are written about it — what it does to certain groups of people who don't have a voice, and that's what each of us are elected here to do. There is not one riding that we can say does not have renters in it. Not one riding can stand and say that it's all homeowners. Because many of us know that's not afforded to many of us. Many of us do not have that generational wealth that was passed on.

What I don't hear being brought up in this House is poverty. I championed that in my own community about having generational wealth. Let's build generational wealth for our people to be homeowners. 2023 — maybe some of my people might be afforded to own a home. I know I'm not one of them — I know that. So, my wish is that my children would have that opportunity to be a homeowner.

I think about the history of this land where this Assembly sits on. This was all First Nation land at one time. But nobody wants to talk about that, because that requires truth. And that truth is not nice — of graders coming at night and moving and displacing us. Moving us further and further and further down until we've ended up by a swamp with no running water, no

electricity, no indoor plumbing. And all that we had was by people who brought it. It was not a given. Everything that we had as people, we fought for, we brought up.

These are the problems; these are the issues. Nobody mentions that Kwanlin Dün and Ta'an Kwäch'än are probably some of the largest landlords in the Yukon aside from Yukon Housing. Kwanlin Dün has approximately 262 housing lots. Ta'an — they want to increase generational wealth for their people. They're a very small population; they're a First Nation.

But again, when I think about the lack of consultation that is happening with this government, it causes me to pause and say: Well, what is the purpose of us being civic-minded and trying to influence all these other decision-makers that the government has regulations and legislation and policies? Again, I will talk about those impacts to certain groups of people. From my own birthright, the amount of policies and legislation that have affected my life is still ongoing because of decisions made in houses like these — and they're not all good.

I remember at one time when was talking about my mom attending residential school and how old she was when my grandparents were able to vote — she was 12. I think about when my mom was taken to residential school when she was four. My grandparents couldn't even hire a lawyer at that time to know what entitlements they had as parents, what rights they had, what other Canadians got to enjoy. No consultation with us — nobody came and asked us in our communities. But here we are in 2026 and we see those effects still happening today — and it's troublesome.

I can't imagine having a no-cause eviction for — again, somebody like me, everyday Yukoner — where would I go? Who is going to help me? Where do I turn to? I don't have money for a lawyer. Did anybody come and talk with me, consult with me, engage?

When these consultation processes first started that the Member for Takhini brought up, I attended them at Sternwheeler Conference Centre, and there were landlords and tenants all at the table. And it was a very heavy topic to talk about. But the discussions that were there were healthy. It gave an opportunity for people to come together and try to find a common ground, like: What's working, what's not working, what are the issues?

We look at the Human Rights Commission now. They don't even have the resources to fully fund themselves. They have such a backlog on issues because human rights are important to people. We see the discriminatory acts that still happen today.

I listen to my colleagues here. I think we're coming into a very difficult time where people are going to be afraid to speak out if you're a tenant. I think the government has the opportunity again to bring two different groups together to find a common ground, to listen to each other and find solutions.

It's disheartening that when I think of a government it is supposed to be reflective of its people, the more times that I stand here as the Official Opposition, the more I realize how much I belong here. Because I don't see myself being reflected in this government and the issues that pertain to me and my family, to my community, to people that I talk to, and I'm astounded at how much more people are approaching me and talking to me and saying how happy they are that I'm here. Because, Madam Speaker, I'm the first woman from Kwanlin

Dün First Nation to stand in this Assembly, to be elected. And it's 2026 — 2026.

And now I'm here bringing up campaign issues. I never heard one person saying that they couldn't wait for no-cause evictions to come into play. I talked to landlords on the campaign. There were some issues, but there were fewer than the people that I know that came up to me and are concerned about this. How do you find a place in six months? Where are you going to go? What options are available?

This government has acknowledged the high cost of living. We just got the electric rate hike. I've seen the notice and the difference in my bills. That affects my everyday budgeting. So, that means I'm going to be taking away from the things that I necessarily enjoyed. Maybe I'm not going out to eat out as much. But I guarantee you, from a single-income earner, that is a treat to go out and eat dinner — that's not your priority.

So, when I stand here and I try to speak about the realities of what it is to everyday Yukoners, again, that engagement and consultation process should be of the utmost importance, the very first thing that a government should do — not could, not would, but should. This is how you engage people. This is how you find that common ground. But the lack of desire is so apparent; the lack of will is so apparent.

Even having a meaningful engagement — like I said, I attended the meetings at the Sternwheeler Conference Centre — I listened to the landlords. I went as a tenant; I went as a decision-maker when I was in leadership in Kwanlin Dün. One of the first things that we wanted to do was empower our people. And part of empowerment is listening to the people, listening to the people who are going to be affected by these changes. That's the very first place we should have started.

We talk about safe, reliable, and affordable. But how about a home? A home for our children. They want somewhere safe, they want somewhere warm, they want somewhere to call home. Do we think about the children who are going to be affected by this? Because we as the adults are supposed to be the ones making wise decisions and choices in these rooms, these places where decisions are being made. And we need those protections in place. We talked about protecting the most vulnerable. We won't even open part of the empty building here for a warming centre.

Madam Speaker, I'm going to share something very personal. I was going to be evicted from my home. And the reason why is because I was medically unable to talk. I had no power of attorney because my illness came on so fast and so quick, and I was actually in a coma. My mother got the notice, and if she didn't happen to see a very good friend of mine who cared about me — a very good friend of mine who happened to be a lawyer, a very good friend of mine who knew what the rights were — I'm not sure where I would have ended up or my children.

We hear from the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce talking about not being able to recruit and retain people because of unavailable housing units and affordability. Just about everybody here, I could probably say with a certainty, has moved here from other places. They came here for dreams. They came here to build a future, came to build a life, and many of them have succeeded. Many of them are very, very successful people. I see that. I know that because I'm not in a lot of the same rooms as them.

I can guarantee you, I know who came and knocked on my door for a lot of elections. I could name them: three — three candidates — two for a territorial election and one for a City of Whitehorse, and that City of Whitehorse was just recent in the last election. That's in my community. I'm not in rural Yukon; I'm not in country residential; I live here in Whitehorse.

So, when I think about engagement and consultation, who is it? I've been bugging people in my community about this legislation, this firearms legislation, because I haven't been consulted yet.

Speaker: Order.

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

*Debate on Second Reading of Bill No. 8 accordingly
adjourned*

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.