Yukon Legislative Assembly

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HANSARD

Tuesday, October 27, 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

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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

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Tuesday, October 27, 2026

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

Prayers

WITHDRAWAL OF MOTIONS

Speaker: Before we proceed to the Daily Routine, the Chair wishes to inform the House of a change made to the Order Paper. Motion No. 121, standing in the name of the Member for Klondike, has been removed from the Order Paper at the request of the member.

DAILY ROUTINE

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

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Speaker: Introduction of visitors.

Visitors introduced

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Statement — Yukon public service collective agreement bargaining

Hon. Jen Gehmair: I rise today to acknowledge the recent tentative agreement reached between the Government of Yukon and the Public Service Alliance of Canada-Yukon Employees' Union. This tentative agreement reflects the sustained efforts between both parties at the bargaining table and a shared commitment to reaching a constructive outcome.

I would like to thank the negotiating teams for their professionalism and dedication through the process. I would also like to thank Yukon Government employees for their patience and for the important work that they do on behalf of Yukoners every day. While the agreement remains subject to ratification, this milestone reflects the value of respectful dialogue, collaboration, and good-faith bargaining. We look forward to continuing the work together to support a strong public service and the delivery of service Yukoners rely on.

Applause

Statement — Mallory's Postering 10th anniversary

Kate White: I have the great pleasure and honour to celebrate my dear friend Mallory Pigage on the 10th anniversary of Mallory's Postering. If you've ever looked for help putting up posters all over Whitehorse, you've likely already met Mallory and her team.

Mallory's Postering is a social enterprise run by Mallory and supported by Inclusion Yukon. Since 2016, Mallory and her team have built a successful business while developing lasting relationships with clients, colleagues, and community members across Whitehorse. Mallory's Postering has been able to support art organizations and businesses to spread their word while employing her peers. The work is valued by clients and brings economic inclusion for her community.

What started as a presentation in my office has led to 14-plus years of friendship, and in that time, she has taught me a heck of a lot. Those of us who are lucky enough to call Mallory a friend know that she thrives in the company of others, loves fully, teases freely, takes no prisoners while playing Skip-Bo, and that tomorrow is not her birthday.

Statement — Mural art installations in Whitehorse

Debra-Leigh Reti: In spending more time in Whitehorse, I have noticed an ever-growing number of beautiful and creative murals and art installations throughout the city. Many Yukoners have probably noticed the most recent additions: wildlife and northern landscape scenes that have been painted on City of Whitehorse traffic control boxes. Local artist Clayton Conner has been hard at work bringing these boxes to life. There are 19 in total. A recent online request for an ice fishing tent to help him complete his work through the colder days was met swiftly by locals who wanted to be sure he was able to continue with his beautiful art contributions to our community.

Another project taking place is through the Youth of Today Society and ATCO Electric Yukon. Local Indigenous youth artists have created artwork that is now being displayed on utility boxes throughout downtown Whitehorse. Each box features a QR code connecting people to the artist, helping to give their work a public platform.

Statement — Yukon heath care workers

Patti McLeod: Every day, Yukon health care workers provide care, support, and reassurance to people across the territory. Health care professionals work to deliver the services and care that Yukoners deserve and require. Delivering health services is a team effort that brings together professionals with a wide range of skills and expertise. They work to provide Yukoners with quality care that meets their individual needs. Their knowledge, professionalism, and commitment strengthen our health system and the communities it serves.

I want to recognize and thank all Yukon health care workers for the important role they play in the health and well-being of Yukoners across the territory.

Statement — Mallory Pigage, local inclusivity advocate

Carmen Gustafson: Today while we have our friend Mallory Pigage and her supporters in the gallery, I'd like to take a moment to celebrate her for living out loud without apology and being such an incredible advocate for inclusivity. In addition to being a business owner, Mallory is a cherished daughter, sister, auntie, and friend. She's also an athlete in several sports and has competed in many Special Olympics, provincial, and national games. Mallory is fiercely independent, very fun, and a little spicy at times.

Despite all the ways that she is a part of the fabric of our community, every day she faces barriers to full participation. Whether it's poorly maintained sidewalks that limit her physical mobility or policies that dictate her income that keep her in poverty despite her hard work, Mallory continues to champion for inclusivity by blowing the doors open into the world she lives in.

I'm grateful that Mallory continues to speak her truth every chance she gets, and it's on us to make sure we listen.

Statement — Highway maintenance crews

Hon. Linda Benoit: Today, I want to thank all the hard-working crews from Highways and Public Works Transportation Maintenance branch. Across the territory last winter, weather ranged from extreme cold to heavy precipitation. This spring, that left a lot of highways and roads in rough shape.

Our highway crews worked furiously as snow and ice started to melt, working to avoid washouts, clean up washouts, and deal with the repairs needed once the weather warmed up. They filled an enormous number of potholes this year, especially along the North Klondike Highway between Carmacks and Dawson City. Our line-painting crew, despite taking a break to assist with potholes, did many kilometres more painting than they have in years past. Our bituminous surface treatment, or BST, crews, including the ripping and reshaping, application, and sweeping crews, almost doubled the amount of BST work completed from the year before.

Again, I wish to thank you all, for you are the backbone of our highway infrastructure across the Yukon.

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Kate White: Today, I have for tabling 235 letters directed to the Minister of Community Services, where I'm cc'd, in opposition to the proposed amendments to the RTA.

Lane Tredger: I have for tabling a report by the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition called *Living Wage in Whitehorse, Yukon: 2026*.

Speaker: Are there any committee reports to be presented?

PETITIONS

Petition No. 3 — Utility billing — received

Clerk: Speaker and Honourable Members of the Assembly: I have had the honour to review a petition, being Petition No. 3 of the First Session of the 36th Legislative Assembly, as presented by the Member for Riverdale North on October 26, 2026.

The petition meets the requirements as to form of the *Standing Orders of the Yukon Legislative Assembly*.

Speaker: Accordingly, I declare that Petition No. 3 is deemed to be read and received. Pursuant to Standing Order 67, "the Executive Council shall provide a response to a petition which has been received within eight sitting days of its presentation." Therefore, the response to Petition No. 3 shall be provided on or before November 9, 2026.

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT the Members' Services Board examine options for enabling 93.5 FM to be received in the community of Old Crow; and

THAT the board report to the Legislative Assembly on its findings and recommendations by April 1, 2027.

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Question — Disability-related services and legislation

Kate White: In June, Inclusion Yukon, Autism Yukon, FASSY, and the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition wrote to the Minister of Health and Social Services. From that letter — and I quote: "Disability is not a separate or isolated experience. Any person can become disabled through illness, injury, aging, or circumstance. The system is built today will ultimately shape the kind of support and dignity available to all Yukoners throughout their lives.

"For years, individuals with disabilities, caregivers, and service providers have been navigating fragmented systems with inconsistent standards, unclear accountability, and significant service gaps. While many front-line workers and departments continue to do their best within existing limitations, the absence of territorial disability legislation leaves too many people without reliable, equitable, and coordinated support."

The disability support community has spoken clearly. When will this government move past considering and start the work of developing disability legislation?

Hon. Brad Cathers: I would remind the member that the motion passed in the spring urged the government to designate a lead department prior to October 31 of this year, which has been done.

Health and Social Services will take the lead in considering the development of disability legislation or policies. While I do respect the input received from those groups and appreciate their perspective, I would remind the member, as I have previously in response to the NDP's comments on this issue, that they seem to conflate services and legislation. We are looking at the question of services as well, not just the question of whether legislation might be appropriate.

Kate White: Unfortunately, the minister has just disregarded the recommendations or requests of experts.

Yukoners with disabilities want to work, learn, and live more independently, but too often, the rules punish them for it. People with disability accessing income assistance live in deep poverty. Earn a little more, and benefits are clawed back; gain independence, and the supports that made it possible are cut back. Many are forced to choose security over full participation in community life.

In the letter, the minister indicated that a review of social assistance is ongoing, but a review behind closed doors that doesn't include the disability community or other affected Yukoners can't tell government how the current policies adversely affect people's lives.

When will the public be able to give input on the latest review of social assistance, and how will the department engage directly with the disability community to find out how current policies affect them?

Hon. Brad Cathers: Again, we will consider what consultation may be appropriate as we do the work on social assistance review. But what I would remind the member is the previous approach that was brought forward by the NDP and

the Liberals did not properly take a look at the question of how the system is supporting people.

We have heard the concerns brought forward, including from other NGOs, that the current structure does not do a good job of supporting people with disabilities in moving into the workforce. We're considering how to do that. We're considering how other jurisdictions in Canada are doing that and assessing whether that is working or not.

Just this morning, I was on a provincial and territorial virtual meeting with the ministers responsible for social services and heard some perspectives of provincial ministers on steps that have been taken in provinces to better support people with disabilities in entering the workforce if they are able to do so, recognizing that there are some who will never be able to work due to the nature of their disability. We are considering what has been done by other jurisdictions and we will use that to help inform the actions that we move forward with.

Kate White: In June, disability organizations wrote to the minister about fragmented systems, unclear accountability, and service gaps. The examples are everywhere. Yukon children with disabilities grow up to find that, as adults, they are offered far less support despite having the same level of need. A person with a permanent disability must prove it to the government every single month, and someone's social assistance is clawed back because they worked. A Yukoner with a mobility challenge waits years on the Yukon Housing wait-list only to be offered a unit with stairs.

People with disabilities, their families, and their caregivers are spending far too much of their time navigating systems that clearly don't work. Each time the minister is asked, his answer is the same: Reach out to your social worker or the director of Social Supports. That puts the responsibility for a system-wide problem on the very people trying to live within it. The disability community shouldn't have to find the gaps and report them one at a time.

Why is the minister asking Yukoners to accept system-wide problems, and when will he close the gaps?

Hon. Brad Cathers: I'm not asking people to accept the status quo. In fact, after nine years of Liberal and NDP neglect of the system, we are taking the action necessary to reform the structure to ensure that it better supports people. But those improvements include service changes; they include policy changes; they may include legislative measures.

But again, the Leader of the NDP keeps touting legislation as a solution for things that are actually addressed through services. We will consider the input from all NGOs, including those who have suggested disability legislation would be useful. We will consider that. That work, as we've previously indicated, will largely begin next year, but we are already working on improving services and policies for people with disabilities, including additional support we've provided to Autism Yukon this year.

As I mentioned, the member earlier in response to one of her caucus members brought forward a specific issue on behalf of a constituent that we change the policy to address that issue for that family as well as others in similar situations. We are already taking steps to improve the system in contrast to nine years of neglect under the Liberals and the NDP.

Question — Whitehorse Emergency Shelter services and downtown core concerns

Lane Tredger: Yesterday, the Minister of Health and Social Services was asked about people who were camping on the sidewalk in front of the emergency shelter in downtown Whitehorse. In response, he said that work was needed to, quote: "… get rid of tents". He went on to say that he had directed his department to — quote: "… crack down".

When CBC asked what the minister meant by a crackdown, he refused to talk to them. But as of 11:30 this morning, almost all the tarps and tents that had been in front of the emergency shelter were gone. I'm hoping the minister can now explain what he meant by a crackdown.

How were the tents and tarps in front of the emergency shelter removed? Who was involved in the process? And what happened to the people who were staying there?

Hon. Brad Cathers: What I want to note first of all is to point out to members that according to recent data provided by Connective, the operator of 405 Alexander, 405 Alexander is operating at approximately 64-percent capacity. That means that all of the individuals who have been outside could be accommodated within the facility unless any of them are prohibited due to behaviour.

I would also point out to the member that when I was referring to a crackdown while I was making mention of the activity taking place there, that activity includes repeated reports that we have heard of drug dealing occurring on the premises, and it is especially regarding drug dealing in 405 Alexander or on the premises that we are asking for a crackdown. That activity is placing people at risk, including the very clients who are most in need of services at 405 Alexander.

Lane Tredger: When people are sleeping under a tarp on a sidewalk in sub-zero weather, it is because every system and safety net in the Yukon has failed them. Being homeless is not a crime; it is a result of failures of government. But instead of responding with compassion and the support, the Minister of Health and Social Services said he would bring in bylaw and the RCMP and get rid of the tents. This report of drug dealing is new today; that was not something he mentioned in his crackdown yesterday.

Tearing down tarps doesn't improve public safety. Taking away someone's tent doesn't give them a safe or warm place to sleep. Unless they get support to find a place to stay that actually works for them, it just means they'll have to move somewhere where fewer people can see them. Often, camping in a less visible place is even more dangerous and makes it even harder for people to connect with the services that can support them.

What happened to the people whose tents were outside the emergency shelter, and will they have a safe place to sleep tonight?

Hon. Brad Cathers: I would point out, as I did to the member previously, that recent data provided by Connective, the operator of 405 Alexander, indicates that 405 Alexander is operating at approximately 64-percent capacity, which means that they have room for everyone who was on the sidewalk outside.

Connective, with HSS support, is working to schedule an interagency meeting in the immediate future with partners including RCMP, bylaw, and the Fire Marshal's Office. We have also taken steps in cooperation with other NGOs such as

Safe at Home to open additional supportive housing. Yukon Housing has taken steps to open housing units. We recognize the need for housing supports to support those in need and for shelter services.

But as I reminded the member, Connective indicates that the shelter is operating at approximately 64-percent capacity, and the part that we are most concerned with cracking down on is the reports of drug dealing on the premises of 405 Alexander, including reports of it in tents. That is of the greatest concern, because those activities, if indeed they are occurring as they have been reported to us repeatedly, are placing the most vulnerable clients of that facility at the greatest risk, not to mention residents of the neighbourhood and businesses in the area.

Lane Tredger: Being homeless is not a crime. Just because the government has utterly failed in their duty to support Yukoners doesn't mean that the people who have suffered the consequences are criminals.

I live downtown very close to the emergency shelter. The people we're talking about today are my neighbours. They are community members. They are Yukoners. They deserve a warm place to stay, and they deserve to be spoken about with respect.

But the minister doesn't seem able to muster even the most basic compassion for their situations. He's never visited the shelter. He hasn't made any attempt to find out why people were sleeping on the sidewalk instead of in the shelter, and he doesn't seem to have tried to find them any help or support. Instead, he called for a crackdown. Now their shelters are gone, and he hasn't even bothered to ask where they will stay tonight. Why doesn't the minister care about what happens to Yukoners who don't have a home?

Hon. Brad Cathers: The member knows that's not the case. In fact, as I reminded the member, in addition to additional housing units that have been developed through partners, including Safe at Home as well as the Yukon Housing Corporation, the recent data provided by Connective indicates that the shelter is only operating at approximately 64-percent capacity, which means there is room for people in need in the shelter right now.

But why is the NDP member standing up and indicating that their party is okay with drug dealing happening on the premises of 405 Alexander? Does the NDP have a problem with government and the RCMP cracking down on illegal drug dealing on the premises of 405 Alexander, and if so, why?

Question — Whitehorse Emergency Shelter services

Debra-Leigh Reti: Yesterday, I asked what help is coming for the people living outside the shelter before winter. The minister answered that he has told the department to crack down on it. These are people who are struggling, and minus 30 degrees will only make that harder. Cracking down and kicking people farther away does not give anyone a warm place to go.

Earlier in this Sitting, I called on the government to put more resources toward this issue, but the government claimed to be already doing everything that was needed. What actual help, like a warming centre or expanded overnight services if and when needed, will the minister bring to these people before the cold arrives?

Hon. Brad Cathers: As I pointed out to the NDP member in my earlier response, in fact, our government has taken steps in conjunction with partners to bring on additional housing units. That includes the 67 units brought on by Safe at Home at the former High Country Inn site; there is still room in that facility. It includes work being done by Yukon Housing Corporation to expand capacity, and it includes, as I mentioned to the previous member, that there is room in 405 Alexander Street, according to the most recent data we've been provided by Connective, updated to me this morning by the department, which indicates that 405 Alexander is operating at approximately 64-percent capacity. That means there is room inside the shelter for people to get warm and for people to sleep in a safer environment than on the sidewalk.

Debra-Leigh Reti: The minister keeps telling this House that the only reason the Connective contract was extended is that First Nation leadership asked for it, but this government said the contract would end in August, and it had no new operator ready to go. First Nation leaders stepped in because there was no plan from the government. If First Nation leaders had not asked, who did the minister expect to be running the shelter this winter?

Hon. Brad Cathers: Again, the member has her facts wrong. The contract had already been extended until mid-September, actually at no additional cost to government, and we thank Connective for that. Again, the request that came forward from First Nation leadership was, rather than going more quickly to an expression of interest for an operator or operators for the shelter — which could include the current operator or others — the request came forward in a unified manner that they wanted it extended to the end of March, which was further than we had planned to extend it. We listened, and it is only because of that unified request that we agreed to extend the contract that long instead of going out through a competitive process, which is what we intend to do to ensure that the services currently offered there, including housing, including food services, and including shelter services, remain available at some locations in Whitehorse. Again, as I've indicated, we may offer shelter services at a different location or locations that will be actively explored, but we recognize that action is needed.

I would remind the member herself that her questions have somewhat changed from yesterday when she was complaining, saying — quote: "… things outside of the shelter have gotten worse, not better." That was the member just yesterday calling for additional action, and now she complains when we take action.

Debra-Leigh Reti: Earlier this Sitting, the Premier said the government wants shelter services that are "compassionate". He also told this House that the status quo will continue this winter and that the government is "always willing to listen" to suggestions.

Here is one: Open a warming centre before the cold sets in and treat the people outside the shelter as neighbours who need help, not a problem to be cleared off the sidewalk. Will the acting Premier take responsibility for this and commit to a compassionate plan for this winter instead of a crackdown?

Hon. Brad Cathers: Again, I have to remind the member of her own words from yesterday when she complained that — quote: "… things outside of the shelter have gotten worse, not better." The member herself complained that more action was necessary — quote: "… effective enforcement measures against the illicit drug trade going on right in front of us" — the member's own words from yesterday.

We are concerned about reports of illegal drug dealing happening on the premises of 405 Alexander Street. That is why we have taken action and asked officials and enforcement agencies to crack down. We also recognize the need for shelter services, which is why we are continuing to fund the operations of 405 Alexander, which, as I reminded members previously, according to recent information from the operator, is operating at approximately 64-percent capacity, which means that for the people who have been on the sidewalk, if they are not able to access other housing units, there is room in 405 Alexander Street, according to the most recent information I've received from the department as of this morning based on what they were informed by Connective. So again, we recognize the need for those services. We will not be opening additional warming centres. I would remind the member that the one that was briefly operated in this building was simply one of a number of locations available for Yukoners and that last winter — one of the coldest winters in recent history — things worked fine.

Question — Employment support for people with disabilities

Justin Ziegler: October is Disability Employment Awareness Month. Yukon businesses tell us they cannot find workers. Our job vacancy rate was 4.1 percent in the first quarter of this year, well above the national rate of 2.7 percent.

The Yukon Bureau of Statistics tells us 11.7 percent of Yukoners live with a disability. Many of these Yukoners are ready, willing, and able to work. Organizations that support Yukoners with disabilities help make that happen. Their job coaches and support workers help them find work, keep their jobs, and take part in their communities. But when these organizations are stretched thin, Yukoners with disabilities wait longer for support, and some may never get the chance to work at all.

How will this government work with local organizations to expand services for employment support for Yukoners with disabilities?

Hon. Brad Cathers: I appreciate this question, because that is indeed exactly one of the things we are trying to do as part of the social assistance review — to determine how we can more effectively support people with disabilities entering the workforce and working as close to full time as they are able to. I've heard concerns expressed directly by NGOs about the system not doing a very good job of that right now. I appreciate the opportunity to meet recently with FASSY and heard their perspective on the need for improvement in that area.

As I mentioned in response to a previous question, I met this morning virtually with ministers of social services from provinces and territories and was very interested to learn more about some of the work being done in provinces to better support people with disabilities receiving the support that they need to enter the workforce and to become fully employed or closer to it. We recognize that there's a need for improvement in this area, and we recognize that during the nine years under the Liberals and Liberals-NDP, this area was unfortunately neglected; we are paying attention to it.

Justin Ziegler: Workers have a legal right to accessible workplaces, and they are also legally protected against disability-related discrimination, including negative perceptions about a disability and its impact on an individual's work. Many Yukoners with disabilities are ready and eager to work, and many Yukon businesses need workers and would gladly hire them.

A workplace that is inclusive, offers appropriate training, and is ready to welcome the public and staff with disabilities is considered ability-smart. But many businesses do not know where to start to make their workplace ability-smart. When a new employee needs a job coach, adapted equipment, or a modified workspace, the owner often does not know where to turn or how to pay for it. An ability-smart workplace benefits everyone.

What programs exist to help businesses increase accessibility and help them hire people living with disabilities?

Hon. Brad Cathers: I appreciate the question from the member. This is an area where we agree that more work is necessary and beneficial. There is an opportunity to better support people who have a disability in entering the workforce and remaining in the workforce. That includes, in some cases, looking at what supports government makes available to businesses to ensure that — whether it's issues of accessibility or another example that has been brought forward to me by a business owner who had previously employed someone with a cognitive impairment, that for some businesses, it is not necessarily possible for them to afford to hire someone who has a cognitive disability without some sort of support from government or an NGO. Determining what those supports look like, there needs to be a significant amount of work done.

This is an area that was neglected during the nine years under the Liberals and the Liberals-NDP. We are taking action in this area, and the Premier and I had the opportunity to meet with Rick Hansen this summer and appreciated hearing his perspective on how to make communities more accessible. We look forward to additional action in this area. We have already, as I've mentioned in previous responses, changed policies at disability services to better support the accessibility needs of Yukoners. We look forward to continued work in this area. There is much work to be done here, but after nine years of neglect under the Liberals and the NDP —

Speaker: Order.

Justin Ziegler: Many Yukoners living with disabilities are ready, willing, and able to work. Some have held the same community job for years with the support of a job coach. Yet many still live well below the poverty line because what they earn can be clawed back from their social assistance. A Yukoner receiving the supplementary allowance for a long-term disability can only earn $3,900 a year before their earnings start to reduce their support. But Yukoners with disabilities are afraid to work too much because, understandably, their motivation fades when their earnings are clawed back each month. This has been an issue for years. Yukon businesses need workers, and these Yukoners want to work.

Will the minister review the rules on earned income so that Yukoners with disabilities can work more without losing the supports they rely on?

Hon. Brad Cathers: Again, I appreciate the question from the member. Yes, that is something that we're looking at. That is one of the reasons why, while the Leader of the NDP has consistently oversimplified the question of social assistance, we're taking the time to get it right. That includes looking at what the system can do to better support Yukoners who have a disability entering employment, to be able to be as fully employed as possible, but also recognizing that we have heard concerns repeatedly about the same thing that the member mentioned, and we recognize that there's a need to look at what provinces are doing.

As I mentioned, I appreciated hearing this morning at the P/T ministers of social services meeting a little bit about steps taken in other provinces, taking a look at what provinces have done in this area to support people with disabilities in the workforce and entering the workforce and ensuring that their financial needs are also addressed appropriately. Those are things that we will be looking at as part of this, and we look forward to seeing what provinces have done and determining what is working, what is not, and where we may be able to borrow from the successes of provinces to better support people with disabilities entering the workforce and being as fully employed as possible while also having their own financial needs met.

Question — Yukon public service collective agreement bargaining

Tyler Porter: After months of negotiations and a conciliation process, the government has announced that it has reached a tentative agreement with the Yukon Employees' Union.

Can the Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission update this House on where things currently stand in the collective bargaining process?

Hon. Jen Gehmair: I'm pleased today to say that the Yukon Government and the Yukon Employees' Union have reached a tentative collective agreement. Reaching a tentative agreement is an important milestone in the bargaining process and reflects the hard work, professionalism, and commitment of both bargaining teams. I would like to thank everyone involved in reaching this point, including the representatives from the government and the union who spent many months working through this negotiating process. Their efforts and dedication have been instrumental in achieving this important milestone.

The agreement will now proceed through the ratification process, including a vote by union members and approval through the government-established process. Until those steps are complete, the current collective agreement remains in effect.

Tyler Porter: Many Yukon public servants will be interested in understanding what happens next. Can the minister explain the ratification process to this House and when employees can expect to receive more information about the tentative agreement?

Hon. Jen Gehmair: It is standard practice for the details of the tentative agreement to remain confidential until the ratification process has been completed. The union will provide information to its members and conduct a ratification vote, while government will complete its own approval process. Once those steps have been completed, information regarding the agreement will be made available. Employees should have the opportunity to review the agreement through the appropriate channels before there is any public discussion about its provisions.

Tyler Porter: Collective agreements play an important role in supporting Yukon public servants and the services they deliver every day. Can the minister speak to the significance of reaching a tentative agreement at this stage?

Hon. Jen Gehmair: Yukon public servants provide vital services to Yukoners in every community across the territory, and I would like to thank them for their continued dedication and professionalism.

Reaching a tentative agreement demonstrates that both parties remain committed to working through the collective bargaining process in good faith. While I'm not commenting on specific provisions until ratification is complete, I am encouraged that the parties were able to reach a tentative agreement and move forward through to the next stage of the process.

Today's announcement is a positive step for employees, government, and the Yukoners who rely on the public services they provide every day.

Question — Cost of living

Kate White: Top of mind for almost every Yukoner is the rising cost of living. The 2026 Yukon living wage report indicated that the wage needed to have a basic quality of life in Whitehorse rose by 9.1 percent over last year. This comes at a time when this government continues to make life more and more expensive for Yukoners.

Despite running on a campaign promise to roll back rate increases, electricity rates have only continued to rise under their leadership. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has told Yukoners that they may have to face an additional 53-percent rate increase to their already high electricity bills. To top it off, the Yukon Party are intent on allowing for uncontrolled rent increases and no-cause evictions. Yukoners can't take much more.

What additional supports will this government put in place to support Yukoners who are struggling to make ends meet?

Hon. Brad Cathers: Again, as I mentioned in a previous response, we are doing a review of the social assistance programs right now but also looking at how that supports people entering the workforce and remaining there, including people who have disabilities. There's also work to be done in that area of taking a look at the welfare wall where people who are working full time are in some cases worse off than if they were depending on social assistance. That work is underway. We are doing that comprehensive work.

Again, I would remind the member that we did not see the system change in the way it needed to under the Liberals and the Liberals-NDP during the period of nine years of neglect and

failed policies. I remind the member also that as a result of the rent control policy that she brought in along with the Liberals, the member herself was forced to publicly apologize to Yukoners who had been evicted as a result of their failed NDP policies.

Kate White: I can't wait for this government to make apologies to the thousands of Yukoners who face no-fault evictions. The minister can go on and on about what the previous government did or didn't do, but the truth is he is in the driver's seat and Yukoners are counting on him to have real answers.

Yesterday in debate on the changes to the *Residential Tenancies Act*, the Minister of Community Services said that short-term disruptions in housing are acceptable because new supply will eventually bring rents down. But she's been unable to provide Yukoners with any projections, research, or data to support the claim that supply will actually increase.

The living wage report finds that shelter is by far the greatest expense for every household type in Whitehorse. The report warns that eliminating rental protections, including the return of no-cause evictions, may mean higher housing costs. The cost of living just continues to climb and Yukoners are already finding it hard to cover the cost of rent.

Can the Minister of Community Services give Yukoners a timeline on just how long they'll have to pay increased rents in order to —

Speaker: Order.

Hon. Scott Kent: It's a privilege to rise today to speak about a number of investments that we're making in affordable housing through the Yukon Housing Corporation and partners. We've spoken on a number of occasions about impending openings in Whitehorse and Dawson City of large units, including the partnership with Da Daghay Development Corporation in Whistle Bend — the Winter Crossing project.

I'd also like to highlight some changes that we made to the Canada-Yukon housing benefit, which is essentially a rent supplement. It has supported more than 300 households to secure and maintain housing in the private rental market. Previously, the program set a fixed benefit amount of $200, $400, $600, or $800 depending on a client's income. However, earlier this year, we made changes to that subsidy stream, implemented in June, which included adjusting the maximum benefit by household size — so, larger households who face higher costs may receive a higher benefit — and introducing a sliding scale so that changes in income lead to proportionate changes in benefit.

Now the maximum benefit for a bachelor suite is $885, and for a four-bedroom suite, the maximum benefit is $1,403. These are just some of the concrete actions that we're taking as a government and through the Yukon Housing Corporation to support Yukoners staying in their homes.

Kate White: Yukoners are working harder than ever and still falling behind, and this government's actions have consistently made things worse. Instead of taking steps backward, it's time that the Yukon Party government looked at what the evidence and research say. They could start with the recommendations of the living wage report, eliminating all fares on public transit, reviewing the minimum wage rate, and introducing a basic income program in the Yukon.

Despite what these ministers in this government have said, these aren't hypothetical situations. These are the lived realities of many Yukoners, and there are tangible actions that will help address the affordability crisis. Will this government commit to implementing the recommendations of the 2026 living wage report?

Hon. Ted Laking: I'm just rising in response to some of the questions about the cost of electricity. As the member opposite is aware, our government brought in a new affordability rebate which is double the size of the previous rebate that existed to help offset the costs of electricity. We've also launched what we call the "dependable grid program", which is approximately a million dollars per year to provide rebates to homeowners to make changes in their homes to make them more efficient to reduce their energy usage, which would in turn result in them having smaller electricity bills. There are a number of elements that we're doing when it comes to energy to help people spend less and to help offset increased costs.

One of the other things that we're doing is actively seeking federal partnerships to help offset the costs that would have to go to ratepayers to pay for some of the necessary infrastructure, such as the Mayo generating facility. By fostering these relationships and seeking these partnerships with the federal government, the hope is that these costs will not have to go to rates and drive it up further. We've seen that in the past where the previous government did put everything on to rates, and that's what led to the cost increases. But we don't think that's a good approach. We think it's a failed approach, and we're going to continue to seek federal partnerships.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

NOTICE OF GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Hon. Scott Kent: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(7), I would like to identify the items standing in the name of government private members to be called on Wednesday, October 28, 2026. They are: Motion No. 187, standing in the name of the Member for Watson Lake-Ross River-Faro; and Motion No. 188, standing in the name of the Member for Southern Lakes.

Speaker: We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Scott Kent: Madam Speaker, I move that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

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

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

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing clause-by-clause consideration of Bill No. 8, entitled *Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act (2026)*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

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

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing clause-by-clause consideration of Bill No. 8, entitled *Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act (2026)*.

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I would like to continue with clause-by-clause, section 6. I would like to welcome officials Damien Burns and Jaime Mellott back to assist today.

Section 55 is amended in clause 6. This amendment of section 55 of the act, which is the section that lays out all the reasons that either a landlord or a tenant may end a tenancy, adds section 68.01, "Landlord's notice", to the list of reasons given in the current list of section 55.

On clause 6

Chair: Is there any debate on clause 6?

Shall clause 6 carry?

Some Hon. Members: Count.

Count

Chair: A count has been called.

Bells

Chair: All those in favour, please rise.

Members rise

Chair: All those opposed, please rise.

Members rise

Chair: The count is 10 yea, seven nay.

Clause 6 agreed to

On clause 7

Kate White: Sur cette section, on parle de la version en français où ça change « au jour »; ça va être remplacé par « au jour précédant le jour ».

Knowing that this is the French section and it's the difference between "au jour", which refers to the day in question, and being replaced with "au jour précédant le jour", the day before that day, the question I have is: When the French translation happens, what steps are taken to ensure that it has the same meaning in both French and in English?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I just wanted to say thank you for your question. This question is best directed to the Minister of Justice. The French drafting versus translation during the drafting is done with the assistance from that department.

Chair: Is there any further debate on clause 7?

Clause 7 agreed to

On clause 8

Chair: Is there any debate on clause 8?

Kate White: Absolutely, there is debate on clause 8.

Clause 8 talks about section 68.01 being added. This is the ability now; this is where the rubber hits the road to the Yukon Party changes, which is the eviction without cause. Can the minister please walk me through this section as she understands it?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: This section, as the member correctly pointed out, is the section that adds the eviction without cause. It adds section 68.01, "Landlord's notice", reading: "(1) A landlord may end a periodic tenancy, other than a tenancy in relation to a mobile home site, by giving the tenant notice to end the tenancy effective on a date that is (a) not earlier than six months after the date the tenant receives the notice; and (b) the day before the day in the month, or in the other period on which the tenancy is based, that rent is payable under the tenancy agreement."

The new section mirrors section 56, "Tenant's notice". In both cases, the tenant or the landlord does not have to provide a specific reason for ending the tenancy. The amendment adds section 68.01 to this list of reasons a tenancy ends. The amendment applies only to a periodic tenancy. Periodic tenancies do not have a determined end date.

Mobile home site tenancies are exempted from the new section because of the substantial time, cost, and effort associated with relocating a mobile home. Sections 61, 62, 64, 65, and 66 of the act similarly exempt mobile home site tenancies from specific types of evictions. These sections are: section 61, "Landlord's notice for landlord's use of property"; section 62, "Landlord's notice for purchaser's use of property"; section 64, "Landlord's notice for condominium conversion"; section 65, "Landlord's notice for change of use"; and section 66, "Landlord's notice for demolition".

A landlord must give a minimum of six months' notice before the tenancy ends. Landlords must serve tenants notice by either: "(1) giving a copy to a tenant; (2) by registered mail; (3) by attaching a copy to the front door, combined with mailing a copy; (4) registered mail; (5) e-mail, if both parties agree." There are provisions of the act that lay out how receipt of the document is considered if there is a dispute or one party is non-responsive. The notice must be received by the tenant at least the day before the rent is due. This means that a tenant must receive notice to end the tenancy at least six clear months before it is to take effect. For example, a landlord wants a month-to-month tenancy to end on January 15 and the rent is ordinarily due on the first of the month. The landlord starts counting at December 31, the day before the rent is due, and counts back by six complete months. They must give notice to the tenant by June 30.

I don't know if I went through this section — 68.01(2): "A tenant may dispute the notice to end the tenancy by making an

application for dispute resolution within 14 days after the date the tenant receives the notice."

This is to provide a window for the tenant to dispute when the landlord gives notice to end the tenancy; 14 days is in line with other sections on ending tenancies.

(3): "If a tenant who has received a notice to end the tenancy does not make an application for dispute resolution within 14 days, the tenant (a) is conclusively presumed to have accepted that the tenancy ends on the effective date of the notice; and (b) must vacate the rental unit by that date". If the tenant does not dispute the eviction within 14 days, they lose their opportunity to do so.

3(a), "is conclusively presumed" means that if the tenant does not apply for dispute resolution within the 14 days, the director of the residential tenancies office cannot accept the application, and (b), the section means that the tenant must vacate the unit by the date in the notice, and that is section 8.

Kate White: Can the minister please walk me through — I'll note in the new section 68.01, in subsection (2), it says, "A tenant may dispute the notice to end the tenancy by making an application for dispute resolution within 14 days after the date the tenant receives the notice." Understanding that the landlord doesn't have to give any reason, can the minister walk me through what would happen if a tenant goes to dispute the notice of eviction?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Should a tenant wish to dispute the eviction within the 14-day time frame, they would go to the residential tenancies office just to ensure that the eviction was done correctly, done within the timelines, and follows the rules in the act, and if they have any other questions or other issues that they would like to bring forward to the residential tenancies office, then they can do so as well.

Kate White: Can the minister help me understand what sorts of reasons in putting this into the legislation that the minister imagines in which a tenant may be disputing that notice to end the tenancy? Is it because it's, for example, how the application or the notice was given?

But as best as I can understand, with section 68.01 being added in, the only dispute that could possibly come is that it was how the notice was given.

If there are other reasons, I'd like the minister, with the support of her officials and the department, to walk us through what other reasons there may be for a tenant to dispute the notice to end the tenancy. But I'm trying to understand — and knowing that 68.01 says that there doesn't have to be the justification or reason — what subsection (2) is about.

Hon. Cory Bellmore: This section is to make sure that tenants have the opportunity to ensure that the legislation is being applied appropriately and that the eviction notice served has been done correctly and follows the rules.

Kate White: Just to build on that, is it my understanding then that the only way that our residential tenancies office could find with the tenant is if it has not been given in the correct format in the correct way?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: That is a reason that this clause exists, to ensure that the legislation is being applied appropriately. I can't speak to any specific situation or other situations that folks might find themselves in that they might want to speak to the residential tenancies office about. I don't know.

Kate White: Based on the fact that section 68.01 says that the landlord's notice stands and there doesn't need to be justification, are there any other provisions in the act where a tenant may be able to dispute the notice to end that tenancy in those 14 days? Are there any other provisions or protections within this act that a tenant could use in subsection (2) of 68.01 to dispute the notice to end the tenancy?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I'm just going to say again that really it depends on the specific circumstances of somebody's situation. The act itself provides the mechanisms to review the circumstances and determine whether the requirements have been met and to establish the legislative framework within where it's met and not to consider specific potential situations in addressing it here.

Kate White: In 68.01, "Landlord's notice", in subsection (1), it says, "A landlord may end a periodic tenancy, other than a tenancy in relation to a mobile home site, by giving the tenant notice to end the tenancy effective on a date that is…"— and it goes on. The reason why I want to highlight that is in 2014 in December when I tabled a petition for mobile home owners, Petition No. 19, asking to make sure that mobile homes were separated out and that rent caps or rent control to pad rent increases had been put on, this is what the minister of the day, now the Minister of Health and Social Services, said. This is in response to Petition No. 19. I'm just going to read a section from Hansard. He says, "The new *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* limits rent increases to no more than once per year, requires landlords to provide at least three months' notice of a rent increase and prohibits increases in the first year of tenancy. This is intended to provide stability and notice for tenants to decide on their options and time to plan for any financial impact. Landlords, on the other hand, will be able to plan to deal with rising costs, inflation, interest rates, renovations and improvements to their property. In the case of mobile home parks, if a tenant renting a mobile home site or pad receives notice of a rent increase from the landlord, the tenant may choose not to accept it and, if so, they have 12 months to vacate the mobile home site. This is a special provision for mobile home park rentals and recognizes that mobile home owners may require additional time to relocate. We recognize that, currently, mobile home owners have limited options for relocating inside Whitehorse. That is something they may wish to raise with the city, as that falls under their jurisdiction."

The reason why I'm highlighting that — and I've brought it up before — is that the minister has said that mobile home owners can't be evicted in the same way as other tenants, but I'll note that there is still the section in the *Residential Tenancies Act* — so different from the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* but the same — that says that a mobile home owner may treat a rent increase as the notice to end a tenancy.

I'm trying to get a sense if within a park, a mobile home owner is given a pad rent increase that they cannot afford, is that not essentially then an eviction notice?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I have spoken on this subject already about how mobile homes have a separate section in the

act. They are treated differently. There is recognition that they are different than regular tenancies.

Section 91, which has been referred to here about rent increases for mobile home sites may be treated as a notice to end the tenancy, has not changed. That is the same, and that is a choice. If the tenant wishes to treat that notice as a notice to end the tenancy, they can do so. It is specific that section 68.01 doesn't apply. It's section 91, which already currently exists in the legislation.

Kate White: I understand that the minister is telling me that section 68.01 does not apply to mobile home owners, but I'm highlighting that in the legislation, section 91 does talk about whether or not a tenant chooses to accept that increase.

The reason why I highlight this is that if a mobile home owner was to be told that their rent would be doubled within six months' time, in the City of Whitehorse, that could mean it could go from $500 to $1,000. In some parks, it could go from $700 to $1,400. That is not, let's say, affordable.

Is that not just a de facto eviction notice?

The minister has said that folks who couldn't afford those increases could go to Yukon Housing or they could go to the RTO, but the reason why I'm continuing to ask is because it appears that section 68.01 can circumvent the ability for a landlord to evict a mobile home owner by merely giving a pad rent increase that is not affordable. I'm just trying to get a sense of how those two clauses play out.

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I'd just like to describe the difference between the two. Section 91 is if the rent increases for a mobile home's site. A rent increase for a mobile home site may be treated as a notice to end the site tenancy. If a site tenant receives a notice of rent increase with accordance to section 90, the site tenant may treat the notice as a notice to end the tenancy.

Whereas section 68.01 is the landlord's notice, so it is the determination of the tenant at that point in time to decide whether that doesn't work for them. If it doesn't work for them, they have 12 months in which to make the changes they need to in their tenancy agreements.

Kate White: I appreciate the minister's efforts to explain that. But I think the concern I highlight still stands, which is if a landlord of a mobile home park chooses to use an increase in such a way as to force out a tenant, does that not circumvent the part where it says that the landlord may end a periodic tenancy other than a tenancy in relation to a mobile home site? I appreciate that the minister is saying that it's a tenant's decision to stay or not.

My question is: If that increase is of such significance that it is not possible to pay, is that not essentially a notice of eviction?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I think that we've talked about mobile homes quite a bit already in debate, and I think that we've recognized the difference for mobile home ownership versus regular tenancies and that there's lots of provisions in the *Residential Tenancies Act* that recognize the difference as well as section 91 and the fact that it is being excluded from the landlord's notice.

I also think that in our discussion, we've also talked about the need to monitor what's happening with these changes and that we could look at having mobile home sites monitored specifically to see how these changes might affect them.

Kate White: The minister just said "could" monitor mobile home sites. Can I ask for confirmation?

Then will she commit to monitoring mobile home sites for — for example, pad rent increases and the possible unintended consequences of those increases?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I will say that yes, I will talk to the department and the Bureau of Statistics in the work that we're doing to increase the monitoring to see if we can make sure that there's specific monitoring for mobile home parks.

Kate White: I appreciate that confirmation from the minister. In Committee of the Whole debate, as we've been discussing this, I'd asked the minister about specific jurisdictions or other locations that the minister had looked at that had eviction without cause.

I just wanted to know if anything has changed since we had those initial conversations.

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Nothing's changed since we had those conversations.

Kate White: Since we started these conversations on the *Residential Tenancies Act* amendments, has the minister heard from community members concerning the eviction without cause?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Yes, I have received a good number of pieces of correspondence from tenants as well as from landlords, actually, in the last few days since we've been having these conversations.

Kate White: Can the minister give the Assembly an idea of the intention or what those communications were indicating or encouraging or asking for?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I don't recall exactly what the different correspondence was asking for. There was a variety of information. We received specific points. We will ensure that we answer all correspondence we've received on both the raising of rents and the no-cause evictions. Those are obviously the two main points which people are making comments on, and I will ensure that we do respond to every person that has sent in correspondence.

Kate White: I have a sense of what some of those letters in the last 24 hours request, and one of them would be to not allow no-cause evictions in the Yukon.

Understanding that more folks have written in the last 24 hours than the minister's formal or informal engagement on this issue, does this give the minister pause at all about moving forward with clause 68.01?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I did receive correspondence as indicated, certainly on requests for action to pause, as well as I've received correspondence that indicated the approval of no-cause evictions. At this point in time, we'll continue on as we are.

Kate White: I can quite easily document the 235 requests to pause. Can the minister tell me how many pieces of communication or correspondence she's received to continue on with no-cause evictions?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I can say a multiple, but I don't have a specific number.

Kate White: I'll just view that as one of the similar challenges I've been having with data throughout and note then when I asked that there wasn't a specific number.

Chair: Is there any further debate on clause 8?
Shall clause 8 carry?

Some Hon. Members: Count.

Count

Chair: A count has been called.

Bells

Chair: All those in favour, please rise.

Members rise

Chair: All those opposed, please rise.

Members rise

Chair: The count is 11 yea, seven nay.

Clause 8 agreed to

On clause 9

Kate White: So, in clause 9 of the *Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act (2026)*, we're talking about section 90 of the current *Residential Tenancies Act*, which is around mobile homes, and it says: "Timing and notice of rent increases." So, currently, section 90 indicates that notice must be given. It says that three months notice must be given and it's going to be changed to six months.

Can the minister please give me an idea of available mobile home sites in the city of Whitehorse where a mobile home could possibly move to if required? I note this because now the rent increases are going to be six months instead of three months. But based on my experience in supporting those at the Casa Loma mobile home park, that's not very much time either.

Can the minister please walk me through where she might envision folks who may need to vacate a park could go?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I don't have the information as requested from the member of the number of vacant mobile home sites in the City of Whitehorse. These are privately held properties, like most landlord-tenant situations that we have, and there are sites that come available and sites that are vacated from time to time. But I don't currently have that information.

Kate White: Understanding that the minister is also responsible for land development, has the minister had any kind of conversations with her colleague the Minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation around the creation of Condo Corporation No. 69? That is in Takhini off of Range Road, and it's a condo corporation of mobile homes.

The reason why I ask is — is there intention for the minister and her colleagues or her department to look at developing additional space where mobile homes could be relocated to?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: In discussion about land development, we have said that we are looking at different types of lots across the community as well as across rural communities. There's a different range of lot types that are needed in order to meet the whole housing continuum of lots, from lots available for affordable homes, low-income homes, and shelter services as well as high density, which has been what has been built recently — a lot in Whitehorse in order to meet the demand — and home ownership.

If there's options available that come available that people are interested in talking about, I'm interested in talking about it as well. I would like to look at the whole housing spectrum and see what we can make available for people here to work on the housing continuum here in the Yukon.

Kate White: Understanding that if an existing mobile home was to be relocated from where it currently is to a new place, that mobile home would no longer meet the building code or requirements, so is the minister interested in looking at programs or supports to help mobile home owners if there is a need for them to relocate?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: In that specific scenario, I certainly would be interested in looking at whatever supports are available and how we can help folks ensure that their homes are safe and stable.

Kate White: Taking note of what the minister has just said, if folks who are currently in mobile homes in mobile home parks have concerns and would like to find out what supports exist, where should those folks reach out to currently?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I think that we've talked at length about the good work of the people done at the residential tenancies office. I think that is a great place for people to start.

Kate White: Just seeking clarification: If a mobile home owner who was worried about having to relocate their home was looking for programs to help them meet the current building code, the minister would direct them to the RTO?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Yes, the great place to start would be contacting the residential tenancies office. They can help connect people to different departments and different places that are needed depending on their specific situation — so, within the department or within other government organizations.

Kate White: I appreciate that. I'm just seeking confirmation: If folks have questions about the current building code and how it is applied to their existing mobile home, the minister is suggesting that they do reach out to the RTO; is that correct? That questions around building codes, relocating mobile homes, existing lots, how to make sure those mobile homes meet the current building code, the minister has suggested that they reach out to the RTO office; am I understanding that correctly?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: There is a variety of different circumstances in the situations just listed. Specifically, if you have questions around the code issues in your home, the best place to contact is the building safety office.

If you are unsure or want to know about how it affects the mobile home movement, the best place to call would be the residential tenancies office, and they can direct your call from there if they're not able to assist.

Kate White: I appreciate that clarification from the minister.

If folks are interested to know what kind of financial support programs exist to update their mobile homes, which department should they speak to?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I would still suggest that they contact their residential tenancies office. There's a variety of programs in different departments. Depending on what it is they're hoping to do with their accommodations or their home, the great place to start again is talking to the folks at the RTO, and they can redirect folks depending on the type of upgrades they would like to make to their home.

Chair: Is there any further debate on clause 9?
Does clause 9 carry?

Some Hon. Members: Count.

Count

Chair: A count has been called.

Bells

Chair: All those in favour, please rise.

Members rise

Chair: All those opposed, please rise.

Members rise

Chair: The results are 10 yea, seven nay.

Clause 9 agreed to

On clause 10

Kate White: Clause 10 talks about section 147 being amended. Section 147 is the "Regulation-making powers". Can the minister please walk me through the effect of removing or repealing paragraph 147(1)(f)?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Clause 10, paragraph 147(1)(f) is repealed. Section 147 was included in the last round of amendments to give Cabinet powers to make regulations to impose a rent cap. Removing this paragraph means that Cabinet cannot make a regulation limiting rent increases, and a considerable number of regulation powers are listed in this part of the act. The bill does not recommend any additional changes to section 147.

Chair: Is there any further debate on clause 10?
Shall clause 10 carry?

Some Hon. Members: Count.

Count

Chair: A count has been called.

Bells

Chair: All those in favour, please rise.

Members rise

Chair: All those opposed, please rise.

Members rise

Chair: The results are 10 yea, seven nay.

Clause 10 agreed to

On clause 11

Kate White: Clause 11 is "Transition — notice of rent increases", and it reads: "If a landlord gives a tenant notice of a rent increase before the day on which section 5 of this act comes into force, the provisions of the *Residential Tenancies Act*, as they read on the day of the notice, continue to apply in respect to the notice of the rent increase." So, I'll note that section 5 of the act — it says, "Government is bound", so the act binds the Government of Yukon.

Can the minister please walk me through what clause 11 does?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: What clause 11 does is the transition. The transition section is added to clarify when these changes to rent increase notices come into effect. A landlord giving a tenant notice of a rent increase before December 1, 2026 is bound by the current act. This means a notice for rent increase given before December 1, 2026 could not exceed the maximum rent increase set by regulation, and the landlord would be required to give a minimum notice of three months and not six months.

Kate White: How is that enforceable by the minister's department?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Just for clarity, to add to the example provided, if a landlord provides notice of a rent increase on November 30, the current act applies, and the rules and that legislation apply. If on December 1, the rules as listed here apply. If there's a dispute, tenants can seek the advice of the residential tenancies office through their dispute resolution process.

Kate White: Just to confirm my understanding: Does it mean — even if a rent increase was given prior to the December 1 notice, it had to follow with the rent control, but would that tenant still be able to be given an eviction without notice come December 1?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Whatever situation occurs between a landlord and a tenant prior to December 1, so November 30 or earlier, the current act applies. As of December 1, these changes now apply.

Chair: Is there any further debate on clause 11?

Some Hon. Members: Count.

Count

Chair: A count has been called.

Bells

Chair: All those in favour, please rise.

Members rise

Chair: All those opposed, please rise.

Members rise

Chair: The results are 11 yea, seven nay.

Clause 11 agreed to

On clause 12

Kate White: Clause 12 states: "Transition — notice of rent increases for site tenants". Can the minister please walk me through the effects of this clause?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Clause 12 is the same explanation as clause 11. This transition section is added to clarify that when these changes to rent increase notices come into effect, for mobile home site tenancies, a landlord who has given a tenant notice of rent increase before December 1 is bound by the current act. This means a notice for rent increase given before December 1, 2026 could not exceed the maximum rent increase set by regulation, and the landlord would be required to give a minimum of three months', not six months', notice. December 1 and after, these changes to the act would then apply.

Chair: Is there any further debate on clause 12?

Some Hon. Members: Count.

Count

Chair: A count has been called.

Bells

Chair: All those in favour, please rise.

Members rise

Chair: All those opposed, please rise.

Members rise

Chair: The results are 11 yea, seven nay.

Clause 12 agreed to

On clause 13

Kate White: I've had grave concerns about all of these amendments since the beginning. But my concern around the coming into force as of December 1, 2026 — I note that's less than two months after the legislation was initially tabled in the Assembly.

The minister has talked about the need to give tenants additional notice or warning for things like rent increases or evictions without cause. Yet these changes are going to be delivered to the public and actionable in less than two months since the legislation was tabled.

Why was December 1, 2026 chosen as the day that this act comes into force?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: We've talked a lot about the need to stabilize the rental market here during debate and various different things that we've talked about with the *Residential Tenancies Act*. There is a need to make these changes, and there's no need to delay them any further. We would like to start to see the supply of the rental market increase as soon as possible, and we'd like to start to stabilize the market. December 1 was chosen as the date to come into force.

Kate White: I'll note again that we asked about engagement that had happened leading up to these changes. We asked about who was consulted and who wasn't. Yesterday, the minister had a laundry list that maybe she could repeat for me.

When will communication happen to Yukoners about these changes? We are here in Committee of the Whole. It will go through Third Reading today. Well, despite my best efforts, the legislation will pass.

When will communication to Yukoners about these changes that will be in force on December 1 take place? How and when will the minister communicate the changes that she is pushing through with the *Residential Tenancies Act*?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I understand that there are already some communications up about proposed changes and just to let people know what is being considered up on the website.

When the bill passes, the intention is to reach out to stakeholders, First Nation governments, and others involved that are affected by these changes to inform them that they are coming and they will be in effect on December 1. In addition, obviously we would be updating the website, sending out notices to rural communities, and running advertising campaigns to make sure people are notified and aware of what the changes are and what they mean, and the good folks at the residential tenancies office will be able to supply that information as well.

Kate White: Can the minister give me a timeline and when that communication is expected to take place? Again, I'll note that between when the act was tabled and when it comes into force is less than two months. This must be rolling out — the department must be ready to go.

Can the minister give us a date as to when these communications will be rolling out?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Just to add to the information I provided already, the RTO sent information the day that the bill was tabled just to let people know about the proposed changes. There's as much information available as soon as possible, and further communication and stakeholder engagement on what the changes are and when they would take effect would happen right away.

Kate White: Can the minister please let me know — she's alluded that there's communication about this available already.

Can she tell me where that communication is and that advertising is?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: The information is available on yukon.ca for folks that are interested in seeing what's available right at this moment in time.

Kate White: I want to clearly understand. For example, I'm on the *Residential Tenancies Act* page right now. I'll note that this was not the first page it brought me to. I had to find many pages, where it says, "Proposed changes to the Residential Tenancies Act (RTA) have been tabled in the Legislative Assembly. If passed, changes will take effect on December 1, 2026. Learn what's being proposed and how it may affect you. What's changing? The changes proposed include: allowing no-cause evictions; and removing the rent cap. If passed, these changes will take effect on December 1, 2026. Until then, the current *Residential Tenancies Act* remains in effect."

Is this the only place this information is currently available? The minister has said that there's been communication about it circulated. Is what I just read the only information that's been shared with the public about these changes to date?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: This information is available on yukon.ca, as pointed out, as well as at the counter at the residential tenancies office. There's a long list of housing organizations, landlords associations, First Nation governments, housing agencies, realtors association, development corporations, and other community organizations that have been contacted by the residential tenancies office just to ensure we're trying to get out as much information as we can in a timely manner.

Kate White: Can the minister give me an idea when that outreach happened? I'm just trying to get a sense — she had a list. I still don't understand how a tenant, if they didn't go looking to the *Residential Tenancies Act*, specifically Googling that to see proposed changes — I'm checking on Facebook — I'm not sure. I'm happy to be directed to where I should be looking, but where was this communicated broadly to the general public, these changes?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: When the bill was tabled initially, there was a press release issued as well as a media event that I hosted.

Kate White: For the 2,347 Yukon households at least that we know about because of the Yukon rent survey that didn't watch the press release or the press conference or read the press release, how has this been communicated to Yukon tenants so far?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I think that many avenues were used to provide information as much as possible with the media event, the press release, the e-mails that went out on the organization, the update to the website, and fact sheets and information available at the residential tenancies office. That is a good amount of information for public consumption, and I think that has been great so far, actually.

Kate White: I've asked for the timeline for the communication strategy that will be released once this is passed.

Can I also get the anticipated cost of that campaign?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I don't have that information available; happy to share it when I can.

Kate White: I'll note that there are two officials sitting next to the minister, so I'll ask the question again.

What will be the cost of the communication campaign that will be rolled out once this act has passed this House?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I've answered that question.

Kate White: I am going to note my disappointment — my ongoing disappointment, actually, with the process — knowing that this act will come into force less than two months after it was tabled in the Legislative Assembly, to know that there was no engagement prior to the changes, that the communication that ministers indicated happened once it was tabled, she believes is adequate. I disagree.

I will note that I have grave concerns about the date on which it begins and disappointment about the lack of information with the questions I've asked.

Chair: Is there any debate on clause 13?

Shall clause 13 carry?

Some Hon. Members: Count.

Count

Chair: Count has been called.

Bells

Chair: All those in favour, please rise.

Members rise

Chair: All those opposed, please rise.

Members rise

Chair: The results are 11 yea, seven nay.

Clause 13 agreed to

On title

Title agreed to

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Madam Chair, I move that you report Bill No. 8, entitled *Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act (2026)*, without amendment.

Chair: It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that the Chair report Bill No. 8, entitled *Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act (2026)*, without amendment.

Motion agreed to

Hon. Scott Kent: Madam Chair, I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call this House to order.

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

Chair's report

Patti McLeod: Madam Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 8, entitled *Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act (2026)*, and directed me to report the bill without amendment.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

GOVERNMENT BILLS

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

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

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

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 third time and do pass.

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I'll just take a few minutes to relay my appreciation for the work that has been done here, the rigorous and lively conversations and debate on these changes to the *Residential Tenancies Act*.

I understand that we don't agree on rent control and how we'd like to move forward to make safe and stable homes for folks here in the Yukon. I do know that this is a narrow piece of the housing continuum. I do know that work is continuing in all areas for housing for Yukoners, and I do think that this work will help to stabilize the private rental market and bring investment back into the Yukon. Yukoners are a big portion of who makes up landlords here — everyday Yukoners who are renting their secondary suite, their home, or they have a few units that they have invested in and look forward to bringing them back into the market and helping us solve the issue of housing here in the Yukon.

I want to acknowledge that I do think that the intentions of the previous changes to the *Residential Tenancies Act* were made with good intentions. I do think that the idea was to help stabilize housing and work for Yukoners, but we've seen now that did not work. That type of work really just is a moment-in-time stabilization, and as we move forward, prices continue to rise and demand continues to fall and the gap just continues to get larger over time.

With my colleagues and assistants in the different work that we're doing across the housing spectrum — from the shelter to affordable housing, rent-geared-to-income housing, bringing in our partners with First Nation governments, municipalities, development corporations who are providing these types of homes to Yukoners, and continuing to grow that part of the market is very important, and we'll continue to do that good work.

I also believe that providing land and opportunities for people to build homes for their own use, for secondary homes, or whatever they choose to do, because it is a private rental market, is great. We will continue to do that good work as well both here and across the Yukon in various different communities.

I appreciate all of the information that has been relayed, the history, and where people are coming from. I do understand that we're all here to do good work for Yukoners. We're all here to make sure they live in safe and stable homes, and I do hope to see that going forward.

Thank you very much, and I appreciate the time we've had here to debate this bill.

Kate White: I appreciate that the Member for Lake Laberge wanted to end this, but I'm not ready yet. I thank the minister for her three minutes and 12 seconds of comments in Third Reading of Bill No. 8, *Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act (2026)*.

There are so many things, and I'm going to do my best to get through it in a way that makes sense, in a way that is linear. I'll note that I think so much about how important it is that we stand by our decisions, that we stand by our actions, that we stand by our values, and I'll note in Second Reading to Bill No. 8, the *Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act (2026)*, that we actually didn't get to hear from very many folks on the government side. By that, I mean we didn't hear from anyone except for the Minister of Community Services.

I'll note that there are private market rentals in every community in the Yukon — every community in the Yukon, every riding, for certain — represented by members of the NDP, by the member for the Liberal caucus, and certainly by members of the Yukon Party caucus. The minister has spent so much time telling us that this is insignificant, that this is not a big piece of legislation, that this isn't big changes, that maybe the more times that it gets said, people will believe it. It wasn't 185 pages, certainly, but the consequences will be devastating. They will be devastating.

I would expect that if people fully supported these changes, they would have no problem standing up and speaking to the people they represent to say: Yes, I support these changes; I understand these changes, and I agree with them. I think about how far this has strayed from the joint letter that the previous Member for Porter Creek North and I wrote to the then-Liberal Minister of Community Services where we wrote: "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." and "We also suggest that mobile home owners should not face eviction without cause as permitted under current legislation."

So, I guess that's a relief, maybe in desire more so than action, because as these changes come forward which allow for unlimited increases, including to those in mobile home parks, it essentially equates to an eviction without cause. Because if a mobile home tenant can't afford to pay the rent increase, then what does that really mean? Is it the tenant's decision, the homeowner's decision, to vacate the park or is it a consequence of these changes to this legislation?

When I talk about Porter Creek North, I think about Benchmark Trailer Park nestled just on like the toe of Crestview — it's beautiful. It goes up in stages and levels, and I tell you, the folks at the top of that trailer park have an incredible view. They have an incredible view, and they have an MLA who hasn't spoken for or against the changes that we're seeing right now, knowing that her predecessor believed that there should be rent control in mobile home parks.

I think about the folks in the Baranov Trailer Park behind the Porter Creek Mall. I think about the challenges that those folks have faced in the last number of years. I think the fact that their MLA has decided that this is good — this is good policy that there not be rent control on pad rent increases.

I spent 14 years representing Northland Trailer Park — 14 years, until my riding changed. When it was Takhini-Kopper King, Northland was one of mine. It was through Northland Trailer Park that I learned about the challenges of affordability and what could happen if you had a park owner who would just give you regular increases — not an increase of services, just an increase of cost.

I think about all the conversations that I had in Northland about the importance of fairness and making sure that people had security of tenure, that they were able to plan going forward. I think about the nearly 200 households there that will be affected by these changes and the fact that to date, the Member for Porter Creek South has yet to speak on them.

I think about the Prospector Trailer Park and the Kopper King Trailer Park — also two parks that I represented for a very long time. I think about the work that folks in Prospector and I did together when on the top bench, people couldn't access their trailers because of the road washout. Together, we went through the dispute resolution process with the RTO and they were able to get three months of back-pay for their rent. I know the families there and their concerns around affordability, and I wonder what the Member for Porter Creek South will tell them — that he supports the changes to the legislation because it's going to bring balance to the market, that it's going to bring fairness to the market.

I think about those folks in Kopper King who faced even more challenges for lots of different reasons. I imagine going up to a couple of those doors and saying: Well, I know you've got it bad now, but it's just going to get worse, but I support fairness in the market, so this was the way to go. And I think about my friend who has just moved into Lobird with a big family who purchased before this legislation was tabled, when she thought that there was rent control — that she'd be able to anticipate any kind of increases in that mobile home park — and now those are gone. That's the Minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation. But we have been told that folks who have concerns with increases to their rents or increases to their costs can go to the Yukon Housing Corporation to ask for help. Unfortunately, folks in mobile home parks don't qualify for the Canada-Yukon housing benefit. So, what does that mean for my friend in Lobird?

I note that there are more than 650 mobile homes in Whitehorse — 650 households are going to be adversely affected by this, but the Minister of Community Services has told me not to worry because, although no-cause eviction is allowed to be used for any other tenant, mobile homes are exempt. Except, Madam Speaker, they really aren't. Because if a person can't afford the rent increase, well, what are they going to do? Where are they going to go? What's going to happen?

In the last number of days when we've been discussing these changes, there's been all sorts of interesting comments. I was told that data didn't matter. I was told that statistics didn't really matter. When the minister continued to tell me that the data showed that there was a decrease in rental units and I asked to be shown where that data came from, she pointed me to the *Yukon Rent Survey — April 2026*.

And so, the interesting thing is, in comparing Yukon rent surveys and just even comparing April's and going back to 2020 — long before rent control or the changes that removed no-cause eviction — it just shows an increase.

Then the minister told me that she had conversations with people, and I asked if they were formal. She said that no, people had reached out, and I said: Well, could you share that information? And I'm still waiting for it. Madam Speaker, if anything, I'm optimistic. I'm optimistic.

So, when I asked the minister if she directed her department or what kind of policy work was done ahead of these changes and I asked: Did you do a cross-jurisdictional scan? Did you look across Canada for other examples? — she told me no.

When I said: What other jurisdictions in Canada allow for no-fault eviction, no-cause eviction? — I didn't get an answer. But that's okay, because I can tell everyone it's Newfoundland and Labrador. I mean, even Toronto — but even Ontario — Doug Ford's Ontario doesn't allow for no-fault evictions. You can't even look to Alberta as being an example where they allow no-fault evictions. But we're going to go there. Yukon is boldly going where no one has gone in a very long time. We're going backwards.

There are big conversations right now in Newfoundland and Labrador. There is a big push against no-fault evictions and trying to remove that. But because maybe there wasn't a jurisdictional scan, maybe the minister didn't know that there is that push there to remove it. And wouldn't that be something if Yukon were to stand alone in the country and say that there is no rental protection for tenants? Absolutely none. Absolutely none.

Then the minister told me that it wasn't about the numbers or the stories, and there was the assertion that there would be the need to collect data going forward, which is fascinating, because one would think that you'd want the data before you made the decision. You would want an understanding of what exists, what the current scenario was. But that wasn't the case.

When my colleague from Whitehorse Centre put forward a motion to make sure that there was data collected about rent increases and evictions, the minister said — and I'm quoting; this is from October 21: "I think that we definitely need data. We definitely need good, concrete, reliable data that we can all use to have input into and base decisions on, and that work is really important as we see these changes in the *Residential Tenancies Act*. We've committed to monitoring the changes that have been made. I don't want to go on too long. I just wanted to say thank you for bringing this forward."

So, data is going to be important once the changes are made, but data wasn't important to make the changes. Madam Speaker, I think that's a concern, because when I asked the minister how many rental units there were in the territory, she told me she did not know. She did not know about the number of tenants, the number of landlords, or the number of rental units in the territory. So, this is a piece of legislation that affects an unknown number of people.

That can sound insignificant until we look to the Yukon rent survey from April of 2026. And the reason why I keep on going back to this one is because this is what we were using for comparables. I think it's important that I note that the numbers we have are from the Whitehorse rent summaries, which don't talk about Yukon-wide numbers.

And then just to make sure that everyone understands, this does not include subsidized or government-owned housing. And the minister highlighted concerns about the number of people who were currently accessing the Canada-Yukon housing benefit and whether or not they would be captured in the subsidized housing. But then I came back and said it was, I think, 214 people currently from the 2026 response to the Auditor General recommendations.

In the Yukon rent survey, we know that there are at least 2,374 households that are rental units, that are not subsidized or government-owned housing, that are not informal or illegal units. But 2,374 is not the entire picture, because there's no data. And the minister didn't direct her department to find the data, didn't ask the question: How many people can this affect? And it's not just folks in this situation, because yesterday, we found out that the changes in removing section 3 of the

Residential Tenancies Act, which is removing the clause that says rent increases in owner-occupied living accommodation, means that people in a roommate situation that share a kitchen or a bathroom with the owner of a unit now have no protection at all. Before, they benefited from three months' notice of a rent increase.

In the haste to remove any connection to rent control, instead of going in with a scalpel, we went in with a sledgehammer. There was the ability to amend it to say if the owner of a living accommodation shares bathroom or kitchen facilities with a tenant, subsections 40(1), (2), and (4) apply with respect to any rent increase, which would mean that they would be given notification, six months' notification. But instead of going in with a scalpel, the minister went in with a sledgehammer.

So, for any Yukoner who is currently in a situation where they are renting from the owner of the unit, as of December 1, this government has brought them absolutely zero protections. When we asked the minister how many people this could affect, the answer was: I don't know; we don't have the data.

Now, Madam Speaker, I will tell you, I have had roommates. I have had roommates who lived at my house, and I could not imagine telling them that tomorrow their rent was going to increase by even $50 without a little bit of planning. I can't imagine telling people who lived in my house that actually, as of tomorrow, rent is $200 extra a month. And then, guess what? Six months later, I could do it again, because by using the sledgehammer to get rid of section 3, the minister has just wiped out any kind of protection for folks who are in this situation — any kind of protection without knowing how many people it affects.

The minister has told me that a lot of my examples are hypotheticals, that the questions I was asking about what happens next were hypotheticals. But I've been here a long time, and those hypotheticals are real because they have happened already.

In 2014, my colleagues were asking questions about rent increases of 100 percent to a Yukon Party government and what that does for housing stability. And it's interesting, because the reason why we got to rent control in the first place was because of the inaction of the Yukon Party.

I think it's so fascinating, because there's this retelling of the story about how, you know, it's everybody else's responsibility that we got here — it's everybody else's responsibility. Then I think back to when I was first elected way back in the day and I think about the $13 million in affordable housing money at the time that was earmarked for housing development.

And then I'm reminded that the then-Minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation said that he had been contacted by developers and landlords who were concerned that building affordable housing could affect their ability to compete in a market — that it could affect their ability to compete in the market — and so what happened? That plan was cancelled. For folks who weren't here at the time, that's the Member for Lake Laberge who was the minister at the time who made that decision. It turns out phone calls can really make big changes here in this Assembly.

I think about what I learned between 2011 and 2016 with a Yukon Party government. I am going to be frank: It wasn't much better between 2016 and 2021, because although the Liberals told me that they would be different, they really weren't. We saw increases. We saw people facing unfair situations. I don't know if I remember at the time that the members for the Yukon Party were advocating on the rights of tenants, but I welcome them to correct me. I welcome them to correct me.

I think about the debate in 2012 around the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act*, because it was me — I was the one debating that piece of legislation. At the time, the Yukon Party Minister of Community Services wasn't really interested in a conversation on the legislation. If anyone wants to go back and go through the debate, you'll see it was quite challenging.

I was hopeful that it would be better than what existed before, but in 2014, we really start to see the cracks and how it adversely affected mobile home owners. And that's how I got to know folks in all the other parks other than the ones that I represented, because I went door to door with a petition.

At the time, 2016, the Minister of Community Services for the Yukon Party, who is now the Premier, recognized that maybe there needed to be a better understanding of mobile homes, people in mobile home parks, and how that worked. And to his full credit, a survey went out. And I asked if that was used or reflected in the changes that we saw today, that we're talking about today, but it wasn't.

And so then I asked the minister: Well, what kind of engagement happened? What kind of engagement happened on these changes? I'll note that in the Yukon Party platform, there was lots to talk about the importance of engagement and consultation and not behaving like the Liberals. And so I expected that there would have been some kind of engagement — I mean, even a couple phone calls, maybe some formal sit-downs — but there was no engagement.

And so then I asked the minister if she was familiar with the summary of the engagement of the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* review that happened in 2024. And I'll note that it was February, so the shortest month of the year, from February 1 to February 29. I note that is a shorter timeline than the engagement that happened on the *Yukon Firearms Act*. And it had significantly more participation.

Just to remind folks, in 2024 in February, rent control had almost been in place for two years — for two years. So, there were questions. I'll note that in this engagement, 1,500 Yukoners responded. They shared their perspectives and their ideas. There were 1,420 Yukoners who responded to the online and paper survey that was developed in partnership with the Yukon Bureau of Statistics. There were 120 Yukoners who participated in public engagements. Approximately 100 additional people participated in 12 stakeholder meetings held with First Nations, municipal governments, not-for-profit organizations, and other stakeholders. Feedback was also sought from individuals experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity to ensure their feedback would be included in this review.

The reason why I asked if the minister was familiar with this engagement is it seems to me that if you wanted to have consultation, this is pretty deep. This was pretty specific. I think it's important to note that even in this document, it was so much of a difference that it was important to highlight. And I'm just trying to find it right now, which was that there was more of a representation from folks who were landlords than those who were tenants. And that's interesting because of how it came out.

Oh, here we go. I can quote from it — it says: "The number of landlords who responded to the survey was disproportionately high in comparison to tenants." Why does that matter? Because in response to questions regarding rent control, the question was asked, "Rent that increases at the same rate as inflation is fair to both landlords and tenants." More landlords agreed than disagreed. More landlords agreed than disagreed. Interestingly enough, more landlords responded than tenants responded. So, rent control, it was supported.

It's fascinating to know that at that survey, no one could have ever thought that we'd be here discussing reinserting no-cause evictions to join us up with the other single jurisdiction in Canada that allows them. So, I mean, it wasn't part of the summary of engagement; it wasn't one of the questions. The minister told me with confidence that the Yukon Party ran on a platform of removing rent control. My colleagues have mentioned that when we spoke to people at the door during the last campaign, that wasn't as clear as maybe the Yukon Party thought it was. But I will note that during the last election campaign — we would have been in the middle of it a year ago — there was no campaign commitment to bring back no-cause evictions. That wasn't on the Yukon Party flag that was being waved high. So, where did that come from? Where did that come from? I asked the question. It wasn't based on data. It wasn't based on a jurisdictional scan. It wasn't based on the experiences or engagement with community groups. It wasn't.

I think about community that showed up and, in less than 24 hours, at last note at 3:20, had sent the minister 243 separate letters asking that she share the data with Yukoners that was used to make the decision, that she keep a limit on an annual rent increase that reflects the cost of living, and that she does not allow no-cause evictions in the Yukon. To think that in less than 24 hours, 243 different people took time out of their day to send a letter to the minister is something. It also indicates that there was an interest and a willingness to be engaged and consulted on it.

And so, for folks who are just going to brush it off and say that those were form letters, I think it might surprise people to know just how often those letters were changed.

"As a concerned Yukoner who's been working in the social services field for over six years, I have seen firsthand what housing instability does to people in the community."

So, in making these decisions, did the Yukon Party reach out to folks in social services and ask what this effect could be?

"As a citizen of the Yukon, I see homelessness every day in our city … Eliminating rent control and no-cause evictions will only make the problem worse for those living precariously and in need of safe, stable housing. If you sincerely believe that this is justifiable then surely you would have no problem letting the electorate know what factual information your party has based this decision upon. And surely limiting rent increases to the cost of living increases should be a reasonable policy, otherwise this is just a huge boon to landlords and no one else."

During the many hours of the debate in Committee of the Whole, I told the minister — I said: Just tell me that it's not based on data and that it's based on ideology, and I'll move on.

We are politicians, and we do adhere to ideology and values. My ideology and values got rent control in the first place. When things didn't go as smoothly as anyone would have hoped, I took responsibility and I spoke to the media, and I acknowledged what had happened. Far fewer people were affected in 2021 than will be affected in 2026 going forward; mark my words. And so, while the Yukon Party has weaponized my apology, I will say that I stood by my values and I stood by my ideology.

We have a piece of legislation in front of us — two amendments, two significant amendments that I'm going to suggest are based on ideology and not based on data, because the data couldn't be shared. It didn't matter how many times I asked and how many different ways. It didn't matter who I asked: Was there conversation and consultation? I got accused of repetition, Madam Speaker. But I think if anything should be repeated, it should be who did not get included in this conversation — and I'm going to say Yukoners. People have raised questions like: What evidence tells us that removing rent controls will actually make housing more affordable? Why should a tenant lose the security of knowing they can remain in their home without cause for eviction?

"December 1 is an unfortunate time to introduce greater uncertainty into people's lives. Winter is setting in. The holidays are approaching. And for a lot of Yukoners, the question of whether they can afford to stay in their homes is already weighing heavily enough."

I think about the youth workers who have reached out who have asked if it has been considered how this is going to affect young people, with questions like: Has the minister looked at the *Territorial Youth Strategy* or checked out the living wage report, which we tabled today, that indicates that the changes to no-cause eviction could have serious consequences?

I think about the folks that I know who have reached out to share that they are renters — that they are a renter who is on disability due to chronic illness, that their general living situation is tenuous enough, and that they are afraid of what no rent control and no-cause evictions could mean for them and so many other vulnerable people.

We talked about how the *Human Rights Act* has some protections for folks due to gender expression and identity and disability and how that should not affect housing. And the challenge is with no-cause evictions, because now there's no stopping the change. Before, if a person received an eviction notice because their landlord didn't like their self-expression, maybe didn't like how their rent was being paid, there was a chance to appeal.

Lots of people have reached out and asked: Did the government meet with the folks at Safe at Home to see how it would affect vulnerable clients? As a business owner downtown, they had heard first-hand from staff how disheartening this decision was to that organization and how it will ultimately leave more Yukoners unhoused, homeless, and underhoused. There are folks who said that they were concerned about young working people, that they have been watching them for the last decade trying to cobble together viable rental living arrangements in Whitehorse.

I think about the letters that came in from friends in mobile home parks and how they have been here before and they're going back, and they're afraid.

I think about the letters where people have said: "Please explain, in detail, what the government means when it says that removing rent caps will attract more developers. Is it because developers will be attracted to the possibility of more profits? What good does more housing do if it's all unaffordable? This

belief that it will eventually stabilize and the market will correct itself is a fantasy."

Maybe the question should be: Is there a press release in the wings coming out tomorrow where the government is going to be supporting a developer with a large development and this will be the answer that we've been waiting for?

I think about the person who wrote: "This government has signed on and committed to the Territorial Youth Strategy, where one of the top calls to action is housing security. Allowing rental raises with no cap will certainly make housing unaffordable for young people in the territory. You have a duty and commitment to Yukon youth to make housing affordable and accessible and this bill will do the opposite of that." So, what about that commitment?

Or the folks who wrote: "As someone who has worked with marginalized and vulnerable populations in housing, I am deeply concerned about who these new amendments will affect most. Housing is a basic human right, and housing stability should be protected by our government, not taken away. No cause evictions are harmful and will cause more homelessness in the Yukon. Hope you're ready to address that as well."

Or the senior who said that they would like to sell their small house and move into an apartment but the price to rent an apartment or condo is really high, that they could not get into any apartment or condo with an owner to agree to a long-term rent contract, and that they won't sell their house to get into an apartment when they could be asked for more in rent than they do currently. This person said that they want the minister to share with Yukoners what data was used to make this decision, not including anecdotal evidence from landlords due to lobbying efforts.

And Speaker, that's just 15 out of the 243 letters. I have more here.

I think about when this legislation was tabled, and I'll note that it was tabled on October 8. And the reason why it's important to note that it was tabled on October 8 is because it will take effect in less than two months after it was tabled. In less than two months from when it first got presented in this Assembly, it will be law. It means Yukoners who currently rent will now face the risk of no-fault eviction. That means they cannot remedy the situation, they can't change the behaviour, it has nothing to do with them — starting December 1.

I've talked about my friend Hazel a lot. So, I think about the senior at Normandy Living who reached out and asked me what could be done to stop this. What could be done to stop this? I said: Well, I think the hard part is that there's not a lot. The only people who can make a decision to stop this are the government. And so we talked a bit about it, and I saw her last week. And she explained to me that she and her husband, in making the decision to move to Normandy, met with a financial planner and their bank to look at their financial resources prior to making the decision to move to Normandy Living. And she said that because rent control was in place, they did the calculations over a number of years to see what they could afford. They made a decision to move into housing with support based on the rent control being in place, based on the ability to tell what the future held. In having a conversation with her last week, she told me that she's worried because in their calculations, there was a bit of a buffer but not a huge buffer.

Then I wonder what the government has to say to seniors who have made decisions to move in from different places — rural Yukon, outskirts of Whitehorse, other places — to Normandy Living who will now be facing uncontrolled rent increases. And what does that mean for them?

I told the story of my friends who both have government jobs who were trying to figure out what they could absorb. Would it be a $500-a-month increase? Could they absorb a $500-a-month increase — $6,000 a year? Could they go much higher than that? What would that look like?

I think about the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce which says that the number one concern for their members is recruitment and retention of employees and what that means and what these changes will mean for business.

And whenever I had concerns and I asked the minister about what would happen if a person couldn't afford their rent increase and the suggestion was to go to Yukon Housing to look for rental support, I thought: Wow, that's really just like a subsidy for landlords at a certain point, isn't it?

If a significant portion of the 2,374 known renters — known rental households in the Yukon — all of a sudden face an affordability crisis, what programs currently exist to support them? I think that's really like some of the questions.

We've heard in this Assembly — in a way that I think has been said to make me feel shame, but I don't — about a March 29, 2023 news article that says, "Yukon NDP Leader apologizes for 'unintended consequences' from rent cap". I'll tell you why I don't feel shame: Because I had a conversation with every single person who was adversely affected and I listened to them and we talked and I apologized.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Kate White: I think I just heard the Member for Lake Laberge, off-mic, saying that's no better. But the reality is, if these are your convictions — my conviction was the importance of putting in rent control. Those were my values. That was my ideology based on fact, cross-jurisdictional scans, examples in other places.

I have told folks that if they want to have a conversation about the confidence and supply agreement and those miserable four years at any point in time, I welcome the conversation.

While the government has used this article as an example of how I should be apologizing or how I should be shamed for where my position was in 2021, I wonder if they'll have the ability to apologize to the people these changes affect. Will each member of the Yukon Government respond to their constituents who tell them that they can't afford their rent any longer and what that means? Will they stand by their ideology?

When I asked about engagement, I was going to go by community. I would have expected that this would be a conversation, for example, with the Association of Yukon Communities or every municipality about the consequences this could have. But that didn't happen. And then today, when I was asking about where it was advertised and I was told with so much confidence that there was information available on the government webpage and that was plenty — that was plenty — I wonder if the minister really believes that this page on yukon.ca really reached 2,374 households who are dealing with life. I asked what the campaign would be to inform people of the changes and when that would be rolled out, knowing that from start to finish, this will be less than two months.

Again, I note that so far in speaking in support of this bill, we've only heard from the Minister of Community Services, and I can only imagine that must be lonely, because I can tell you that having my colleagues stand and speak against this bill has not been lonely — hearing from Yukoners and having them share their concerns, those 243 letters that have been sent to the minister, the many e-mails she and I have been sent together. I think that if, in this Assembly, we can't stand by our decisions, we can't tell the people we represent that we believe in what we're doing, either for or against, then I wonder what that really means.

I wonder how all the folks in the mobile home parks are going to receive this information. Are members going to go out with pamphlets and drop them off to say that the legislation has changed and there's no longer rent control and about pad rent increases? Maybe. I wonder, because everyone represents renters, how they're going to respond to the folks in their ridings who are tenants who reach out to say what happened. I think about the importance of this Assembly. Put it on record. Put it on record — your support. Tell me why I'm wrong. Tell me that you believe that removing protections for renters will bring fairness to the market. Tell me I'm wrong. Tell me I'm wrong; tell me that you believe in these changes, that you support these changes, and that you're unconcerned about the tenants in your ridings.

Madam Speaker, over the years, I've done a lot of tributes on bullying and anti-bullying, and one of the things that often gets said and that I've said more than once is silence — silence speaks. I invite the members opposite to tell us why they support these changes. I invite the members opposite to tell Yukoners who they represent who are renters that they have nothing to worry about. Because if we can't stand with our values in this place, then where do we stand at all?

I'm sure it's not a surprise on what feels like hour nine million that I will not be supporting these changes. I wonder if the minister and her colleagues will respond to each and every e-mail or phone call of the people who will be adversely affected by these changes. I wonder what they're going to say. Are they going to say that it's going to be uncomfortable for a while, but we believe this will bring fairness to the market, that this will bring down the cost of housing? I imagine I'll be cc'd on some of those e-mails as well.

When I think about these two changes to this piece of legislation, I think about the impacts. I think of the impacts of every single person I know right now that rents. I think about the impacts of those folks that rent rooms and houses that do not know what's coming at them come December 1 — and all with the assertion that data doesn't matter now, but it will be important on the other side. What does that even mean to a person right now who is going to find out that they have no protection going forward?

Madam Speaker, I challenge others to speak today for or against, because it's going to be this that's documented in the future, and when Yukoners look back to figure out what happened and when, this is where they're going to look. Again, I welcome members to tell me I'm wrong — absolutely — but I also challenge them to know that when it comes time, I hope that they are strong enough to apologize.

Debra-Leigh Reti: I'm not going to repeat what I said at Second Reading, but I just want to share that I do have concerns about this bill.

Renters in the Yukon already have very little leverage, and this bill removes the rent cap and brings back no-cause evictions at the same time. While the government campaigned on the rent-cap issue, they did not campaign on the reintroduction of no-cause evictions. We will now be one of only two jurisdictions in Canada that allow this type of eviction. The government has struggled mightily over the last few days trying to justify this aspect of the legislation and has been unable to come up with a convincing argument for the public. I do recognize that the government is trying to encourage more rental supply, and I hope that happens, but I'm not convinced that these changes will get us there, and I do worry it is the tenants who will feel the impacts first.

Over these days, it has been disappointing for me to hear that the government didn't explore any other options to prevent gouging when the cap comes off in December. A consultation process might have produced a compromise that would have allowed for rent increases while protecting renters from price gouging. The government had almost a year to go out and hear from people and it chose not to.

I would encourage the government to watch closely what happens to rents and evictions after December 1 and to be willing to come back to this Legislature if the results are not what they expect.

Carmen Gustafson: I did want to start by thanking the officials and public servants who supported the drafting and the debate on this bill. I know that was a bunch of work. The officials were in for quite a few days supporting that, so thank you for that.

I did want to also thank the Member for Takhini. While she was speaking, I recalled that, back in those days when she was circulating the petition in the trailer parks, I went out with her and joined her on those evenings in the trailer parks. It gave me a better understanding about that issue and the issues faced by homeowners in those trailer parks. It probably was also sort of a path to getting into the Legislative Assembly. Some days, I'm not sure if I should thank the Member for Takhini for that, but here we are. It is insightful and it is important, because behind all of the stories, behind all of the e-mails that the minister has been receiving, are people who will be impacted by policy choices.

I also was reflecting on my great aunt who lives in BC. A couple of years ago, she contacted me, and as the only lawyer in the family, you get all of the legal questions whether you know the answers to them or not. Auntie Sheila contacted me. She's over 90, lives in supported housing, and her rent was going to be going up. She got a notice that her rent was going to be going up and there is rent control in BC, so I was able to tell her: This is wrong; this is not okay. Her options were either the rent goes up and she had to find a new place to live at over 90 years old, which probably meant leaving the community, or they could fight back. The residents went to the owner who gave them the notice and said that this isn't right, and the owner backed down. But as part of that conversation, my great aunt understands that the cost of everything is going up, and she said: I'm willing to pay a little bit more in reflection of that — I understand that things are more expensive — but this amount

isn't fair, and I cannot pay this amount. I think that's common. I think that's what the rent cap was trying to do. There was an ability to raise rent under the rent cap, and we're removing that limit and just allowing any amount whatsoever — probably what the market dictates as opposed to what is fair.

Just going back to my initial comments about the amendments — and the Member for Takhini reiterated those — I do think that these amendments are using a sledgehammer where a scalpel is appropriate and that, unless it's responding to an urgent situation, good legislation and policy is based on data, evidence, analysis — not assertions — and it doesn't hide behind confidential information that the government refuses to disclose. It seeks outcomes that are definable and measurable and not just what's hoped for, what the market will do. It considers varying perspectives and impacts of outcomes and seeks to minimize negative consequences, especially on those most vulnerable, and it does that by consulting with experts and individuals. It's easily defendable, easily explained — even to those opposed and even if the explanation fails to change minds.

I've listened to the debate on these changes, and I'm not confident that any potential benefit to the housing market outweighs potential harm to current renters. There is a need to improve availability of housing in the Yukon, especially rental housing. I would even go so far as to agree that there's a need for measures to ensure a range of new rental units come online. However, no evidence has been provided that gives me confidence that these specific changes are an effective measure to achieve that objective. No alternatives were provided that would convince me that this was the most careful option to make changes that would have more benefit than cost.

The minister was not able to answer many questions about the bill, including questions about the real estate market or other explanations of the dynamics of rental housing and whether people are entering or exiting that market. This is the sole mechanism given to support the changes, and yet only some anecdotal suggestions that some landlords said so was given as a reason to support the changes. It makes it obvious that little consideration was paid to Yukon-specific housing market circumstances or more complex reasons for the situation as it is today.

I knew coming here that I wouldn't agree with everything that this government does, but I do have an expectation that Yukoners will be given a good understanding of the information used to make a particular decision. It's disappointing to hear only a few repeated speaking points that were wholly unsupported by data or analysis to support these changes.

To conclude, while I did listen to the debate with an open mind, my position opposing the bill has not changed, because I'm not confident that these measures will create the changes that are hoped for, while they are likely to have negative consequences on Yukoners who currently rely on the protections that are being removed.

Justin Ziegler: At Second Reading, I pointed out that the minister mentioned tenants only three times in her speech, and I hoped the Committee of the Whole would give us the rest of the story, so I listened very carefully. I want to put on the record what we learned. We learned that the minister does not know how many tenants live in the Yukon. She did not ask her department. She does not know how many landlords there are or how many private rental units exist. She does not know how many mobile home parks there are in Whitehorse or how many mobile homes at all. This bill will change the lives of thousands of people and the government cannot tell us how many.

We learned that there are no statistics on landlords leaving the market. The minister told us these were conversations, and she committed to a legislative return on the number of units she was told were taken off the market. So, we're being asked to pass this bill before we see the main evidence the government says it relies on. We learned that the government's own numbers do not show a decline. The minister even agreed that the number went up. We learned that the government did not look at any other option. The minister told us — and I quote: "Considering other options was not part of the work." And we learned that there is no target, no timeline. The minister could not tell us how many new rental units this bill will create or when rents will go down, if they even go down. The government cannot tell Yukoners how it will know if this bill works or if it fails.

I want to spend some time on what the minister said. In Committee, she said again that rent control helps the people who are already housed, and that's an important admission. For a year, this government has told Yukoners that rent control has failed. Those are the words in their platform: "Recognizing that rent control has failed…" Now the minister stands in this House and tells us that rent control actually benefits the people who have a home. If the problem is that rent control protects only some tenants, the answer is to protect more. But instead, this bill protects none of them.

I also want to talk about consultation. On October 14 in Question Period, the Premier told this House that there may be future changes to the act and that — and I quote: "When that time comes, we'll be happy to engage in public consultation about those changes." The government will consult next time, but not this time. In Committee of the Whole, the minister confirmed that there was no engagement on these changes, and in 2024, more than 1,500 Yukoners took part in the review of this act, almost two years after the rent control came in. So, more Yukoners supported rent control than opposed it. That is the only public consultation we have on these questions, and this bill literally goes against it.

I know I'm not adding anything new here, but I just wanted to add my own voice, because I think that's what we were elected to do. I also want to be able to tell people, when knocking on doors in Riverdale South — my friends, the people I work with — some of them are probably renters; some of the people working with the ministers actually are probably renters — and I want to be able to look these people in the eyes and be like: I fought. I stood up. I spoke. I did my best.

Madam Speaker, we spent most of yesterday afternoon on clause 2 of this bill, and I want the record to be clear about what it does. Clause 2 repeals section 3 of the *Residential Tenancies Act*. Section 3 protects people who rent a room in someone's home and share a kitchen or a bathroom with the owner. Section 3 was the only protection they had: a limit on how much their rent can go up — no more than one increase a year and with three months' notice. Past December 1, all of that is gone. Their rent can go up by any amount at any time with no notice. Every other tenant in the Yukon will now get six months' notice of a rent increase; the tenant renting a room will get none. This bill takes away all protections

from tenants who have the least. And who rents a room in someone's home? Often people with the fewest options in the market — and they live under the same roof as their landlord. They share the kitchen; they share the bathroom.

Madam Speaker, most of these arrangements are probably fine, but some are not. Some people rent a room from a person who controls them. Sometimes it is a partner; sometimes it is a family member; sometimes it is an owner who knows the tenant has nowhere else to go. Section 3 put a limit on what that person could do with the rent. From December 1, there's no more limit. The rent can go up by any amount at any time with no notice. In the hands of someone who wants control, that is not a rent increase; it is a threat: Pay what I ask or leave. Economic abuse is a form of violence, and this bill removes a rule that stood between these tenants and that kind of control.

How many are there? We asked; the minister did not give us a number — not even once in all of this debate. We asked why this protection had to go; we did not get an answer. The minister told us that if something does not work, the government can bring amendments later. This act comes into force on December 1. The earliest this House can fix it is the Spring Sitting. Between those two dates, there's a Yukon winter. A tenant who gets a rent increase in January with no notice cannot wait until the spring. Once again, the government will fix it next time but not this time.

When we asked what happens to people who cannot pay their new rent, the minister said the question was hypothetical. From December 1, it will not be hypothetical. In a few months, it will be a family in Riverdale, a senior in Northland, or a worker in Dawson.

I said at Second Reading that every member who votes yes is responsible for what comes next. Committee of the Whole did not change that view; it made it actually clearer. We asked for evidence; we did not get it. We asked for a plan; we did not get one.

At least I stood up and I spoke and, of course, I will vote against this bill.

Merci de m'avoir écouté.

Linda Moen: I want to address some of the concerns that I had with Bill No. 8 and the amendments to the *Residential Tenancies Act*. I'm going to be very honest, and I'm going to be mindful about what I say. But I know already just from some of the feedback that we got that Yukoners are alarmed at the lack of engagement and consultation from this government. There's not even a bare minimum that we could say was reached. We can't even say there was an effort made to reach out to the people that were going to be affected by this — no effort.

Hearing from Yukoners about this issue should have been the very first concern of this government. The lack of information on who the Minister of Community Services had these "conversations" with is also a huge concern. The hesitancy and the lack of transparency — shrouded — should concern every Yukoner. Who was consulted in those conversations? What was considered? What was said? Why is that information not public?

All of the MLAs in this House have tenants in their ridings that will be affected by this change. Each of us has a responsibility to answer to our constituents on their questions and concerns, because they're the ones who put us here. They're the ones who put us here. Even more alarming is almost none of the other YP members have chosen to talk about this issue or go on record.

The lack of engagement and outreach to the women's organizations is a huge mistake. They could have provided valuable advice and guidance on the issues affecting their clients and their unique issues — to find evidence or consultation or even given the basic opportunity for their input to be considered. The few arguments —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Linda Moen: I'm sorry; are we tired? I'm speaking. That's what we're here for.

The few arguments presented by the Minister of Community Services are also concerning. No knowledge or technical information fed into that decision-making process.

I sat at a decision table before. I sat in leadership. I know the amount of work that goes into that. I negotiated a protocol with the RCMP. It took 18 months to do that work. That protocol still stands in place to this day because of the work that was put into it and the effort that was given to it — the consultation and the engagement that it deserved.

There was no information on how many tenants are being affected or the number of rental units available at any given time. The lack of knowledge in the rural communities — again, rural communities. I lived in a rural community. Each is so different and so unique that they had at least deserved to be asked what their thoughts are. How will it impact their community? The First Nations living there? Wasn't that in the YP platform: working with Yukon First Nations? And not even a phone call? But maybe they'll get a letter about the changes.

The lack of data is a sure signal that this is not an informed decision. No evidence either — no stats, no engagement, no consultation — nothing.

Not all First Nations are represented by CYFN either. The government didn't even meet with CYFN. I know first-hand what happens when there's a lack of consultation, and we've seen it many times — it's court cases.

What about the children? We have a youth and child advocate office. Were they given an opportunity to come and put their input into this of what children are facing? Do Yukon children not deserve safe and stable housing as well? Again, no data, no stats.

What about the affordability issues affecting the entire Yukon — not some, all of us? You want to have a great conversation opener? Ask about the electric bill, groceries, gas, and now creating uncertainty and removing the rent cap and no-cause evictions just add to the ever-growing list of what Yukoners are concerned and worried about.

How about single-parent families like mine? Every dollar that we receive is allocated for and budgeted; I guarantee you that. I guarantee you that. I guarantee you that budgets are stretched thin. There is not a lot of buffer room. There is no room at most times — you are juggling.

I just saw today — and I was very happy to see it: Ta'an Kwäch'än Council has just offered their citizens $1,000 for a cost-of-living relief payment. They're listening to their citizens telling them they can't afford the cost of living that's happening. They're being proactive: $1,000 to each of their citizens. They're concerned; they're worried; their people are worried.

Again, what about the Yukoners on the social assistance program? There's no plan coming for that, no timeline. What happens when their rent goes up? They're only eligible for a certain amount for rent. Where does that overfall come from? What are they going to give up if they have to cover out of pocket for a rent increase? Same with their electricity bill — they're only allocated a certain dollar amount. Where does that money come from? What are they going to give up? What are they going to go without?

This is the second time I've heard of a Cabinet confidence regarding GIDA, the gender-inclusive diversity analysis. Again, behind closed doors — again, no data. We don't even know what was considered. Again, a decision came from this, and it should be an informed decision-making process, and we don't even know what was considered.

Numbers matter. Numbers matter — we even track how many people voted at election time. We know how many people in a riding voted. It's all accounted for — numbers matter. Numbers put us here. But we can't even say how many Yukoners were consulted — don't know how many tenants, don't know how many landlords, don't know the issues that were considered in making an informed decision.

What is each MLA going to tell their constituents in their riding about the information they considered in supporting or not supporting this? Are they going to be transparent in providing that information to their constituents?

For a minister who has the entire department to utilize and request information like data, statistics, to do a jurisdictional scan and yet has none of this and still has the audacity to push this bill through, it tells me they are out of touch with everyday Yukoners — everyday Yukoners who are facing the highest inflation in this country. The cost of living is impacting every Yukoner, and higher costs are on the way — we know that. There's another increase in January that we all get to look forward to. They're everyday Yukoners who are stretched thin with their budgets, everyday Yukoners living paycheque to paycheque who we represent in this House — everyday Yukoners who deserve at the bare minimum to be informed about the impacts of this bill.

Brent McDonald: I rise to speak in opposition to Bill No. 8, and I'd like to explain my opposition to this bill. It involves important legislative changes that affect so many Yukoners and how those decisions are made in this Legislature.

I believe the best decisions are made after significant research has been completed on whatever the issue at hand may be. You look at the pros and cons, and then evidence from that research should be made available to all affected parties because they all have a stake in this. Then gathering their feedback will help compile perspective, additional information, differing points of view, and perhaps unintended consequences. Only once this process has been finished can the complete picture be understood and contemplated for any needed changes.

The changes that we see coming forth on this Bill No. 8 seriously affect people's homes, their families, their livelihoods, and the communities they live in. No evidence has been provided to us — none. In Committee of the Whole even, most affected parties were not even consulted. Whether I agree or not with the content of this bill, it certainly does not meet even my minimum consideration for important legislative changes, because I believe in evidence-based decision-making and consultative-based decision-making.

I also oppose this bill because of the likely effects it will have in our community of Dawson City. This bill has a December 1 effective date, a short bit more than a month away, and a form of common ownership of common owner-occupied tenancy that is effective immediately right at the beginning of this winter — almost no notice and no-limit rent increases for people with that kind of tenancy right off the bat. People who have budgeted their hard-earned seasonal earnings, their winter rent, are immediately affected. Think of the uncertainty and how they feel.

For others, no-cause evictions and unlimited rent increases come into effect around potentially the beginning of May, which in our community of Dawson City is the influx of our seasonal workforce. For the tourism industry, for the service industry, for mining industries — this doesn't bode well for anyone arriving in the spring expecting any affordable accommodation in a near-zero-vacancy community. It doesn't bode well for any business that relies on this workforce to show up. I'm very concerned and disappointed in this lack of consideration for our community, and I'm not the only concerned party.

Dawson City Town Council meets tonight, and the agenda includes the following draft resolution for discussion: "Draft Council Resolution — Bill No. 8

"WHEREAS Dawson City faces significant constraints in rental housing availability, and the consequences of eviction in a small northern community—where alternative accommodations may be extremely limited—can be severe; and

"WHEREAS Bill No. 8 proposes amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act that would permit landlords to terminate residential tenancies without cause; and

"WHEREAS Council is concerned that permitting eviction without cause removes an essential safeguard for tenants and creates the potential for arbitrary, retaliatory, or discriminatory displacement; and

"WHEREAS the proposed six-month notice period does not provide meaningful protection when suitable alternative housing may not exist; and

"WHEREAS existing legislation already provides mechanisms for landlords to terminate tenancies for legitimate reasons, and Council questions the necessity of removing the requirement to provide grounds altogether; and

"WHEREAS housing instability affects workforce retention, families, local businesses, and the long-term sustainability of communities across the territory;

"THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the City of Dawson formally express its opposition to the provisions in Bill No. 8 that permit eviction without cause; and

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Council request that the Government of Yukon:

"1. Remove the provisions permitting eviction without cause from Bill No. 8, or repeal those provisions should they become law;

"2. Maintain legislative protections requiring legitimate grounds for terminating residential tenancies;

"3. Undertake meaningful consultation with municipalities, tenants, landlords, and housing organizations regarding the

potential impacts of these changes, particularly in rural and northern communities;

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Mayor be directed to transmit a letter to the Premier and Minister of Community Services conveying Council's position and requesting a written response."

It should be an interesting meeting tonight.

I express once again my disappointment and opposition to this bill.

Lane Tredger: Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to all my colleagues and the member for the Third Party who spoke on this proposed law.

I see our role as MLAs, as representatives, to bring the voices of our constituents to this Legislature to share their views and their concerns and their ideas, their stories, as we debate legislation. And then after the debate, after the discussion, after all those viewpoints have been considered, I see it as our role to take that information back to our constituents to explain how the decisions were made. I don't think any of my constituents have the expectation they'll agree with everything done in this Chamber, but I think that when I go to them and tell them what happened in this debate, they're going to be deeply disappointed. Because I think their expectation is that we come into the Legislature and we discuss and we debate ideas, we ask questions, we give answers, we consider different viewpoints, and that has most certainly not happened during this debate.

I want to speak to my constituents. The Yukon Party has made it quite clear they're not listening to us in this debate. The Member for Lake Laberge has been yawning loudly through my colleagues' speeches. The minister regularly refused to answer questions during debate.

I'm speaking to my constituents now, to Yukoners, and I want to tell you that I'm sorry that this has been such a disappointing debate you'll have to read. I wish this was not the news I was bringing to them.

During the debate, the Yukon Party has refused to answer questions. They have provided inaccurate information and then they refused to answer follow-up questions on that information. They have continued to provide the same inaccurate information after we have pointed out that it was wrong. They showed that they were unfamiliar with previous engagements on the issues addressed in bill, and then they couldn't or wouldn't answer questions about what those results were or how they had been considered.

The Yukon Party admitted that when it came to this bill, they have not consulted with CYFN. They have not consulted with a single individual First Nation in the Yukon. They have not consulted with the Association of Yukon Communities or the City of Whitehorse or any other Yukon municipality. They admitted that they have not met with a single stakeholder organization, not a single housing organization, not a single chamber of commerce. They claimed that they have spoken to landlords, but they refused to say how many or recount what those conversations were. The minister said that she had received e-mails in support of this legislation. She was asked how many and she couldn't remember. They have demonstrated that they don't understand the current housing landscape by incorrectly representing the scope of the housing organizations that exist in the Yukon. They admitted that they didn't request a jurisdictional scan — a scan of what's done in other parts of the country, which is a very, very basic first step toward any policy or legislation creation.

The Minister of Community Services gave answers to our questions that can be proven wrong simply by reading the Yukon Housing website. When I pressed her for details, she said to ask Yukon Housing. When I asked the Minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation, he looked at his desk, and the Minister of Community Services got up and again failed to answer the question.

Then there was yesterday's debacle. I pointed out that this law changes the notice period for rent increases for people who share a home with their landlords. So, this law will mean that if you share a bedroom or a kitchen with your landlord — you used to have to get a three-month notice before your landlord could increase your rent — if this law comes into force, that will remove this protection; you will not be required to receive any notice of rent increases before you get them. On the 31st of the month, if you share a home with your landlord, your landlord can say: By the way, tomorrow your rent has doubled, tripled, quadrupled. They could say: In five minutes, your rent is due. It's a different amount now. That is what will be allowed. The protection of requiring at least a notice of rent increases will be taken away from those tenants.

It's a pretty significant change, but that effect of this law had not been mentioned before I brought it up in debate yesterday. The minister didn't mention it in Second Reading. She didn't mention it in general debate in Committee of the Whole. She did not mention it in any description of what the law does. The bill itself does not contain any mention of that change to the law, and it is not in any public statements or comments from the Yukon Party about this bill. So, I brought up that the law would have this effect if it comes into force, and it was pretty obvious that was news to the Yukon Party, that they had been unaware of the effect until yesterday that their own law did this, but this did not dissuade them. I asked them what the justification for it was. The minister said — quote: "I think that there are likely reasons for that." I just have to come back on that, because the minister who's sponsoring this bill, who is responsible for its effects and its consequences, the minister standing behind this law — who said that this is important enough, we're going to prioritize it, bring it forward, and these are the directions I have given — didn't know what her law would do and said, "I think that there are likely reasons for that." Do you think? Likely? She doesn't know what they are? She's bringing forward a law that has reasons behind it and she doesn't know what they are?

So, I asked them to pause this law until they had considered this new change that they didn't know their law would make. I asked them to pause to consult with each other, with her Cabinet colleagues, to consult with their staff, with their drafters, to consider the impacts of this change and decide if it was a change they really wanted to include or if they should amend their law so it only had the effects that they had originally intended. I didn't even ask them to stop it altogether; I just asked them to pause it so they could think about it for more than the 24-hour period since they had learned about it until we're going to vote on this bill. They said no; they said they would proceed as is, unintended consequences and all.

It is an enormous problem that the Yukon Party is moving this law forward without consulting, after having refused to answer questions, after having failed to give justification for the

legislation, after having failed to respond to concerns raised by Yukoners and Opposition MLAs, after they gave incorrect information repeatedly and refused to listen to corrections and showed that they were unaware of the effects of their own laws, because the consequences of this legislation are enormous. Your home is everything. People who own their homes know they can stay there as long as they can pay their mortgage. If they have a mortgage, they know the bank can't change the contract once it has been agreed on. They have the terms and conditions in their mortgage documents and they know they can count on those. That's not a right that tenants will have anymore.

This law is going to have three significant changes that I want to speak to. The first is the removal of rent control. Currently, there are limits on how much landlords can increase your rent every year. It's an amount that's tied to the Canadian price index, to the cost of living, and that's not going to be true anymore if this law passes. The reason that rent control was brought in the first place was not because people were sitting around thinking: I have a good idea; there's no reason, but we can do it. It's because we heard real stories — real stories from Yukoners of getting 10-, 20-, 30-, 40-percent rent increases. I'm not making these numbers up. I remember door-knocking in the 2021 election and talking to an entire building of renters who had all gotten 30-percent rent increases — 30-percent rent increases for the entire building. We have many of these stories.

Imagine not knowing if your rent is going to change by 30, 40 percent. It could be more; it could absolutely be more. The landlords will have the right to double or triple your rent, but we know at least there are examples of landlords giving 30- and 40-percent rent increases. Imagine knowing that your rent could go up by 30 or 40 percent next year and with the vacancy factor that we have in the Yukon, knowing that it will be very, very difficult to find another place. Imagine what that does to your attempts to budget. Some people will be able to absorb that rent increase — some of them comfortably, many not comfortably at all. There aren't very many people with a whole lot of extra money sitting around in their budgets. These people will be giving up warm winter gear for their kids. They'll be giving up fruits and vegetables at the grocery store. They'll be giving up holidays to visit extended family. They'll be giving up vet visits for their pets. And some people will be giving up much more than that. They'll be giving up basic necessities to try to meet those rent increases. Some of them won't be able to. They'll move to different accommodation that is cheaper because it's smaller or less suitable or not in good shape, and some of them will become homeless.

The second effect I want to speak to is the allowing of no-cause evictions. I think everyone here agrees that there are good reasons to evict a tenant. So, if your tenant doesn't pay their rent, if your tenant damages your property and won't make it right, if your tenant is threatening their neighbours or doing something that's illegal under the act, I think everyone thinks that landlords should have the right to evict them in circumstances like that. That's not what we're talking about. We're talking about the right for landlords to say: You're evicted — with no reason given. There are so many concerns with this. My colleagues have spoken about many of them.

One is the allowance of retaliatory no-cause evictions, and again, this is something I have seen. It's true that the act says that landlords are not allowed to retaliate against their tenants for enforcing their rights, but I have seen landlords do just that. I have seen tenants take illegal directions from their landlords to their RTO, win those cases, and then have their landlords evict them with no given reason. It seems pretty obvious to everyone involved that it's for standing up to them, but there's no way of proving it. I know tenants who were evicted and their landlord told them it was because of their lifestyle. This eviction was done under a no-cause eviction. This is a family where both parents are queer and trans, and I guess the landlord didn't like that. But they weren't able to prove it. They weren't able to prove that by "lifestyle" he meant that they were queer and trans, and so because he could evict them with no reason given, that eviction held.

Whenever there are news stories about these topics, there's always people who are willing to speak for the landlords. The landlords have a certain association; they are always happy to speak. But it's much harder to find tenants who are willing to speak about it, and that's because tenants are much more vulnerable. If a tenant doesn't like what a landlord says, I guess they could move and let the landlord find another tenant. But if a landlord doesn't like what a tenant says about something, no-cause eviction and they're out, no recourse. If they don't like what they say about these laws or any other political matter, they have full power to evict them with a no-cause eviction, and there will be no way of proving that it was anything else.

The third effect of this legislation — the big surprise of yesterday that I already mentioned — is that people who share accommodations with the owners of the accommodations, with their landlords — so, people who share a bathroom or kitchen with their landlord — will not be entitled to any notice of rent increases nor any limit on how many rent increases can happen per year. That's something they are entitled to right now. The minister said many times that it didn't change things for them. It's not true; they are currently protected in that way. They are currently entitled to notice of rent increases. That will change as of the time this law goes into force, December 1, I suppose. They could wake up any day, any moment — they could come home any time and be told: By the way, your rent has gone up — tomorrow, in an hour, next week; no notice is required.

I know there's a lot of Yukoners who are really afraid of what's coming with this bill. I'm afraid too. There are many, many people who will run the risk of having their lives upended by this legislation, of being forced out of their homes with few alternatives, of being forced to scrape into their budgets for rent increases of any amount. But I also know that Yukoners are not people to stand by and let unfair things happen.

My colleague mentioned that we've been cc'd on letters to the minister from people opposing this legislation. Unlike the minister who couldn't remember how many letters she'd received — she knew that there were multiple letters that she'd received that were in support of this legislation, but she wasn't sure how many other than "multiple". I can tell you that she's received at least 257 letters since yesterday morning. In the last two days, she's received 257 letters opposing this legislation, and that's only what we've been cc'd on. So, I want to say to Yukoners: There's strength in numbers. This is not a fight that I think we will win today. I expect this legislation to pass in a few minutes, but there's this really wonderful quote from a union organizer that says, It's only a defeat if you stop fighting. So, I want Yukoners to know that, as these very difficult things

happen, as these changes happen and effects happen on your life — which I'm afraid will be very significant and very difficult — I want them to know that my colleagues and I will stand with them. We want to hear your stories. We want to hear what happens, and we will do everything we can to keep fighting with you until this can be changed.

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

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I would like to thank the members of this Legislative Assembly for sharing their views, their stories, and their interest in this legislation. I'm happy to continue to have these conversations and learn more about what folks would wish to tell me, but I do also want to say that there is a desire, there is a want to have safe and stable housing for Yukoners. I've said it several times in Committee of the Whole, in different parts of debate on this bill — I acknowledge that we don't agree on the way to move this forward. We have said that we want to see supply increase. We believe that the supply and demand of the market is a piece of the market that is very important. We understand that supply has waned, demand continues to increase, rent prices continue to increase. While the good intentions of the policy as put into place are not working — they're not working and rents continue to go up and supply continues to go down. We are making these changes to change the course and bring supply back.

I do appreciate it. I am open to hearing and listening to what people have to say and do. I want to hear what communities have to say and do and what they think they need. But at the crux of it, the market supply and demand is driven by Yukoners. Yukoners own these homes; Yukoners are the tenants. There are also Yukoners who are the landlords, and I think that it was often forgotten in what I've heard here today — that there are two sides to that equation. Unfortunately, we want to listen to both sides of the equation, and that's not what I've heard.

But I would just like to again say thank you, and I appreciate all the information I've received. I appreciate all the correspondence that I've received and will ensure that I respond to every person who has sent me correspondence previously and in the last 24 hours. Again, I thank the members today. As I said previously, I look forward to working with my colleagues in different areas — in housing, in social assistance, in my department within land development — and finding the whole continuum of housing and moving that forward for all Yukoners.

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. Scott Kent: Agree.
Hon. Cory Bellmore: Agree.
Hon. Brad Cathers: Agree.
Hon. Linda Benoit: Agree.
Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible)

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order. We are in the middle of a vote, so I would appreciate that we do not say those words. Thank you.

Clerk, please continue.

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: Disagree.

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

Speaker: The yeas have it.

I declare the motion carried and that Bill No. 8 has passed this House.

Motion for Third Reading of Bill No. 8 agreed to

Hon. Scott Kent: Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:21 p.m.