



Yukon Legislative Assembly

3rd Session

34th Legislature

Index to **HANSARD**

October 3, 2019 to November 27, 2019

NOTE

The 2019 Fall Sitting of the Third Session of the Thirty-Fourth Legislature occupies two volumes

	Issue Numbers	Page Numbers
Volume 11	1 - 15	1 - 461
Volume 12	16 - 30	463 - 915

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
Don Hutton	Mayo-Tatchun

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King
Liz Hanson	Whitehorse Centre

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Dan Cable
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

ACTING SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Re relevance - amendment (defers ruling), 115

ADEL, TED (see also ACTING SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS, DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, DEPUTY CHAIR'S RULINGS, and DEPUTY CHAIR'S STATEMENTS)

Speaks on:

Bill No. 5 - *Liquor Act: Second Reading*,268

Motion No. 4 - Re single-use bag ban, 454, 461

Motion No. 22 - Re Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne,61

Motion No. 27 - Re endorsing the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*, 658, 666

ADJOURNED DEBATES

Bill No. 3 - *Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act: Second Reading* (Streicker),84

Motion No. 8 - Re establishing the Select Committee on Electoral Reform (Amendment to) (Time expired) (Silver),344

Motion No. 19 - Re medical travel (Amendment to) (Time expired) (Mostyn), 118

Motion No. 22 - Re Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne (Time expired) (Mostyn),47

Motion No. 31 - Re north Klondike Highway (Amendment to) (Time expired) (Kent), ..214

Motion No. 113 - Re opposing the confiscation of firearms (Time expired) (Cathers), .798

ASSENT TO BILLS

Commissioner Angélique Bernard,913

BILLS (see BILLS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT BILLS and GOVERNMENT BILLS)**BILLS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT BILLS**

No. 1 - *Act to Perpetuate a Certain Ancient Right* (Adel)

Introduction and First Reading,6

No. 300 - *Act to Eliminate Daylight Saving Time* (Istchenko)

Introduction and First Reading,493

BILLS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT BILLS *(continued)***No. 301 - Act to Amend the Taxpayer Protection Act** (Cathers)

Introduction and First Reading,615

CATHERS, BRAD

Questions, oral:

Affordable housing,223
 Agriculture policy,438
 Budget estimates and spending, 92, 468, 494, 530
 Carbon tax,864
 Election voting by special ballot, 151
 Electoral reform,315
 Independent Commission on Electoral Reform, 19, 57
 Mineral staking,712
 Queen's Printer and Central Stores services,259, 354
 Yukon Hospital Corporation funding,861
 Yukon Water Board wetlands hearing,616

Speaks on:

Bill No. 3 - *Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act*: Third
 Reading,225
 Bill No. 4 - *Act to Amend the Elections Act*: Second Reading,533
 Bill No. 4 - *Act to Amend the Elections Act*: Third Reading,746
 Bill No. 6 - *Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009*: Second Reading,357
 Bill No. 6 - *Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009*: Third Reading,714
 Bill No. 7 - *Technical Amendments Act, 2019*: Second Reading,147
 Bill No. 7 - *Technical Amendments Act, 2019*: Third Reading,689

Ministerial statements:

Carbon price rebate,380
 Motion for the Production of Papers No. 3 - Re Central Stores and Queen's
 Printer Agency restructuring cost savings,326
 Motion No. 1 - Re appearance of Chief Electoral Officer as witness,623, 626
 Motion No. 4 - Re single-use bag ban,458
 Motion No. 8 - Re establishing the Select Committee on Electoral Reform,338

CATHERS, BRAD (*continued*)

Speaks on:

Motion No. 19 - Re medical travel,	101, 111
Motion No. 31 - Re north Klondike Highway,	191
Motion No. 113 - Re opposing the confiscation of firearms,	797
Motion No. 116 - Re funding the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, ...	781, 782

CHAIR'S RULINGS (see also Deputy Chair's rulings)

Re addressing remarks to the Chair not to other Members,	229
Re referring to Members by riding or portfolio not by name,	907
Re relevance - appearance of witness,	638

CHAIR'S STATEMENTS (see also Deputy Chair's statements)

Re five-minute time limit for witness introductory remarks and responses to members' questions,	814
Re raising questions during general debate concerning Votes that do not require new appropriations,	229

CLERK OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Reads bills for Assent,	913
Reports on Petition No. 1,	406

COMMISSIONER (Hon. Angélique Bernard)

Assents to bills,	913
Delivers Speech from the Throne,	1

COMMITTEES, REPORTS OF STANDING

Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees, Standing Committee on	
14 th report tabled (dated June 6, 2019) (Sessional Paper No. 4) (Adel),	7
15 th report tabled (dated August 2, 2019) (Sessional Paper No. 5) (Adel),	7
Public Accounts, Standing Committee on	
4 th report tabled (November 2019) (Sessional Paper No. 20),	680

COUNTS IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Motion No. 1 - Re appearance of Chief Electoral Officer as witness (Amendment to) (Negatived),	627
---	-----

DENDYS, JEANIE

Speaks on:

Bill No. 3 - <i>Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act: Second Reading</i> ,	137
Ministerial statements:	
Tourism development strategy,	646, 648
Motion No. 22 - Re Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne,	35
Motion No. 27 - Re endorsing the <i>Yukon Tourism Development Strategy</i> ,	662
Motion No. 116 - Re funding the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation,	791

DEPUTY CHAIR'S STATEMENTS

Re off-mic comments interfering with Chair's ability to hear debate,	603
--	-----

DEPUTY SPEAKER'S RULINGS

Re referring to Members by riding or portfolio not by name,	337
---	-----

DIVISIONS

Bill No. 2 - <i>Yukon University Act:</i>	
Second Reading,	395
Third Reading,	812
Bill No. 3 - <i>Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act:</i>	
Second Reading,	138
Third Reading,	226
Bill No. 4 - <i>Act to Amend the Elections Act: Second Reading</i> ,	540
Bill No. 4 - <i>Act to Amend the Elections Act: Third Reading</i> ,	749
Bill No. 5 - <i>Liquor Act:</i>	
Second Reading,	270
Third Reading,	623
Bill No. 6 - <i>Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009:</i>	
Second Reading,	360
Third Reading,	716

DIVISIONS *(continued)*

Bill No. 7 - <i>Technical Amendments Act, 2019:</i>	
Second Reading,	147
Third Reading,	689
Bill No. 200 - <i>Second Appropriation Act 2019-20:</i>	
Second Reading,	166
Third Reading,	913
Motion for the Production of Papers No. 3 - Re Central Stores and Queen's Printer	
Agency restructuring cost savings,	329
Motion No. 4 - Re single-use bag ban,	461
Motion to adjourn debate (Negatived),	456
Motion No. 7 - Re climate change	
(Amendment to),	133
(As amended),	136
Motion No. 22 - Re Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne,	80
Motion No. 27 - Re endorsing the <i>Yukon Tourism Development Strategy</i> ,	666
Motion No. 32 - Re <i>Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan</i> ,	453
Motion No. 60 - Re updating animal protection and dog control,	658
Motion No. 66 - Re forensic audit of Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services	
(Amendment to),	562
(Amendment to) (Negatived),	566
(As amended),	569
Motion No. 77 - Re confidential Members' Services Board communications (Negatived), ...	576
Motion No. 81 - Re reappointment of Conflict of Interest Commissioner,	474
Motion No. 116 - Re funding the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation	
(Amendment to),	779
(As amended),	794
Motion No. 121 - Re adjournment of House for Arctic Winter Games,	842

FILED DOCUMENTS

1. Whistle Bend School Planning Committee, letter re (dated September 4, 2019) from Scott Kent, Member for Copperbelt South, to Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee, Minister of Education, and Hon. Richard Mostyn, Minister of Highways and Public Works (Kent),	14
--	----

FILED DOCUMENTS *(continued)*

2. Whistle Bend School Planning Committee, letter re (dated September 25, 2019) from Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee, Minister of Education, to Scott Kent, Member for Copperbelt South (Kent), 14
3. *Yukon Geographical Place Names Board 2018-2019 Annual Report* (Dendys),52
4. Electoral Reform, letter re (dated April 5, 2019) from Stacey Hassard, Leader of the Official Opposition, to Hon. Sandy Silver, Premier (Cathers),52
5. Electoral Reform Commission, letter re (dated May 3, 2019) from Stacey Hassard, Leader of the Official Opposition, to Hon. Sandy Silver, Premier (Cathers),52
6. Electoral Reform Commission Applicants, letter re (dated June 16, 2019) from Stacey Hassard, Leader of the Official Opposition, to Hon. Sandy Silver, Premier (Cathers), ..52
7. Electoral Reform Commission Applicants, letter re (dated July 11, 2019) from Stacey Hassard, Leader of the Official Opposition, to Hon. Sandy Silver, Premier (Cathers), ..52
8. Electoral Reform Commission Applicants, letter re (dated July 15, 2019) from Stacey Hassard, Leader of the Official Opposition, to Hon. Sandy Silver, Premier (Cathers), ..52
9. Procedures — Project Advisory Committee — Whistle Bend Elementary School (July 2019) (Mostyn),52
10. Status of Yukon Energy Corporation’s proposed new 20 MW thermal facility, letter re (dated October 1, 2019) from Lesley Cabott, Chair, Yukon Energy Corporation Board of Directors, to Hon. Ranj Pillai, Minister responsible for the Yukon Development Corporation and the Yukon Energy Corporation (Pillai),54
11. Safety and Security Issues, letter re (dated July 3, 2019) from Hon. Pauline Frost, Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation, to Liz Hanson, Member for Whitehorse Centre (White),217
12. Independent Commission on Electoral Reform, letter re (dated August 2, 2019) from Floyd W. McCormick to Hon. Nils Clarke, Speaker and Chair of Members’ Services Board (Hanson),283
 Removed from the Assembly's records by Speaker's Order,379
13. Electoral Reform, letter re (dated October 9, 2019) from Stacey Hassard, Leader of the Official Opposition, to Hon. Sandy Silver, Premier (Cathers),345
14. Electoral Reform, letter re (dated October 17, 2019) from Stacey Hassard, Leader of the Official Opposition, to Hon. Sandy Silver, Premier (Cathers),345

FILED DOCUMENTS *(continued)*

15. Financial investigation of Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services, letter re (dated August 9, 2019) from Stephen Samis, Deputy Minister, Department of Health and Social Services, to Dena Zavier, President, Many Rivers (White),406
16. Executive Summary of Findings, Report of Factual Findings, and Financial Information of Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services Society For the year ended March 31, 2019, letter re (dated July 31, 2019) from Erik Hoenisch, CPA, CA, Incorporated Partner, Crowe Mackay LLP, to Will Friesen, Budget Officer, Health and Social Services (White),406
17. *2018 Yukon Minerals Advisory Board Annual Report* (Pillai),465
18. Canada Remembers — Commemorative School Project, letter re (dated November 1, 2019) from Joseph R. Mewett, President, Whitehorse Legion, to Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee, Minister of Education (White),493
19. *Yukon Lottery Commission Annual Report 2018/19 — What's Your Recreation?* (Streicker),523
20. Electoral Reform, letter re (dated November 4, 2019) from Stacey Hassard, Leader of the Official Opposition, to Hon. Sandy Silver, Premier (Cathers),534
21. Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy, letter re (dated November 5, 2019) from Porter Creek Secondary School Gender and Sexuality Alliance to Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee, Minister of Education (White),586
22. *PWC - Review of the determination of security for reclamation and closure of the Wolverine Mine* (Pillai),680
23. Privatization of Yukon government services including Queen's Printer and Central Stores, letter re (dated November 12, 2019) from Penny Goldsmith to Liz Hanson, Member for Whitehorse Centre (Hanson),680
24. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's elimination of regional northern broadcasts, letter re, from Hon. Sandy Silver, Premier, to Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Premier of the Northwest Territories, and Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Premier of Nunavut (Silver), 741
25. Changes to Canadian Broadcasting Corporation services and Central Stores and Queen's Printer Agency, letter re (dated November 20, 2019) from Stacey Hassard, Leader of the Official Opposition, to Sandy Silver, Premier (Hassard),801

FROST, PAULINE

Speaks on:

Bill No. 3 - <i>Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act: Second Reading,</i>	80, 138
Bill No. 3 - <i>Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act: Third Reading,</i>	224, 226
Bill No. 5 - <i>Liquor Act: Second Reading,</i>	265
Ministerial statements:	
Housing action plan,	891, 892
Implementation of the <i>Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan,</i>	184, 185
Whistle Bend Place,	466, 467
Motion No. 7 - Re climate change,	128
Motion No. 19 - Re medical travel,	98, 106
Motion No. 22 - Re Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne,	62
Motion No. 32 - Re <i>Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan,</i>	445
Motion No. 60 - Re updating animal protection and dog control,	656
Motion No. 66 - Re forensic audit of Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services,	561, 564
Motion No. 80 - Re reappointment of Child and Youth Advocate,	473
Motion No. 116 - Re funding the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation,	787

GALLINA, PAOLO

Speaks on:

Bill No. 3 - <i>Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act: Second Reading,</i>	83
Motion No. 4 - Re single-use bag ban,	456
Motion No. 8 - Re establishing the Select Committee on Electoral Reform,	336
Motion No. 22 - Re Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne,	23, 79
Motion No. 27 - Re endorsing the <i>Yukon Tourism Development Strategy,</i>	661
Motion No. 77 - Re confidential Members' Services Board communications, ..	574
Motion No. 116 - Re funding the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation,	789
Motion No. 121 - Re adjournment of House for Arctic Winter Games,	840

GOVERNMENT BILLS**No. 2 - *Yukon University Act* (McPhee)**

Introduction and First Reading (Dendys),	89
Second Reading (McPhee),	387–396
Division,	395
Committee of the Whole,	690–698
Reported without amendment,	703
Unanimous consent re deeming all clauses, preamble, and title read and agreed to,	698
Third Reading (McPhee),	809–812
Division,	812
Assent,	913

No. 3 - *Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act* (Frost)

Introduction and First Reading,	14
Second Reading,	80–84, 136–138
Division,	138
Committee of the Whole,	138–146
Unanimous consent re deeming all clauses and title read and agreed to,	145
Reported without amendment,	146
Third Reading,	224–226
Division,	226
Assent,	913

No. 4 - *Act to Amend the Elections Act* (Silver)

Introduction and First Reading,	121
Second Reading,	532–540
Division,	540
Committee of the Whole,	717–722
Unanimous consent re deeming all remaining clauses and title read and agreed to,	722
Reported without amendment,	735
Third Reading,	746–749
Division,	749
Assent,	913

GOVERNMENT BILLS *(continued)***No. 5 - *Liquor Act*** (Streicker)

Introduction and First Reading,	121
Second Reading,	260–270
Division,	270
Committee of the Whole,	270–279, 360–373, 396–404, 540–548
Unanimous consent re deeming clauses 63 through 79 read and agreed to,	542
Unanimous consent re deeming clauses 93 through 100 read and agreed to,	547
Unanimous consent re deeming all remaining clauses and title read and agreed to,	548
Reported without amendment,	549
Third Reading,	620–622
Division,	623
Assent,	913

No. 6 - *Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009* (McPhee)

Introduction and First Reading (Streicker),	52
Second Reading (McPhee),	355–360
Division,	360
Committee of the Whole,	414–430, 474–485
Unanimous consent re revisiting clause 5,	484
Reported without amendment,	490
Third Reading (McPhee),	713–716
Division,	716
Assent,	913

No. 7 - *Technical Amendments Act, 2019* (Streicker)

Introduction and First Reading,	89
Second Reading,	146–147
Division,	147
Committee of the Whole,	166–170
Reported without amendment,	179
Third Reading,	688–689
Division,	689
Assent,	913

GOVERNMENT BILLS *(continued)***No. 200 - Second Appropriation Act 2019-20** (Silver)

Introduction and First Reading,	52
Second Reading,	156–166
Division,	166
Committee of the Whole, 170–179, 226–247, 290–309, 485–490, 499–519, 548–549, 576–579, 593–594, 597–612, 627–629, 667–676, 698–703, 722–734, 750–766, 813–829, 842–856, 865–883, 898–912	
Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 51 cleared or carried, 900	
Reported without amendment,	913
Third Reading,	913
Division,	913
Assent,	913

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**No. 7 - Re climate change**

Notice,	15
Debate,	127–136
Amendment proposed (White),	131
Amendment agreed to (Division),	133
Motion, as amended, agreed to (Division),	136

No. 71 - Re Membership of Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Notice,	413
Debate,	413
Motion agreed to,	413

No. 72 - Re Membership of Standing Committee on Statutory Instruments

Notice,	413
Debate,	413
Motion agreed to,	413

No. 73 - Re Membership of Members' Services Board

Notice,	413
Debate,	413
Motion agreed to,	413

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS *(continued)***No. 74 - Re Membership of Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees**

Notice,	413
Debate,	414
Motion agreed to,	414

No. 80 - Re reappointment of Child and Youth Advocate (McPhee)

Notice,	430
Debate,	473
Motion agreed to,	473

No. 81 - Re reappointment of Conflict of Interest Commissioner (McPhee)

Notice,	430
Debate,	473
Motion agreed to (Division),	474

No. 121 - Re adjournment of House for Arctic Winter Games (Streicker)

Notice,	770
Debate,	839–842
Division,	842
Motion agreed to (Division),	842

HANSON, LIZ

Questions, oral:

Access to information,	807
Affordable housing,	711
Alaska Highway corridor upgrades,	650
Beaver River watershed land use plan,	528
Funding for non-governmental organizations,	21
Government employee acquisition and retention,	471
Government of Yukon auxiliary-on-call employees,	836
Hemodialysis,	257
Internet connectivity,	94
Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services,	317, 352, 384
Queen's Printer and Central Stores services,	685

HANSON, LIZ (*continued*)

Questions, oral:

Roadside brush-clearing,	188, 222
Waterside boundaries,	410, 591
Whitehorse Correctional Centre segregation cell,	495
Whitehorse Emergency Shelter,	125

Speaks on:

Bill No. 2 - <i>Yukon University Act</i> : Second Reading,	394
Bill No. 4 - <i>Act to Amend the Elections Act</i> : Second Reading,	537
Bill No. 4 - <i>Act to Amend the Elections Act</i> : Third Reading,	747
Bill No. 5 - <i>Liquor Act</i> : Second Reading,	263
Bill No. 5 - <i>Liquor Act</i> : Third Reading,	621
Bill No. 6 - <i>Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009</i> : Second Reading,	358
Bill No. 6 - <i>Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009</i> : Third Reading,	714
Bill No. 7 - <i>Technical Amendments Act, 2019</i> : Third Reading,	689
Bill No. 200 - <i>Second Appropriation Act 2019-20</i> : Second Reading,	157

Ministerial statements:

40 Developmental Assets Model,	91
Cannabis Yukon retail store closure,	218
Carbon price rebate,	381
Implementation of the <i>Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan</i> ,	185
Improvements to north Klondike Highway,	285
Mandate letters,	122
Mayo aerodrome becoming an airport,	525
Nares River bridge,	350
Panache Ventures,	150
Queen's Printer and Central Stores services,	254
Tourism development strategy,	647
YuDriv,	587
Motion No. 1 - Re appearance of Chief Electoral Officer as witness,	625
Motion No. 7 - Re climate change,	135
Motion No. 8 - Re establishing the Select Committee on Electoral Reform, 330, 341	
Motion No. 19 - Re medical travel,	107
Motion No. 22 - Re Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne,	67

HANSON, LIZ (*continued*)

Speaks on:

Motion No. 27 - Re endorsing the <i>Yukon Tourism Development Strategy</i> ,	664
Motion No. 32 - Re <i>Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan</i> ,	440
Motion No. 66 - Re forensic audit of Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services,	563
Motion No. 71 - Re Membership of Standing Committee on Public Accounts, .	413
Motion No. 77 - Re confidential Members' Services Board communications, ..	575
Motion No. 80 - Re reappointment of Child and Youth Advocate,	473
Motion No. 116 - Re funding the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 775, 780, 793	
Motion No. 121 - Re adjournment of House for Arctic Winter Games,	840

HASSARD, STACEY

Questions, oral:

Alaska Highway corridor upgrades,	619, 648
Aviation investment strategy,	741
Beaver River watershed land use plan,	770
Budget estimates and spending,	526
Community nursing shortage,	834
Dawson City Airport,	893
Dawson City infrastructure upgrades,	860
Electoral reform,	314, 350, 411
Health care review,	54
Highway guardrails,	436
Lead in drinking water,	493
Mayo aerodrome,	434, 469
Mining project oversight,	554
Motor vehicle reclassification,	652
Nares River bridge project expenditures,	472
Queen's Printer and Central Stores services,	255, 285, 683
Southern Lakes enhancement project,	219, 382
Whistle Bend school,	804

HASSARD, STACEY (*continued*)

Speaks on:

Bill No. 200 - <i>Second Appropriation Act 2019-20: Second Reading</i> ,	157
Ministerial statements:	
40 Developmental Assets Model,	90
Improvements to north Klondike Highway,	284
Mandate letters,	122
Mayo aerodrome becoming an airport,	525
Nares River bridge,	349
Queen's Printer and Central Stores services,	254
YuDriv,	587
Motion for the Production of Papers No. 3 - Re Central Stores and Queen's Printer Agency restructuring cost savings, 320, 329	
Motion No. 19 - Re medical travel,	111
Motion No. 22 - Re Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne,	75
Motion No. 32 - Re <i>Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan</i> ,	447
Motion No. 77 - Re confidential Members' Services Board communications, 570, 576	

HUTTON, DON (see also **DEPUTY SPEAKER, CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**)

Speaks on:

Bill No. 5 - <i>Liquor Act: Second Reading</i> ,	266
Motion No. 19 - Re medical travel,	100
Motion No. 22 - Re Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne,	30
Motion No. 31 - Re north Klondike Highway,	190, 205
Motion No. 32 - Re <i>Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan</i> ,	439, 452
Motion No. 60 - Re updating animal protection and dog control,	653, 658

ISTCHENKO, WADE

Questions, oral:

Diesel energy generation costs,	838
Energy supply and demand,	96
Kluane Lake School relocation,	588
Nuclear energy,	805

ISTCHENKO, WADE (*continued*)

Questions, oral:

Private venture capital funds,	897
Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board membership,	189
Yukon parks strategy,	773

Speaks on:

Bill No. 5 - <i>Liquor Act</i> : Second Reading,	263
Bill No. 5 - <i>Liquor Act</i> : Third Reading,	620

Ministerial statements:

Cannabis Yukon retail store accounting,	553
Cannabis Yukon retail store closure,	218
Climate change, energy, and green economy strategy,	53
Home retrofit loan program,	313
Panache Ventures,	150
Youth panel on climate change,	17
Motion No. 7 - Re climate change,	133
Motion No. 19 - Re medical travel,	100
Motion No. 31 - Re north Klondike Highway,	205
Motion No. 60 - Re updating animal protection and dog control,	654
Motion No. 113 - Re opposing the confiscation of firearms,	794

KENT, SCOTT

Questions, oral:

Canada Remembers commemorative school project,	497
Capital plan for schools,	58
Coffee Gold project,	95
Contract procurement,	220
Diabetes treatment,	527
French immersion programming,	435
Government of Yukon website,	742, 771
Mineral staking,	687, 709
Mining sector development,	558, 687
Queen's Printer and Central Stores services,	256, 318, 351, 896

KENT, SCOTT (*continued*)

Questions, oral:

Radon testing,	289
Robert Service School,	894
School structural safety,	127
Teacher staffing,	808
<i>Waters Act</i> and regulations,	649
Whistle Bend school,	22, 838
YESAA and Yukon Water Board processes,	618
Yukon mineral exploration program,	555, 863
Yukon Water Board wetlands hearing,	615, 774

Speaks on:

Ministerial statements:

Climate change strategy,	681
Renewable energy,	707

Ministerial statements:

Early kindergarten - K4,	802
Implementation of the <i>Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan</i> ,	184

Motion for the Production of Papers No. 3 - Re Central Stores and Queen's

Printer Agency restructuring cost savings,	328
Motion No. 4 - Re single-use bag ban,	455
Motion No. 31 - Re north Klondike Highway,	212
Motion No. 80 - Re reappointment of Child and Youth Advocate,	473
Motion No. 81 - Re reappointment of Conflict of Interest Commissioner,	473
Motion No. 121 - Re adjournment of House for Arctic Winter Games,	840

LEGISLATIVE RETURNS

1. Response to oral question from Ms. White re: seniors home care (Frost),	252
2. Response to Motion No. 39 re Burma Road improvements and Motion No. 40 re Horse Creek Road and Jackfish Bay road improvements (Mostyn),	312
3. Response to Motion for the Production of Papers No. 3 re Central Stores and Queen's Printer Agency restructuring cost savings (Mostyn),	434
4. Response to oral question from Mr. Kent re: radon testing (Dendys),	523

LEGISLATIVE RETURNS *(continued)*

5. Response to oral question from Mr. Kent re: Canada Remembers Commemorative School Project (Dendys),	523
6. Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Mr. Kent related to general debate on Bill No. 200, <i>Second Appropriation Act 2019-20</i> — new French first language school (Mostyn),	552
7. Response to oral question from Ms. Hanson re: Whitehorse Correctional Centre segregation cell (Streicker),	552
8. Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Mr. Istchenko related to a Ministerial Statement re Cannabis Yukon retail store closure (Streicker),	586
9. Response to Written Question No. 1 re: Members' Services Board agenda (Speaker Clarke),	887
11. Response to oral question from Mr. Kent re: teacher staffing (McPhee),	887
12. Response to Motion for the Production of Papers No. 6 re: Government of Yukon auxiliary-on-call employees (Mostyn),	888
13. Response to oral question from Mr. Hassard re: Community nursing shortage (Frost),	888
14. Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Mr. Istchenko related to general debate on Bill No. 200, <i>Second Appropriation Act 2019-20</i> - moose surveys (Frost),	888

McLEOD, PATTI

Questions, oral:

Canadian Armed Forces health care reimbursement (McLeod),	93
Continuing care wait-list,	437
Health care review,	18, 55, 288, 319
Health care specialist wait times,	835
Hospital staffing,	151, 187
Macaulay Lodge closure,	557, 592
Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services,	383, 408, 409
Medical travel,	123, 154
Pharmacist regulations,	745
Radon testing,	708
Whitehorse Emergency Shelter,	386, 412

McLEOD, PATTI (*continued*)

Speaks on:

Bill No. 3 - <i>Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act</i> : Second Reading,	81
Bill No. 3 - <i>Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act</i> : Third Reading,	225
Ministerial statements:	
Whistle Bend Place,	466
Motion No. 19 - Re medical travel,	97, 110
Motion No. 31 - Re north Klondike Highway,	210
Motion No. 66 - Re forensic audit of Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services,	562, 566

McPHEE, TRACY-ANNE

Speaks on:

Bill No. 2 - <i>Yukon University Act</i> : Second Reading,	387, 395
Bill No. 2 - <i>Yukon University Act</i> : Third Reading,	809, 812
Bill No. 6 - <i>Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009</i> : Second Reading, ...	356, 359
Bill No. 6 - <i>Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009</i> : Third Reading,	713, 715
Bill No. 7 - <i>Technical Amendments Act, 2019</i> : Third Reading,	688
Ministerial statements:	
Early kindergarten - K4,	802, 803
Motion No. 1 - Re appearance of Chief Electoral Officer as witness,	625
Motion No. 116 - Re funding the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, ...	781, 785

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Dendys, Jeanie

Tourism development strategy (Van Bibber/Hanson),	646
---	-----

Frost, Pauline

Housing action plan (Van Bibber/White),	891
Implementation of the <i>Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan</i> (Kent/Hanson),	184
Whistle Bend Place (McLeod/White),	466

McPhee, Tracy-Anne

Early kindergarten - K4 (Kent/White),	802
---	-----

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS *(continued)*

Mostyn, Richard

Improvements to north Klondike Highway (Hassard/Hanson),	284
Mayo aerodrome becoming an airport (Hassard/Hanson),	524
Nares River bridge (Hassard/Hanson),	349
Queen's Printer and Central Stores services (Hassard/Hanson),	253
YuDriv (Hassard/Hanson),	586

Pillai, Ranj

Climate change, energy, and green economy strategy (Istchenko/White),	52
Climate change strategy (Kent/White),	680
Panache Ventures (Istchenko/Hanson),	149
Renewable energy (Kent/White),	706

Silver, Sandy (Premier)

40 Developmental Assets Model (Hassard/Hanson),	90
Carbon price rebate (Cathers/Hanson),	380
Mandate letters (Hassard/Hanson),	121
Youth panel on climate change (Istchenko/White),	16

Streicker, John

Cannabis Yukon retail store accounting (Istchenko/White),	552
Cannabis Yukon retail store closure (Istchenko/Hanson),	217
Home retrofit loan program (Istchenko/White),	312
Leave for victims of domestic violence (Van Bibber/White),	407

MOSTYN, RICHARD

Speaks on:

Bill No. 3 - <i>Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act</i> : Second Reading,	82
Bill No. 200 - <i>Second Appropriation Act 2019-20</i> : Second Reading,	160

Ministerial statements:

Improvements to north Klondike Highway,	284, 285
Mayo aerodrome becoming an airport,	524, 526
Nares River bridge,	349, 350
Queen's Printer and Central Stores services,	253, 255
YuDriv,	586, 587

MOSTYN, RICHARD (*continued*)

Speaks on:

Motion for the Production of Papers No. 3 - Re Central Stores and Queen's Printer Agency restructuring cost savings,	322
Motion No. 8 - Re establishing the Select Committee on Electoral Reform,	343
Motion No. 19 - Re medical travel,	116
Motion No. 22 - Re Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne,	43, 59
Motion No. 31 - Re north Klondike Highway,	208
Motion No. 116 - Re funding the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation,	792

MOTIONS (see GOVERNMENT MOTIONS, MOTIONS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF PAPERS, MOTIONS IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS, MOTIONS OF URGENT AND PRESSING NECESSITY, MOTIONS RESPECTING COMMITTEE REPORTS, MOTIONS, WITHDRAWAL OF and PROCEDURAL MOTIONS)

MOTIONS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF PAPERS**No. 3 - Re Central Stores and Queen's Printer Agency restructuring cost savings**

(Hassard)

Notice,	280
Debate,	320–329
Motion agreed to (Division),	329

MOTIONS IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**No. 1 - Re appearance of Chief Electoral Officer as a witness (McPhee)**

Moved,	623
Debate,	623–627
Amendment proposed (Cathers),	624
Amendment negatived (Count),	627
Motion agreed to,	627

No. 2 - Re appearance of witnesses from Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board (Dendys)

Moved,	749
Debate,	749
Motion agreed to,	749

MOTIONS IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE *(continued)***No. 3 - Re appearance of witnesses from Yukon Hospital Corporation** (Frost)

Moved,	812
Debate,	812
Motion agreed to,	812

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**No. 4 - Re single-use bag ban** (Adel)

Notice,	9
Debate,	454–461
Motion to adjourn debate (Kent),	456
Motion to adjourn debate negated (Division),	456
Motion agreed to (Division),	461

No. 8 - Re establishing the Select Committee on Electoral Reform (Hanson)

Notice,	15
Debate,	330–344
Amendment proposed (Cathers),	340
Debate adjourned on motion and amendment (Time expired) (Silver),	344

No. 19 - Re medical travel (McLeod)

Notice,	16
Debate,	97–118
Amendment proposed (White),	105
Debate adjourned on motion and amendment (Time expired) (Mostyn),	118

No. 22 - Re Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne (Gallina)

Notice,	23
Debate,	59–80
Debate adjourned (Time expired) (Mostyn),	47
Motion agreed to (Division),	80

No. 27 - Re endorsing the Yukon Tourism Development Strategy (Adel)

Notice,	89
Debate,	658–666
Motion agreed to (Division),	667

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS *(continued)***No. 31 - Re north Klondike Highway** (Hutton)

Notice,	121
Debate,	190–214
Amendment proposed (Cathers),	202
Debate adjourned on motion and amendment (Time expired) (Kent),	214

No. 32 - Re Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan (Hutton)

Notice,	121
Debate,	439–453
Motion agreed to (Division),	453

No. 60 - Re updating animal protection and dog control (Hutton)

Notice,	284
Debate,	653–658
Motion agreed to (Division),	658

No. 66 - Re forensic audit of Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services

(White)

Notice,	312
Debate,	559–569
Amendment No. 1 proposed (Frost),	561
Amendment No. 1 agreed to (Division),	562
Amendment No. 2 proposed (Hanson),	564
Amendment No. 2 negatived (Division),	566
Motion, as amended, agreed to (Division),	570

No. 77 - Re confidential Members' Services Board communications (Hassard)

Notice,	406
Debate,	570–576
Motion negatived (Division),	576

No. 100 - Re tribute in remembrance of former Premier Dennis Fentie (Hassard)

Unanimous consent re moving motion without notice,	532
Moved,	532
Motion agreed to,	532

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS *(continued)***No. 113 - Re opposing the confiscation of firearms** (Istchenko)

Notice,	706
Debate,	794–798
Debate adjourned (Time expired) (Cathers),	798

No. 116 - Re funding the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (Hanson)

Notice,	741
Debate	
Amendment proposed (Streicker),	779
Amendment agreed to (Division),	782
Motion, as amended, agreed to (Division),	794

MOTIONS, WITHDRAWAL OF

Adel

Motion No. 3,	431
---------------------	-----

Cathers

Motion No. 17,	149
----------------------	-----

Gallina

Motion No. 1,	767
---------------------	-----

White

Motion No. 6,	149
---------------------	-----

NOTICE OF PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Government private members' business

Order of business for October 16, 2019 (Streicker),	156
Order of business for October 30, 2019 (McPhee),	413
Order of business for November 13, 2019 (McPhee),	619
Order of business for November 27, 2019 (McPhee),	865

Opposition private members' business

Order of business for October 9, 2019 (Kent/White),	59
Order of business for October 23, 2019 (Kent/White),	290
Order of business for November 6, 2019 (White/Kent),	531
Order of business for November 20, 2019 (White/Kent),	746

PAGES

Introduction of (Speaker Clarke),	6
---	---

PETITIONS

No. 1 - Re Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services (White)	
Presented,	379
Received,	406
Response (Streicker),	614
No. 11 (2 nd Session of 34 th Legislature) - Re school bus safety (Cathers)	
Presented (2 nd Session of 34 th Legislature),	4604
Received (2 nd Session of 34 th Legislature),	4634
Response (Dendys),	88

PILLAI, RANJ

Speaks on:

Bill No. 2 - <i>Yukon University Act: Second Reading</i> ,	392
Bill No. 2 - <i>Yukon University Act: Third Reading</i> ,	811
Bill No. 200 - <i>Second Appropriation Act 2019-20: Second Reading</i> ,	163
Ministerial statements:	
Climate change, energy, and green economy strategy,	52, 53
Climate change strategy,	680, 682
Panache Ventures,	149, 151
Renewable energy,	706, 708
Motion No. 22 - Re Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne,	68
Motion No. 32 - Re <i>Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan</i> ,	450

POINTS OF ORDER

Re accusation of "not telling the truth" (McPhee),	355
Speaker's statement (defers ruling),	355
Re addressing remarks to the Chair not to other Members (Silver),	229
Chair's ruling,	229
Re addressing remarks to the Speaker not to other Members (Hutton),	108
Speaker's ruling,	108

POINTS OF ORDER *(continued)*

Re addressing remarks to the Speaker not to other Members (White),	322
Speaker's ruling,	322
Re imputing false or unavowed motives (White),	109
Speaker's ruling,	109
Re insulting language (Cathers),	748
Speaker's statement,	748
Re Motion No. 4 no longer in order (Cathers),	453
Speaker's ruling,	453
Re personalizing debate (Hanson),	529
Speaker's ruling,	529
Re reading unnecessarily from tabled documents (Silver),	534
Speaker's ruling,	534
Speaker's statement,	537
Re referring to Members by riding or portfolio not by name (Cathers),	337
Deputy Speaker's ruling,	337
Re referring to Members by riding or portfolio not by name (Cathers),	907
Chair's ruling,	907
Re referring to Members by riding or portfolio not by name (Cathers),	55
Speaker's ruling,	55
Re relevance - amendment (Streicker),	113
Speaker's ruling,	114
Re relevance - amendment (Cathers),	116
Speaker's ruling,	116
Re relevance - amendment (Hanson),	115
Acting Speaker's statement (defers ruling),	115
Re relevance - amendment (Streicker),	112
Speaker's statement,	113
Re relevance - amendment (White),	342, 564, 565
Speaker's ruling,	342, 564, 565
Re relevance - appearance of witness (White),	638
Chair's ruling,	638
Re relevance - bill (Cathers),	538
Speaker's ruling,	538

POINTS OF ORDER *(continued)*

Re relevance - bill (Silver),	534, 535
Speaker's statement,	534, 535
Speaker's ruling,	536
Re relevance - motion (McPhee),	459
Speaker's ruling,	459
Re use of "misrepresent" (Cathers),	320
Speaker's ruling,	320
Re use of "whopper" (Streicker),	77
Speaker's ruling,	77
Re uttering a deliberate falsehood (Streicker),	21, 571
Speaker's ruling,	21, 571

PRIVILEGE, POINTS OF PERSONAL

Re clarification re tribute delivered was on behalf of all Members of the Assembly not just the government (Silver),	283
---	-----

PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

Motion to engross Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne (McPhee), .	688
Motion agreed to,	688

QUESTIONS - ORAL

Access to information (Hanson),	807
Affordable housing	
(Cathers),	223
(Hanson),	711
(Van Bibber),	155
(White),	126, 862
Agriculture policy (Cathers),	438
Alaska Highway corridor upgrades	
(Hanson),	650
(Hassard),	619, 648
(Van Bibber),	896

QUESTIONS – ORAL *(continued)*

Aviation investment strategy (Hassard),	741
Beaver River watershed land use plan	
(Hanson),	528
(Hassard),	770
Budget estimates and spending	
(Cathers),	92, 468, 494, 530
(Hassard),	526
Canada Remembers commemorative school project (Kent),	497
Canadian Armed Forces health care reimbursement (McLeod),	93
Capital plan for schools (Kent),	58
Carbon tax (Cathers),	864
Challenge housing project (Van Bibber),	124, 186
Climate emergency declaration (White),	435
Climate lens policy (White),	287
Coffee Gold project (Kent),	95
Community nursing shortage (Hassard),	834
Condor Airlines (Van Bibber),	589
Continuing care wait-list (McLeod),	437
Contract procurement (Kent),	220
Dawson City Airport (Hassard),	893
Dawson City infrastructure upgrades (Hassard),	860
Dental health care (White),	617
Department of Education sexual orientation and gender identity policy (White),	590
Diabetes treatment (Kent),	527
Diesel energy generation costs (Istchenko),	838
Election voting by special ballot (Cathers),	151
Electoral reform	
(Cathers),	315
(Hassard),	314, 350, 411
Emergency room visits (White),	710
Energy demand-side management (White),	56, 258
Energy retrofit program for homeowners (White),	496
Energy retrofits (Van Bibber),	286

QUESTIONS – ORAL *(continued)*

Energy supply and demand (Istchenko),	96
French immersion programming (Kent),	435
Funding for non-governmental organizations (Hanson),	21
Government employee acquisition and retention (Hanson),	471
Government of Yukon auxiliary-on-call employees (Hanson),	836
Government of Yukon website (Kent),	742, 771
Greenhouse gas emissions (White),	772
Grizzly bear conservation plan (White),	743
Health care review	
(Hassard),	54
(McLeod),	18, 55, 288, 319
Health care specialist wait times (McLeod),	835
Hemodialysis (Hanson),	257
Highway guardrails (Hassard),	436
Hospital staffing (McLeod),	151, 187
Housing First project (Van Bibber),	530
Independent Commission on Electoral Reform	
(Cathers),	19, 57
(White),	20
Internet connectivity (Hanson),	94
Kluane Lake School relocation (Istchenko),	588
Lead in drinking water (Hassard),	493
Living wage and minimum wage (White),	470
Macaulay Lodge closure (McLeod),	557, 592
Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services	
(Hanson),	317, 352, 384
(McLeod),	383, 408, 409
(White),	385
Mayo aerodrome (Hassard),	434, 469
Medical travel (McLeod),	123, 154
Midwifery legislation (White),	353

QUESTIONS – ORAL *(continued)*

Mineral staking	
(Cathers),	712
(Kent),	687, 709, 774
Mining project oversight (Hassard),	554
Mining sector development (Kent),	558, 687
Motor vehicle reclassification (Hassard),	652
Nares River bridge project expenditures (Hassard),	472
Pharmacist regulations (McLeod),	745
Porter Creek group home (Van Bibber),	863
Powerline safety (Van Bibber),	57
Private venture capital funds (Istchenko),	897
Queen's Printer and Central Stores services	
(Cathers),	259, 354
(Hanson),	685
(Hassard),	255, 285, 683
(Kent),	256, 318, 351, 896
(Van Bibber),	684
(White),	686
Radon testing	
(Kent),	289
(McLeod),	708
(Van Bibber),	744
Roadside brush-clearing (Hanson),	188, 222
Robert Service School (Kent),	894
School structural safety (Kent),	127
Seniors home care (White),	153
Seniors housing (White),	221
Sexualized assault response team (White),	837
Social inclusion and poverty reduction (White),	895
Southern Lakes enhancement project (Hassard),	219, 382
Teacher staffing	
(Kent),	808
(White),	806

QUESTIONS – ORAL *(continued)*

Tourism development strategy (Van Bibber),	652
Vimy housing project (Van Bibber),	189
<i>Waters Act</i> and regulations (Kent),	649
Waterside boundaries (Hanson),	410, 591
Watson Lake hospital staffing (McLeod),	498
Whistle Bend school	
(Hassard),	804
(Kent),	22, 838
Whitehorse Correctional Centre segregation cell (Hanson),	495
Whitehorse Emergency Shelter	
(Hanson),	125
(McLeod),	386, 412
Whitehorse Emergency Shelter and Housing First supports (White),	556
YESAA and Yukon Water Board processes (Kent),	618
Yukon Hospital Corporation funding (Cathers),	861
Yukon mineral exploration program (Kent),	555, 863
Yukon parks strategy (Istchenko),	773
Yukon Water Board wetlands hearing (Kent),	615

QUESTIONS - WRITTEN

No. 1 - Re: Members' Services Board agenda (Istchenko)	
Filed at Table,	490
No. 2 - Re: carbon price exemption for farm propane (Cathers)	
Filed at Table,	490
No. 3 - Re: licensed physicians and nurses practising in Yukon (McLeod)	
Filed at Table,	914
No. 4 - Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Health and Social Services (McLeod)	
Filed at Table,	914
No. 5 - Re: website and visual identity costs for the Women's Directorate (McLeod)	
Filed at Table,	914
No. 6 - Re: expropriations of placer and quartz mining claims (Kent)	
Filed at Table,	915

QUESTIONS – WRITTEN *(continued)*

No. 7 - Re: Yukon resource gateway spending (Kent)	
Filed at Table,	915
No. 8 - Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Education (Kent)	
Filed at Table,	915
No. 9 - Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources (Kent)	
Filed at Table,	915
No. 10 - Re: land withdrawals and staking bans (Kent)	
Filed at Table,	915
No. 11 - Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Finance (Cathers)	
Filed at Table,	915
No. 12 - Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Justice (Cathers)	
Filed at Table,	915
No. 13 - Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Environment (Istchenko)	
Filed at Table,	915
No. 14 - Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Economic Development (Istchenko)	
Filed at Table,	915
No. 15 - Re: website and visual identity costs for the Yukon Development Corporation (Istchenko)	
Filed at Table,	915
No. 16 - Re: website and visual identity costs for the Yukon Liquor Corporation (Istchenko)	
Filed at Table,	915
No. 17 - Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Community Services (Van Bibber)	
Filed at Table,	915
No. 18 - Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Tourism and Culture (Van Bibber)	
Filed at Table,	915
No. 19 - Re: website and visual identity costs for the Yukon Housing Corporation (Van Bibber)	
Filed at Table,	915

QUESTIONS – WRITTEN *(continued)*

No. 20 - Re: website and visual identity costs for the Public Service Commission (Hassard) Filed at Table,	915
No. 21 - Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Highways and Public Works (Hassard) Filed at Table,	915
No. 22 - Re: website and visual identity costs for the Executive Council Office (Hassard) Filed at Table,	915
No. 23 - Re: website and visual identity costs for the French Language Services Directorate (Hassard) Filed at Table,	915

QUORUM COUNT

Bill No. 200 - <i>Second Appropriation Act 2019-20</i> : Committee of the Whole,	295
Motion No. 31 - Re north Klondike Highway,	195, 199

SESSIONAL PAPERS

1. Speech from the Throne (Speaker Clarke),	7
2. <i>Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Yukon — Kindergarten Through Grade 12 Education in Yukon — Department of Education</i> (June 18, 2019) (Speaker Clarke),	7
3. <i>Report from the Clerk of the Yukon Legislative Assembly on the Absence of Members from Sitzings of the Legislative Assembly and its Committees</i> (October 3, 2019) (Speaker Clarke),	7
4. <i>Fourteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees</i> (June 6, 2019) (Adel),	7
5. <i>Fifteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees</i> (August 2, 2019) (Adel),	7
6. <i>Yukon Legislative Assembly Respectful Conduct - Members' Services Board</i> (June 12, 2019) (Speaker Clarke),	14
7. <i>Yukon Liquor Corporation Annual report — April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019</i> (Streicker),	14

SESSIONAL PAPERS *(continued)*

8. <i>Cannabis Yukon Annual report — Yukon Liquor Corporation — April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019</i> (Streicker),	14
9. <i>Yukon Arts Centre 2018/19 Annual Report</i> (Dendys),	52
10. <i>2019-20 Interim Fiscal and Economic Update</i> (Silver),	52
11. <i>Yukon Development Corporation 2018 Annual Report</i> (Pillai),	283
12. <i>Yukon Energy Corporation Annual Report 2018</i> (Pillai),	283
13. <i>Embracing the Children of Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow — Child and Family Services Act Advisory Committee</i> (Frost),	379
14. <i>Financial Accounting Report — Government of Yukon — for the period of April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019 — Mercer Marsh Benefits (September 19, 2019)</i> (Silver),	379
15. <i>Yukon Public Accounts 2018-19</i> (Silver),	434
16. <i>Advocacy in Action - 2018/2019 Annual Report - Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office</i> (Speaker Clarke),	465
17. <i>Yukon Police Council Annual Report 2018-19</i> (McPhee),	465
18. <i>Yukon Heritage Resources Board Annual Report April 1, 2018 - March 31, 2019</i> (Dendys),	586
19. <i>Yukon Hospitals — A journey together — Year in review 2018-2019 and Yukon Hospital Corporation Consolidated Financial Statements March 31, 2019</i> (Frost),	614
20. <i>Standing Committee on Public Accounts Fourth Report</i> (November 2019) (Hassard),	680
21. <i>A Year in Review — Yukon Human Rights Commission — 2018-2019 Annual Report and Yukon Human Rights Commission Financial Statements Year Ended March 31, 2019</i> (Speaker Clarke),	706
22. <i>Health Care Insurance Programs — Health Services - Fiscal years 2009-10 to 2018-19 — Annual Report April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019</i> (Frost),	706
23. <i>A Year in Review — Yukon Human Rights Commission — 2017/2018 Annual Report and Yukon Human Rights Commission Financial Statements Year Ended March 31, 2018</i> (Speaker Clarke),	741
24. <i>Yukon Housing Corporation Annual Report — For the year ended March 31, 2019</i> (Frost),	770
25. <i>Crime Prevention and Victim Services Trust Fund Annual Report 2018-19</i> (McPhee),	859
26. <i>Yukon Public Service Labour Relations Board Annual Report 2018-2019</i> (Mostyn),	859
27. <i>Yukon Teachers Labour Relations Board Annual Report 2018-2019</i> (Mostyn),	859

SESSIONAL PAPERS *(continued)*

28. *Chief Electoral officer's Report to the Legislative Assembly - A Summary of Electoral Activities and Proposed Elections Act Amendments - November 26, 2019* (Speaker Clarke),887
29. *Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues - Annual Report 2018-2019* (Dendys), 888

SILVER, SANDY

Speaks on:

- Bill No. 4 - *Act to Amend the Elections Act: Second Reading*, 532, 539
- Bill No. 4 - *Act to Amend the Elections Act: Third Reading*, 746, 748
- Bill No. 200 - *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20: Second Reading*, 156, 165
- Ministerial statements:
- 40 Developmental Assets Model, 90, 91
- Carbon price rebate, 380, 382
- Mandate letters, 121, 123
- Youth panel on climate change, 16, 18
- Motion No. 8 - *Re establishing the Select Committee on Electoral Reform*, 344
- Motion No. 19 - *Re medical travel*, 110
- Motion No. 22 - *Re Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne*, 72
- Motion No. 77 - *Re confidential Members' Services Board communications*, .. 575
- Motion No. 81 - *Re reappointment of Conflict of Interest Commissioner*, 473
- Motion No. 116 - *Re funding the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*, 783

SITTING DAYS

- No. 1 October 3, 2019 (Thursday), 1–9
- No. 2 October 7, 2019 (Monday), 11–47
- No. 3 October 8, 2019 (Tuesday), 49–85
- No. 4 October 9, 2019 (Wednesday), 87–118
- No. 5 October 10, 2019 (Thursday), 119–147
- No. 6 October 15, 2019 (Tuesday), 149–179
- No. 7 October 16, 2019 (Wednesday), 181–214
- No. 8 October 17, 2019 (Thursday), 215–247
- No. 9 October 21, 2019 (Monday), 249–280
- No. 10 October 22, 2019 (Tuesday), 281–309

SITTING DAYS *(continued)*

No. 11 October 23, 2019 (Wednesday),	311–345
No. 12 October 24, 2019 (Thursday),	347–374
No. 13 October 28, 2019 (Monday),	375–404
No. 14 October 29, 2019 (Tuesday),	405–430
No. 15 October 30, 2019 (Wednesday),	431–461
No. 16 October 31, 2019 (Thursday),	463–490
No. 17 November 4, 2019 (Monday),	491–519
No. 18 November 5, 2019 (Tuesday),	521–550
No. 19 November 6, 2019 (Wednesday),	551–579
No. 20 November 7, 2019 (Thursday),	581–612
No. 21 November 12, 2019 (Tuesday),	613–643
No. 22 November 13, 2019 (Wednesday),	645–676
No. 23 November 14, 2019 (Thursday),	677–704
No. 24 November 18, 2019 (Monday),	705–735
No. 25 November 19, 2019 (Tuesday),	737–766
No. 26 November 20, 2019 (Wednesday),	767–798
No. 27 November 21, 2019 (Thursday),	799–829
No. 28 November 25, 2019 (Monday),	831–857
No. 29 November 26, 2019 (Tuesday),	857–884
No. 30 November 27, 2019 (Wednesday),	885–915

SITTING LENGTH

Acting Government House Leader's report on (Streicker),	190
---	-----

SPEAKER (see also **SPEAKER'S RULINGS**, **SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS**, and **UNPARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE**)

Introductions

Borud, Stan,	582
Campbell, Edith,	7
Duncan, Suzanne,	7
Grabowski, Terry,	582
Hamel, Sylvie, and grade 10 class from Vanier Catholic Secondary School, ...	582
Harvey, Maxwell,	119, 885

SPEAKER *(continued)*

Introductions

Miller, Louise,582

Pages,6

Tables documents, 7, 14, 465, 706, 741, 887

SPEAKER'S RULINGS (see also Deputy Speaker's rulings and Acting Speaker's rulings)

Re addressing remarks to the Speaker not to other Members, 108, 322

Re impartiality of the Chair; the tabling and release of confidential committee documents;
the removal of filed document No. 12 from the Assembly's records,378

Re imputing false or unavowed motives, 109

Re Motion No. 4 no longer in order,453

Re not quoting from confidential documents,575

Re personalizing debate,529

Re reading unnecessarily from tabled documents,534

Re referring to Members by riding or portfolio not by name,55

Re relevance - amendment, 112, 114, 115, 116, 342

Re relevance - bill,535

Re relevance - motion,459

Re use of "misrepresent,"320

Re use of "whopper,"77

Re uttering a deliberate falsehood,77

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS (see also Deputy Speaker's statements and Acting Speaker's statements)

Re accusation of "not telling the truth" (defers ruling),355

Re artwork exhibits in the Chamber, 11

Re Child Day, National, recognition of,767

Re impartiality of the Chair, 336, 571, 573

Re insulting language,748

Re off-mic comments allowed in moderation, 111

Re preparing amendments prior to debate,561

Re providing the Speaker written notice re introduction of visitors outside the rubric
Introduction of Visitors,46

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS *(continued)*

Re quoting from confidential documents,	572, 573, 574
Re referring to "member for" not "member from" a given riding,	214
Re referring to members by riding or portfolio not by name,	35, 447
Re relevance - amendment,	109, 113
Re relevance - second reading of Bill No. 4,	534, 535
Re Remembrance Day, recognition of,	581
Re use of "gaslighting,"	572
Re volume of Member's speech - adequacy of,	526
Re volume of off-mic comments interfering with ability to hear,	568

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

Delivered (Commissioner Bernard),	1
Tabled (See Sessional Paper No. 1),	7
Consideration of Motion for an Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne on a day following (Silver),	7
Notice pursuant to Standing Order 26(2) of consideration of Motion for an Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne	
McPhee,	7
Streicker,	23
Motion No. 22 - Re Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne (Gallina), 23–47, 59–80	
Motion to engross Address (Silver),	688

STREICKER, JOHN

Speaks on:

Bill No. 2 - <i>Yukon University Act: Second Reading</i> ,	391
Bill No. 3 - <i>Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act: Second Reading</i> ,	84, 137
Bill No. 5 - <i>Liquor Act: Second Reading</i> ,	260, 269
Bill No. 5 - <i>Liquor Act: Third Reading</i> ,	620, 622
Bill No. 7 - <i>Technical Amendments Act, 2019: Second Reading</i> ,	146
Bill No. 200 - <i>Second Appropriation Act 2019-20: Second Reading</i> ,	158

STREICKER, JOHN *(continued)*

Speaks on:

Ministerial statements:

Cannabis Yukon retail store accounting,	552, 554
Cannabis Yukon retail store closure,	217, 218
Home retrofit loan program,	312, 314
Leave for victims of domestic violence,	407, 408
Motion No. 1 - Re appearance of Chief Electoral Officer as witness,	626
Motion No. 7 - Re climate change,	132, 134
Motion No. 8 - Re establishing the Select Committee on Electoral Reform,	341
Motion No. 19 - Re medical travel,	114
Motion No. 22 - Re Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne,	38
Motion No. 66 - Re forensic audit of Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services,	562, 566, 567
Motion No. 116 - Re funding the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation,	777
Motion No. 121 - Re adjournment of House for Arctic Winter Games,	839, 841

TERMINATION OF SITTING

As per Standing Order 76(1),	912
As per Standing Order 76(2),	913

TRIBUTES

16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, recognition of (Streicker/McLeod/White),	832
Aboriginal Veterans Day, National, recognition of (Frost/Istchenko/White),	584
AIDS Day 2019, World, recognition of (Adel/McLeod/White),	857
Amateur sports, Yukon, recognition of (Streicker),	768
Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada, recognition of (Frost/McLeod),	347
BreakOut West Music Festival and Western Canadian Music Awards, recognition of (Pillai/Hanson),	49
Breast Cancer Awareness Month, recognition of (Dendys/McLeod/White),	282
Cabinet comprised entirely of MLAs, 40 th anniversary of first Yukon, recognition of (Silver),	282

TRIBUTES *(continued)*

Canadian National War Memorial and Parliament terrorist attack, remembrance of (Istchenko),	281
Caregivers and National Foster Family Week, Yukon, recognition of (Frost/McLeod),	182
Child Development Centre 40 th anniversary, recognition of (Frost/Van Bibber/Hanson),	831
CKRW 50 th anniversary, recognition of (Dendys/Van Bibber/White),	677
Community Safety and Crime Prevention Month, National, recognition of (McPhee/Van Bibber/White),	737
Culinary Festival, Yukon, recognition of (Pillai/Van Bibber),	432
Diabetes Awareness Month and Diabetes Day, World, recognition of (Frost/McLeod/White),	678
Farmer of the Year, recognition of (Pillai/Cathers/White),	491
Fentie, Dennis, remembrance of (outside the rubric "Tributes," per Motion No. 100) (McLeod/Silver/Hanson),	596
Firefighters and Fire Prevention Week, Yukon, recognition of (Streicker/Cathers/White),	...50
Foster families and extended families, Yukon, recognition of (Frost/McLeod/White),	..311
Francophone Immigration Week, National, recognition of (Pillai/Cathers/White),	492
Garbage Truck Santa (Mostyn/White),	885
Geoscience Forum awards, 2019 Yukon, recognition of (Pillai/McLeod/White),	738
Girl Child, International Day of, recognition of (Dendys/McLeod/White),	119
Guild Society, 40 th anniversary of, recognition of (Dendys/White),	431
Hospice Yukon, recognition of (Frost/Hanson),	463
Housing Day, National, recognition of (Frost/Van Bibber/White),	800
Karr, Hank, recognition of (Dendys/Van Bibber),	181
Kitchen, Shawn, remembrance of (Pillai),	705
Lane, Julia, remembrance of (Pillai),	705
Libraries Week, Yukon and Libraries Month, Canadian, recognition of (Streicker/Van Bibber),	348
MADD Canada's Project Red Ribbon campaign, recognition of (Mostyn/Hassard/White),	521
Make a Will Month, recognition of (McPhee/Cathers),	613
Mental Illness Awareness Week, recognition of (Frost/McLeod),	88
Movember, recognition of (Adel),	614
North of 60 Agriculture Conference, recognition of (Pillai/Cathers),	464
Northwestel Festival of Trees, recognition of (Frost/Van Bibber),	858

TRIBUTES *(continued)*

Our Trails Bring Us Together conference, recognition of (Dendys/Istchenko),	377
Peter, Joel, remembrance of (Frost),	645
Poverty and Homelessness Action Week, recognition of (Frost/McLeod/White),	215
Radon Action Month, recognition of (Frost/Van Bibber),	740
Re-design craft fair, recognition of (Streicker/Istchenko),	799
Remembrance Day, recognition of (Silver/Istchenko/Hanson),	582
Royal Canadian Legion's poppy campaign, recognition of (Silver/Istchenko/White), ...	375
Share the Spirit and the Bare Essentials campaigns, recognition of (McPhee/Van Bibber),	886
Skilled Trades and Technology Week, recognition of (Dendys/Kent/White),	522
Small Business Week, recognition of (Pillai/Istchenko/Hanson),	251
Sparling, Goodie, remembrance of (Dendys/Van Bibber),	405
Teachers' Day, World, recognition of (Silver/Kent/White),	13
Transgender Awareness Week and Transgender Day of Remembrance, recognition of (Dendys/Istchenko/White),	768
Underhill, Bruce, remembrance of (Streicker),	551
United Way Yukon, recognition of (Streicker/Van Bibber),	87
Waste Reduction Week, recognition of (Streicker/Van Bibber/White),	249
Women's History Month, recognition of (Dendys/Van Bibber/Hanson),	11
Yukoner Appreciation Day, recognition of (Pillai/Istchenko),	464

UNANIMOUS CONSENTBill No. 2 - *Yukon University Act*

Re deeming all clauses, preamble, and title read and agreed to,698

Bill No. 3 - *Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act*

Re deeming all clauses and title read and agreed to,145

Bill No. 4 - *Act to Amend the Elections Act*

Re deeming all remaining clauses and title read and agreed to,722

Bill No. 5 - *Liquor Act*

Re deeming clauses 63 through 79 read and agreed to,542

Re deeming clauses 93 through 100 read and agreed to,547

Re deeming all remaining clauses and title read and agreed to,548

UNANIMOUS CONSENT *(continued)*

Bill No. 6 - <i>Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009</i>	
Re revisiting clause 5,	484
Bill No. 200 - <i>Second Appropriation Act 2019-20</i>	
Re deeming all lines in Vote 51 cleared or carried,	900
Motion No. 100	
Re consent re moving motion without notice,	532
Motion No. 116	
Re moving motion without one clear day's notice,	746
Motions No. 71, 72, 73, and 74	
Re moving motions without one clear day's notice,	413

UNPARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE

"fabricating the numbers" (Frost),	319
"there's a whopper for you" (Hassard),	122

VAN BIBBER, GERALDINE

Questions, oral:

Affordable housing,	155
Alaska Highway corridor upgrades,	896
Challenge housing project,	124, 186
Condor Airlines,	589
Energy retrofits,	286
Housing First project,	530
Porter Creek group home,	863
Powerline safety,	57
Queen's Printer and Central Stores services,	684
Radon testing,	744
Tourism development strategy,	652
Vimy housing project,	189

Speaks on:

Bill No. 2 - <i>Yukon University Act: Second Reading</i> ,	389
Bill No. 2 - <i>Yukon University Act: Third Reading</i> ,	810

VAN BIBBER, GERALDINE *(continued)*

Speaks on:

Ministerial statements:

Housing action plan,	892
Leave for victims of domestic violence,	407
Tourism development strategy,	647
Motion No. 19 - Re medical travel,	99
Motion No. 27 - Re endorsing the <i>Yukon Tourism Development Strategy</i> ,	660

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF

Acheson, Collette (Streicker),	249
Aitken, Hillary (Dendys),	8, 11
Alexander, Carel (Kent),	11
Allain, Louis (Mostyn),	521
Allen, Doris (Frost),	8
Anderson, Doris (Frost),	375
Andison, Ellen (Dendys),	281
Andre, Fritz (Frost),	215
Andre, Shane (Pillai),	677
Aryanto, Mark (Pillai),	8
Ashley, David (Pillai),	405
Austad, Leif (Pillai),	705
Austin, Dave (Streicker),	582
Aylward, Chris (Mostyn),	677
Bagnell, Larry (Silver),	375
Bagranovski, Serge (McPhee),	7
Bailey, Devin (Streicker),	49
Bailey, John (Silver),	595
Baker, Jeanine (Hanson),	799
Barber, Adrian (White),	7
Barkworth, Anne (Streicker),	347
Barnes, Brenda (White),	119
Barnes, Karen	
(McPhee),	387, 809
(Streicker/McPhee),	7

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Barnes, Lesli (Streicker),	347
Barr, Emma (Pillai),	431
Barr, Theresa (Pillai),	431
Barton, Brad (Pillai),	463, 491
Barwell, Mike (McPhee),	7
Bastien, Alison (Frost),	799
Beaudoin, Jeanne (Streicker),	491
Bedard, Jacqueline	
(Dendys),	87
(McPhee),	7, 387, 808
Beebe, Jeremy (McPhee),	885
Beese, Mark (Van Bibber),	677
Bélanger, Edith (Streicker),	491
Belanger, Nikki (Van Bibber),	181
Bell, Doug (Silver),	375
Benoit, Linda (Istchenko),	375
Benson, Kevin (Van Bibber),	677
Bentz, Lloyd (Streicker),	119
Bergeron, Joséé (Streicker),	347
Bernier, Tracy (Dendys),	405
Bidman, Eva (Van Bibber),	677
Billingham, Cindy (Pillai),	49
Bilsky, Tracey (Streicker),	7
Binette, Sylvie (Dendys),	375
Birch-Jones, Sarah (Frost),	799
Birmingham, Crystal (Pillai),	431
Black, Colin (Mostyn),	249
Blackjack, Teresa (Frost),	215
Blais, Jean-Sébastien	
(McPhee),	7
(Streicker),	491
Blake, Melissa (Streicker),	119
Blaker, Sheri (McPhee),	613

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Blattner, Helen (Dendys),	405
Bock, Michael (Pillai),	431
Bogachek, Irina (McPhee),	387
Boland, Chris (Streicker),	49
Boland, Kells (Hassard),	595
Boodram, Chris (Dendys),	768
Bordet, Esther (Pillai),	705
Borud, David (Silver),	582
Borud, Stan	
(Silver),	582
(Speaker Clarke),	582
Borud, Susan (Silver),	582
Bouffard, Isabelle (Streicker),	491
Bourcier, André (Streicker),	491
Bouvier, Barb (Dendys),	405
Bowers, Sam (White),	7
Boyd, Jamie (Streicker),	87
Brais, Melanie (Istchenko),	375
Brandvold, Linda (Streicker),	49
Branson, Thomas (Pillai),	705
Brent-Brakefield, Kathi (Streicker),	215
Brewer, Erica (Streicker),	119
Briss, Arthur (Silver),	582
Brocard, Emeline (Streicker),	491
Brown, Charlie (Hassard),	595
Buchan, Lesley (Dendys),	375, 405
Buckway, Bev (Streicker),	347
Bugg, Jenn (Cathers),	831
Burgess, Carrie (Streicker),	347
Burrell, Heather (Pillai),	705
Burrell, Warren (Pillai),	705
Button, Sarah (Frost),	799
Byram, Jennifer (White),	885

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Cameron, Mary (Frost),	799
Campbell, Ali (Frost),	799
Campbell, Hector (Pillai),	249
Canty, Faye (McPhee),	7
Capot-Blanc, Grey (White),	7
Carne, Andrew (Pillai),	705
Carne, Joan (Pillai),	705
Carne, Rob (Pillai),	705
Caron, Francis (McPhee),	737
Caron, Maureen (McPhee),	7
Champagne, Line (Frost),	799
Champagne, Marc (McPhee),	7
(Streicker),	491
Chandler, Brett (Dendys),	431
Chapple, Daintry (Dendys),	405
Charlie, Jason (Frost),	215
Cheeseman, Elsa (Dendys),	405
Chua, Eng Khoon (Streicker),	7
Chua, Ernest (Streicker),	7
Church, Nicole (Frost),	799
Clare, Shauna (McPhee),	613
Clarke, Jenet, and grade 12 social justice class from Vanier Catholic Secondary School (Speaker Clarke),	646
Cletheroe, Bengie (Speaker Clarke),	463
Cook, Desiree (Streicker),	7, 768
Cook, Douglas Felicia (White),	8
Cook, Jason (White),	8
Cooke, Louise (Streicker),	347
Cooke, Marsha (Streicker),	7
Cote, Doug (Streicker),	49
Coulter, Adam (Pillai),	705
Coulthard, Lucy (Streicker),	7, 768

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Cox, Marie (Dendys),	405
Craig, Kristina (Frost),	215, 799
Cranfield, Kathleen (Streicker),	7
Cratty, Morris (Silver),	375, 582
Crewe, Jodi (Streicker),	347
Cromarty, Megan (Streicker),	768
Cross, Hannah (White),	7
Cumming, Cathy (Gallina),	375
Cumming, Rob (Gallina),	375
Curlew, Frank (Streicker),	521
Curtis, Dan (Streicker),	768
Dalziel, Bonnie (White),	8
Dangreau, Marie-Alexis (Streicker),	491
Danko-Brink, Rebecca (Streicker),	7
Davidson, Karl (Streicker),	119
Davies, Ryan (Frost),	677
Davignon, Ellen (Dendys),	11
Davis, Paul (Streicker),	347
Dawson, Rachel (Streicker),	7
Decoste, Luke (Pillai),	8
Delaurier, Marni (Adel),	799
Deo, Candice (White),	8
Desmarais, Claire (McPhee),	737
Dietrich, Brett (Frost),	799
Dixon, Chris (Streicker),	831
Djokic, Jani (Streicker),	49
Dornay, Shania (White),	7
Dorosz, Emily (Streicker),	49
Dory, Emily (Streicker),	831
Douglas, Brian (Streicker),	49
Douglas, Matt (Pillai),	431
Downs, Graham (Pillai),	705
Doyon, Geneviève (Streicker),	768

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Drechsler, Richard (Pillai),	705
Dryburgh-Moraal, Diana (Frost),	677
Dueling, Jud (Streicker),	215
Dumala, Matthew (Pillai),	705
Duncan, Lori (Frost),	375
Dunmall, Natasha (Mostyn),	521
Dupont, Gabrielle (Streicker),	799
Durham, Michael (Pillai),	705
Eden, Richard (Pillai),	431
Ellis, Aimee (Streicker),	799
Emery, Michel (Streicker),	347
Engasser, Hannah (Streicker),	491
Epstein, Eric (Dendys),	431
Erkhardt, Colin (Streicker),	49
Falkenberg, Aiden (White),	7
Farrell, Emily (Silver),	431
Faulkner, Jeff (Pillai),	705
Faulkner, Joanne (Streicker),	799
Ferbey, Justin (Dendys),	8
Fickling, Keith (Streicker/Istchenko),	49
Fidler, Brian (Dendys),	431
Flett, Allison (Streicker),	119
Forward, Karen (Van Bibber),	181, 857
Fox, John (Pillai),	705
Fraser, Breagha (Dendys),	8
Fraser, Max (Silver),	582
Friesen, Carl (Streicker),	551
Friesen, Robyn (Streicker),	551
Gallant, Mike (McPhee),	7
Gallina, Adria (Streicker),	799
Gallina, Isabella (Streicker),	799
Gallina, Peter (Streicker),	799
Gallina, Sarah (Streicker),	799

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Gallina, Vittoria (Streicker),	799
Gandy, Ryan (Pillai),	705
Gates, Michael (Dendys),	375
Gau, Mike (Streicker),	768
Geick, Steve (Mostyn),	320, 375, 551, 677
George, Wes (Pillai),	8
Georgeault, Miléna (Streicker),	491
Germain, Pierre (Dendys),	405, 645
Gillespie, Heather (Pillai),	431
Gladwin, Shannon (Pillai),	491
Gledhill, Debbie (McLeod),	595
Goldie, Leigh (Streicker),	119
Goldsmith, Penny (Hanson),	677
Goodwin, Milo (White),	7
Gouyou-Beauchamps, Maxime (Streicker),	491
Gower, Wendy (Streicker),	347
Grabowski, Terry	
(Silver),	375
(Speaker Clarke),	582
Graef, Carlie (Frost),	463
Graham, Amanda (McPhee),	7, 809
Graham, Doug (Silver),	281
Graham, Mayvor (Silver),	281
Graham, Richard (Hassard),	281
Gray, Sonny (Pillai),	431, 463
Green, Chris (Silver),	582
Green, Kelsey (Streicker),	119
Greenlaw, Sheena (McPhee),	7
Greenshields, Suzanne (Frost),	463
Greenwood-Paauwe, Taylor (Speaker Clarke),	463
Grenier-Deschesnes, Laurianne (Streicker),	491
Grieve, Laura (Van Bibber),	181
Groenewegen, Patch (Streicker),	119

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Grossinger, Red (Silver),	375, 582
Guay, Rachel (Streicker),	347
Gullison, John (Hassard/McPhee),	737
Hackwell, Jennifer (Mostyn),	249
Hale, Jonathan (White),	7
Hall, Jennifer	
(Cathers),	491
(Pillai),	463
Haluska, Hayley (Streicker),	7
Hamel, Sylvie, and grade 10 class from Vanier Catholic Secondary School (Speaker Clarke),	582
Hamilton, Isaac (White),	7
Hamilton, Jenny (Dendys),	431
Hancock, Bronwyn (McPhee),	7, 387
Hancock, Vicki (Dendys),	8
Hand, Samantha	
(Dendys),	521
(Streicker),	249
Hannam, Kevin (Pillai),	677
Hardie, Jillian (Frost),	799
Harris, Carolyn (Dendys),	375
Hartwig, Mike (Mostyn),	521
Harvey, Maxwell	
(Speaker Clarke),	119
(White),	582
Harvey, Maxwell (Speaker Clarke),	885
Harvey, Sean (Pillai),	8
Harvey-Gautier, Serge (Silver),	582
Haskins, Nick (McPhee),	7, 809
Heiland, Verda (Streicker),	799
Henderson, Wayne (Mostyn),	885
Hermanson, Helmer (Silver),	582
Hermanson, Jane (Streicker),	347

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Herry, Yann (Dendys),	375
Hicks, Adam (Dendys),	375
Higgins, Deb (Frost),	463
Hill, Arjay (Van Bibber),	857
Hill, Mark (Streicker),	49
Hine, Pamela	
(Frost),	799
(Silver),	595
Hines, Cathy (Streicker),	551
Hitch, Doug (Dendys),	375
Hodgson, Val (Silver),	281
Hogg, Jean (Mostyn),	249
Holcombe, Darren (Streicker),	799
Hoogstraten, Eric (McPhee),	7, 809
Hopkins, Gabe (White),	7
Houde McLennan, Ketsia (Streicker),	831
Hougen, Craig (Van Bibber/Cathers),	677
Hougen, Eric (Pillai),	8
Hougen, Kelly (Van Bibber),	677
Hougen, Leanna (McLeod),	595
Hougen, Marg (Van Bibber),	677
Hougen, Myles (Pillai),	8
Hougen, Rolf (Van Bibber),	677
Hougen, Skyler (McLeod),	595
Hougen, Tanner (Pillai),	8
Howard, Ken (Streicker),	768
Huevos-Cunanan, Aiza (McPhee),	7
Isaak, Donna (Kent),	885
Isaak, Ed	
(Kent),	885
(Van Bibber),	181
Israel, Steve (Pillai),	705
Jack, Kevin (White),	521

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Jeffrey, Chelsea (Streicker),	347
Joe, Robert (Dendys),	375
Joe, Sheila (Dendys),	375
Johnson, Ellen (Streicker),	551
Johnson, Linda (Dendys),	375
Johnson, Paul (White),	405
Johnston, Erin (McPhee),	7
Johnston, Paul	
(Dendys),	768
(Mostyn),	551, 677
Jones, Stacey (Frost),	463
Kaiser, Christina (Streicker),	7
Kane, Kristina (Silver),	799
Karp, Rick (Streicker),	7
Karr, Hank	
(Pillai),	49
(Van Bibber),	181
Karr, Hank Jr.	
(Pillai),	49
(Van Bibber),	181
Karr, Pam (Van Bibber),	181
Kassbaum, Brandon (Streicker),	595
Keefe, Beverley (McPhee),	7, 809
Kempis, Christian (Streicker),	7
Kholokholova, Luda (Streicker),	119
Kimmitt, Meaghen (Streicker),	7, 768
King, Annette (Speaker Clarke),	463
King, Lynette (Van Bibber),	181
King, Matt (Streicker),	49, 87, 768
Kingscote, Myrna (Dendys),	405
Kinnear, Lacia (McPhee),	387, 809
Kitchen, Barry (Pillai),	705
Kitchen, Hugh (Pillai),	705

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Kitchen, Wendy (Pillai),	705
Klugie-Migwans, Nyla (Streicker),	7
Knutson, Tamika (Streicker),	7
Koepke, Mark (Streicker),	551
Koepke, Tim (Streicker),	551
Komish, Carmen (McLeod),	595
Korn, Juergen (Frost),	737
Kozknowsky, Emily (Streicker),	831
Krueger, Alia (White),	7
Kucharek, Tim (Van Bibber),	677
Kulachkosky, Kristin (Streicker),	7
Kulachkosky, Michael (McPhee),	387
Kulachkosky, Remi (Streicker),	7
Kulikova, Elena (Streicker),	119
LaBlond, Phillipe (Streicker),	799
Ladroue, Jean-Pascal (Streicker),	491
Lalonde, Sheila (Streicker),	119
Landry, Doris (Streicker),	7, 119
Lang, Archie (McLeod),	595
Lang, Dan (Silver),	281
Lang, Karen (McLeod),	595
Langevin, Coralie (Streicker),	491
Large, Darlene (Gallina),	375
Lassen, Jeane (Streicker),	119
Lassen, Moira (Streicker),	7, 119, 768
Latraverse, Julien (Streicker),	491
LaVallée, Alfie (Frost),	8
Lavin, Andrea (Pillai),	705
Laxton, David (Silver),	582
Leach, Aletta (Frost),	677
LeBlond, Philippe (Streicker),	768
Legaree, Ian (Streicker),	119

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Legge, Sandy	
(Gallina),	8
(Streicker),	7, 768
Lempfers, Justin (Silver),	281
Lendrum, Brian (Cathers),	491
Leong, Leslie (Streicker),	799
Leslie, Amanda	
(Istchenko),	375
(Van Bibber),	677
Levins, Ulrike (Frost),	215
Liodenot, Benoit (Frost),	799
Long, Cam, and retired police service dog Crash (McPhee),	737
Low, Georgianna (Dendys),	375
Lucchini, Giulia (McPhee),	809
Lucier, Al	
(Frost),	799
(Streicker),	49
Macdonald, Brian (Streicker),	551
Macdonald, Danny	
(McLeod),	595
(Streicker),	768
MacKinnon, Keith (McPhee),	7
Mahar, Chris (Silver),	595
Maides, Kristen (Streicker),	7
Maissan, John (Streicker),	551
Malchow, Berkley (White),	7
Malchow, Ginny (Van Bibber),	181
Marcotte, Jason (Pillai),	431
Marnik, Sophia (McPhee),	7
Marsh, Sarah (Dendys),	645
Marshall, Vern (Streicker),	49
Martin, Murray (Hanson),	768
Mason, Asia (Streicker),	831

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Matear, Maggie (McPhee),	7
McBride, Mike (McPhee),	809
McCarthy, Tijana (Streicker),	7
McConnell, John (Pillai),	8
McConnell, Paul (Streicker),	119
McCrae, Mairi (Streicker),	347
McDonald, Hanna (Frost),	799
McDougall, Kaitlin (Pillai),	705
McEachern, Candice (McPhee),	737
McEachern, Cory (Mostyn),	521
McFadyen, Ron (Van Bibber),	677
McIlvaney, Adrienne (McPhee),	809
McInerney, Barb (Streicker),	831
McInnes, Aaron (White),	7
McInroy, Cat (Pillai),	431
McIntyre, Heather (Dendys),	281
McKay, Tammy (Silver),	582
McKenzie, Brooke (Cathers),	831
McLean, Linda (Streicker),	119
McLean, Rick (Dendys),	8, 11
Meechan, Kate (Frost),	799
Meikle, Sue (Streicker),	7, 768
Merangu, Catherine (Frost),	645
Merkel, Nora (Dendys),	11
Merkel, Randy (Dendys),	11
Metropolit, Lorne (Pillai),	431
Mewett, Joe (Silver),	375
Michael, Patrick (Silver),	281
Michaud, Louise (Streicker),	347
Milford, Heather (Dendys),	281
Millard, Eleanor (Hanson),	551
Miller, Louise	
(Silver),	582
(Speaker Clarke),	582

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Mills, Stephen	
(Frost),	645
(Silver),	595
(Streicker),	551
Monahan, Valery (Dendys),	375
Monteiro, Andrea (Streicker),	49
Moodie, Janet (Silver),	281
Mooney, Stephen (McPhee),	7
Moore, Carolyn (Streicker),	7, 768
Moore, Paul (Silver),	595
Moreau, Manon (Pillai),	463
Morgan, Nicole (McPhee),	809
Morton, Jack (Pillai),	705
Moynihan, David (Pillai),	705
Muir, Pam (Silver),	595
Munro, Sean (Pillai/Silver),	705
Murphie, Kathie (Streicker),	249
Murray, Mellisa (Streicker),	7
Murray, Sarah (Frost),	737
Muszynski, Alex (Dendys),	8
Nadon, Roch (Streicker),	491
Nagano, Gina (Gallina),	8
Nakamura Maguire, Lillian (Frost),	8
Nash, Jill (White),	521
Naves, Fabi (McPhee),	7
Neely, Lindsay (Frost),	799
Newman, Katie (Pillai),	49
Newton, Randi (Frost),	8
Nichol, Courtney (Streicker),	7, 768
Nightingale, Kyle (McPhee),	809
Nixon, Abigail (McLeod),	595
Nixon, Andrea (McLeod),	595
Nixon, Austin (McLeod),	595

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Nixon, Ava (McLeod),	595
Nixon, Jason (McLeod),	595
Nixon, Lorraine (McLeod),	595
Njootli, Effie (Frost),	8
Njootli, Garry (Dendys),	375
Nobécourt, Stéphanie (Streicker),	491
Nolan, Kerry (Frost),	215
Nordling, Monica (Streicker),	595
Novecosky, Donna (Pillai),	431
Oberg, Philip (Frost),	737
O'Carroll, Nicholas (McPhee),	885
Ouellette, Kim (Streicker),	491
Ouellette, Sarah (Cathers),	491
Overduin, Jody (White/Frost),	8
Pak, Catherine (Frost),	799
Palamar, Bunne (Streicker),	521
Paradis, Marney (White),	521
Park, Ray	
(Pillai),	49
(Van Bibber),	181
Parker, Colleen (Streicker),	521
Parker, Jonathan	
(Dendys),	375, 405, 645
(Pillai),	431
Parry, Laurel (Dendys),	431
Parsons, Michelle (Streicker),	768
Paterson, James (Streicker),	49
Patricia, Cunning (Pillai),	49
Pearson, Georgi (Streicker),	799
Pellicano, Annie (White),	7
Pemberton, Mike (Pillai),	8, 463
Percheron, Audrey (Streicker),	491
Peter, Tristan (Frost),	645

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Peters, Annette (Frost),	215
Peters, Darrell (McLeod),	595
Peters, Debbie (Pillai),	49
Peters, Janine (Streicker),	7
Phillips, Doug (McLeod/Streicker),	595
Pike, Val (Dendys),	281
Pond, Jo (Mostyn),	249
Pooyatak-Amundson, Taylor (Streicker),	7
Power, Nancy (Streicker),	491
Pozzo, Stephanie (Mostyn),	885
Price, Kirk (Pillai),	463, 491
Publicover, Donna (McLeod),	595
Purdy, Adam (Streicker),	768
Quarton, Gerry (Dendys),	521
Quarton, Joie (Streicker),	249
Quirke-Tomlins, Amelie (Streicker),	215
Ralph, Lauren (Frost),	799
Reed, Rylee (White),	7
Relf, Carolyn (Pillai),	705
Robinson, Mark (McLeod),	595
Robinson, Sally (Dendys),	405
Rodda, John (Streicker),	119
Roddick, Steve (Streicker),	768
Rogers, Blake (Dendys),	8
Romero, Ryan (Streicker),	7, 119, 768
Roske, Krista (Pillai),	431
Ross, Echo (Streicker),	7, 768
Ross, Susan	
(Cathers),	491
(Silver),	11
Ross, Valerie (Streicker),	799
Ross-Furlong, Frances (Frost),	645
Rouble, Patrick (McLeod),	595

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Rowlands, Rosemary (Frost),	375
Rowles, Shelagh (McPhee),	809
Royle, Valerie	
(Dendys),	8, 768
(McPhee),	885
(Streicker),	87
Ryan, Ashely (Streicker),	119
Ryan, Debra (Dendys),	405
Ryan, Shannon (Streicker),	7
Sack, Patrick (Pillai),	705
Salé-Roche, Angela (Dendys),	405
Salesse, Isabelle (Streicker),	7
Samson, Andrei (Pillai),	463
Sanchez, Carlos (Mostyn),	521
Sapers, Howard (Streicker),	49
Sarek, Anneka (Dendys),	281
Sasaki, Elyssia (Pillai),	49
Savoie, Anne (Pillai),	491
Scheck, Adam (Pillai),	705
Schlosser, David (Dendys),	375
Schneider, Dan (Streicker),	215
Schneider, Wayne (Pillai),	705
Scholz, Paul (Silver),	582
Schroeder, Josh (McPhee),	7
Schussler, John (McLeod),	595
Schwertner, Frank (Pillai),	49
Scott, Laura (McPhee),	737
Seaboyer, Keith (Streicker),	347
Shannon, Judy (Hassard),	595
Sheridan, Kim (McPhee),	7, 809
Shopland, Atlin (Pillai),	705
Sidaway-Wolf, Astrid (White),	8
Silas, David (McPhee),	7

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Silver, Mike (Silver),	149
Silverfox, Lynda (Speaker Clarke),	463
Simpson, Fiona (McLeod),	595
Simpson, Susan (Pillai),	8, 249, 463
Skookum, Darlene (Frost),	215
Skookum-Gulstad, Shania (White),	7
Skuce, Greg (Dendys),	405
Slipetz, Jan (Frost),	737
Slipp, Jared (Streicker),	768
Sloan, Mary (Dendys),	431
Slonski, Deanna (Streicker),	799
Smith, Jonas	
(Hassard),	885
(Istchenko),	375
(McLeod),	595
Smith, Kevin (Pillai),	705
Smith, Lindsay (Streicker),	7, 768
Smith, Liz (Pillai),	705
Smoke, Dylan (Dendys),	768
Southwick, Tosh (McPhee),	7
Sparks, Mike (Streicker),	49
Sparling, Joe (Dendys),	405
Staffen, Jess (Streicker),	7
Staffen, Ted (Silver),	595
Stanock, Mike (Kent),	11
Steele, Gordon (Hassard),	595
Steward, Sharon (Frost),	215
Stewart, Loree (Streicker),	215
Stone, Jess (Streicker),	831
Story, Scott (Pillai),	431
Stuckless, Rosie (Dendys),	431
Swales, Janna (Dendys),	375
Sylvestre, Kirsten (Streicker),	215

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Tallass, Ken (McLeod),	595
Tascona, Christa (McLeod),	595
Tascona, Nicholas (McLeod),	595
Tascona, Perry (McLeod),	595
Taylor, Wendy (Pillai),	705, 737
Taylor, Elaine	
(Cathers),	46
(McLeod),	595
Taylor, Kelli (McPhee),	809
Teiman, Chris (Streicker),	7, 119
Teo, Gabriel (Frost),	799
Terris, Dave (Van Bibber),	181
Terry, Julie (White),	249
Tewnian, Will (Streicker),	215
Thibeault-Maloney, Emilie (Streicker),	491
This, Sue Ping (Streicker),	7
Thomas, Christian (Dendys),	375
Thompson, Anna (Streicker),	7
Thompson, Jack (Silver),	582
Timmons, Tracy (Mostyn),	249
Toh, Elsie (Streicker),	7
Toh, Greg (Streicker),	7
Tomlin, Briana (Streicker),	799
Tomlin, Judy (Streicker),	799
Tomlin, Sarah (Dendys),	521
Tomlinson, Caleb (Streicker/Istchenko),	49
Toner, Michelle (Streicker),	119
Torigai, Kaori (White),	431
Tremblay-Morissette, Sophie (Streicker),	7, 768
Troy, Taiga (White),	7
Truesdale, Alex (Silver),	582
Turner, Anne (Pillai),	737
Turner, Matt (Pillai),	705

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Turner, Peter (Pillai),	8
Turner, Sandra (Frost),	799
Turner-Davis, Deborah (Hanson),	249
Tuton, Craig (McLeod),	595
Tuton, Geri (McLeod),	595
Twardochleb, Trevor (Streicker),	768
Ullrich, Jackson (White),	7
Ullyett, Coralie	
(Dendys),	8
(Pillai),	431
Ullyett, Tom (McPhee),	809
Underhill, Ashton (Streicker),	551
Underhill, Brandon (Streicker),	551
Underhill, Dawn (Streicker),	551
Underhill, Kelly (Streicker),	551
Underhill, Michelle (Streicker),	551
Underhill, Shawn (Streicker),	551
Underhill, Tash-Lee (Streicker),	551
Underhill, Zander (Streicker),	551
Underhill, Zoe (Streicker),	551
Usher, Sarah (Dendys),	405
Val, Mia (Streicker),	7, 768
Vallevand, Roxanne (McLeod),	595
Vallevand, Wayne (McLeod),	595
Van Bibber, Pat (Van Bibber),	181
Van Bibber, Stuart (Pillai),	249
van der Eide, Tjitske (Mostyn),	8
Van Marck, Jacquelyn (Mostyn),	521
Vandemeer, Yolanda (McLeod),	595
Vanderbyl, Sheila (Dendys),	281
Veniat, Edwine (Dendys),	645
Vigliotti, Bella (White),	7
Villeneuve, Louise-Hélène (Streicker),	491

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Voyageur, Claris (Streicker),	119
Wadsworth, Barb (Streicker),	347
Wall, Trina (Frost),	799
Wallace, Kirsti (McPhee),	7
Walters, Jennifer (Pillai),	737
Walton, Freda (Streicker),	7
Walton, Mike (White/Frost),	8
Webb, Ira (Streicker),	799
Webber, Adeline (Dendys),	8
Welch, Janet (McPhee),	7
Wellman, Suki (Pillai),	49
Westerlaken, Scott (Streicker),	215
White, Maxine (Frost),	677
Whiteside, Dave (Streicker),	87
Whittaker, Lorne (Silver),	582
Whyte, Marisa (Streicker),	347
Wicke, Brandon (Dendys),	431
Williamson, Laura (Streicker),	7, 768
Williamson, Shelley (Streicker),	7, 768
Willms, Kelson (Pillai),	705
Willoughby, Phil (Mostyn),	885
Wilps, Frank (Pillai),	431
Wirth, Colleen	
(McPhee),	809
(Streicker/McPhee),	7
Woodcock, Rosyln (Streicker),	768
Woodhouse, Jeffrey (Streicker),	768
Woodstock, Katie (Frost),	677
World, Rebecca (Frost),	677
Wright, John (Streicker),	49
Wright, Peter (Streicker),	49
Yeulet, Kayla (Streicker),	119
Yu Schott, Melissa (Streicker),	347

VISITORS, INTRODUCTION OF *(continued)*

Zaccarelli, Barb (Dendys/Kent),	405
Zrum, Kathy (Streicker),	768

WHITE, KATE

Questions, oral:

Affordable housing,	126, 862
Climate emergency declaration,	435
Climate lens policy,	287
Dental health care,	617
Department of Education sexual orientation and gender identity policy,	590
Emergency room visits,	710
Energy demand-side management,	56, 258
Energy retrofit program for homeowners,	496
Greenhouse gas emissions,	772
Grizzly bear conservation plan,	743
Independent Commission on Electoral Reform,	20
Living wage and minimum wage,	470
Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services,	384
Midwifery legislation,	353
Queen's Printer and Central Stores services,	686
Seniors home care,	153
Seniors housing,	221
Sexualized assault response team,	837
Social inclusion and poverty reduction,	895
Teacher staffing,	806
Whitehorse Emergency Shelter and Housing First supports,	556

Speaks on:

Bill No. 2 - <i>Yukon University Act</i> : Second Reading,	390
Bill No. 2 - <i>Yukon University Act</i> : Third Reading,	811
Bill No. 3 - <i>Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act</i> : Second Reading,	81

WHITE, KATE (*continued*)

Speaks on:

Bill No. 3 - <i>Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act</i> : Third Reading,	225
Bill No. 200 - <i>Second Appropriation Act 2019-20</i> : Second Reading,	162
Ministerial statements:	
Climate change strategy,	682
Renewable energy,	707
Ministerial statements:	
Cannabis Yukon retail store accounting,	553
Climate change, energy, and green economy strategy,	53
Early kindergarten - K4,	803
Home retrofit loan program,	313
Housing action plan,	892
Leave for victims of domestic violence,	407
Whistle Bend Place,	467
Youth panel on climate change,	17
Motion for the Production of Papers No. 3 - Re Central Stores and Queen's Printer Agency restructuring cost savings,	
	324
Motion No. 4 - Re single-use bag ban,	460
Motion No. 7 - Re climate change,	130
Motion No. 19 - Re medical travel,	103
Motion No. 22 - Re Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne,	27
Motion No. 32 - Re <i>Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan</i> ,	448
Motion No. 60 - Re updating animal protection and dog control,	656
Motion No. 66 - Re forensic audit of Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services,	559, 561, 566, 569
Motion No. 71 - Re Membership of Standing Committee on Public Accounts,	413
Motion No. 81 - Re reappointment of Conflict of Interest Commissioner,	473
Motion No. 116 - Re funding the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, ...	781, 785

WITNESSES BEFORE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chief Electoral Officer

Maxwell Harvey,	629–643
-----------------------	---------

WITNESSES BEFORE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE *(continued)*

Yukon Hospital Corporation

 Brian Gillen, Chair of Board of Trustees, 814–829

 Jason Bilsky, Chief Executive Officer, 814–829

Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board

 Kurt Dieckmann, President and Chief Executive Officer, 753–766

 Mark Pike, Chair, 753–766

APPENDIX A

(Bill No. 200 - Second Appropriation Act 2019-20)

General Debate, 170–179, 226–247, 290–309, 485–490, 499–519, 548–549, 576–579,
593–594, 597–612, 627–629, 667–676, 698–703, 722–734, 750–766, 813–829, 842

Detailed breakdown of vote discussions:

 Community Services, 842–856, 865–883, 898–900

 Economic Development, 900–912



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 16

3rd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Thursday, October 31, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
Don Hutton	Mayo-Tatchun

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King
Liz Hanson	Whitehorse Centre

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Dan Cable
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, October 31, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed with the Order Paper.
Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Speaker: It is my pleasure to introduce, from the Child & Youth Advocate Office: Annette King, the Child and Youth Advocate; Bengie Clethero, the Deputy Child and Youth Advocate; Lynda Silverfox, systemic analyst; and Taylor Greenwood-Pauwe, helping out in the role of individual advocacy.

Welcome to the Assembly.

Applause

Hon. Ms. Frost: I ask my colleagues to please help me in welcoming some special guests here today from Hospice Yukon: Stacey Jones, Deb Higgins, Suzanne Greenshields, and Carlie Graef.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Members of the Legislative Assembly to welcome individuals who are here today for two different tributes, one on the North of 60 Agriculture Conference as well as Yukoner Appreciation Day. For the North of 60 Agriculture Conference, we have: Manon Moreau, who is our ADM in Energy, Mines and Resources; Kirk Price, who has been our acting director; Brad Barton, who is here with us today; and also leaders in the agricultural field, both Jennifer Hall, the executive director of the Yukon Agricultural Association, and the president, Sonny Gray. It is great to have you here as well today.

Also for Yukoner Appreciation Day, we have: Mike Pemberton, who is the president of the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce; Susan Simpson, the executive director; and Andrei Samson as well from the team.

Applause

Speaker: Are there further introductions of visitors?
Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Hospice Yukon

Hon. Ms. Frost: I rise in the House today to ask my colleagues to join me in two tasks: first, to recognize and congratulate Hospice Yukon on 30 years of service to Yukoners; and second, to thank the organization and all those who have worked for and volunteered with Hospice Yukon during those 30 years.

This organization, run out of a tiny house on Jarvis Street, has been providing compassionate support for Yukoners facing end-of-life and those dealing with grief. They stand with people facing some of the most difficult times in their lives. Within this Legislative Assembly, most of us will have lost a loved one. It is a difficult experience and one that we can't really ever prepare for, but Hospice Yukon is always there to help people with the end-of-life and bereavement supports.

They offer respect, compassion, and empathy. Through their work, they support parents and children who are living with loss. They work with employers and employees to support staff, and each December, they host the Lights of Life, which enables individuals to remember a loved one during the holiday season. There is something powerful and soothing about turning on a light for a loved one as a way to honour and remember their lives.

In Yukon, the term "hospice" refers to a philosophy of care rather than a specific place where people spend their last days. Hospice Yukon provides a vital part of the continuum of palliative and end-of-life care that is available within Yukon. The continuum involves and includes a wide variety of health care professionals, including physicians, nurses, and long-term home care staff. Hospice care, palliative care and end-of-life are provided in many different places for people living with or dying from a life-limiting illness, and it is provided by many different care providers.

Staff and volunteers at Hospice offer support for clients in hospitals, care facilities, homes, and workplaces. Dying doesn't change and grieving doesn't change, but Hospice Yukon is always looking for new ways to support Yukoners. Recently, we provided additional funding to Hospice Yukon to support an educator within their ranks. This person will be responsible for all educational outreach programs, as well as developing and coordinating educational opportunities for rural Yukon communities. I just want to give them a shout-out for coming to my community and helping to educate and train individuals to be those care providers. We will see that throughout the Yukon, Mr. Speaker.

We are very fortunate to have such a caring and compassionate community who has kept this work going for 30 years. I wish them another 30 years. Mahsi'.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: I rise on behalf of the New Democratic Party and the Yukon Party to thank all those past and present folks who have been part of Hospice Yukon. For 30 years, this organization of dedicated staff and volunteers have been offering compassionate support to Yukoners to better understand the profound journey of living, dying, and grieving. Too often, these are not topics that we want to talk about, whether for ourselves or our family members. It is uncomfortable for most of us. When it comes to an ill or dying family member, it feels as though we are giving up hope.

Hospice isn't about giving up hope at all; hospice is about living life to the very end in the best way possible.

At Hospice Yukon, the term "hospice" refers to a philosophy of care, a philosophy on living, dying, and grieving.

Support, education, and volunteering are the foundation of the services they offer. These three areas overlap to create holistic healing programs that help individuals, families, and Yukon communities through the challenges we all experience with dying and grieving.

For over 20 years, Hospice Yukon, through the Lights of Life, has given space to those Yukoners who want to honour the lives of loved ones during the holidays. By hanging a card with a name or a message, this simple ritual has allowed us to meaningfully honour our loss. Hospice Yukon has helped thousands of Yukoners in the last 30 years as they offer support to those at the end of their life journey and those left to grieve their absence.

They work where needed — at hospitals, care facilities, private homes, and workplaces. In their cozy and welcoming downtown office space, they offer counselling services, they have a resource library, and they offer a variety of groups and courses to help. They offer respect, compassion, and empathy to all who come to them for support. They continue to embrace a holistic philosophy of care and healing, addressing the diverse needs of those grieving and dying in our community.

We thank all of those, past and present, from Hospice Yukon for supporting us in our times of need and reminding us that, even the darkest of places, we can find light.

Finally, I want to thank the volunteers who make the little red felt hearts that have become talismans of Hospice Yukon and those whom it touches.

Applause

In recognition of the North of 60 Agriculture Conference

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government and the Yukon New Democratic Party to pay tribute to the 32nd North of 60 Agriculture Conference and the hard-working people in the Yukon farming community.

This coming weekend, farmers, gardeners, and ranchers will be gathering with experts and the public to celebrate Yukon agriculture.

This year's conference will focus on farmers and farm well-being. The conference guests and lecturers will cover topics such as mental health on the farm, food waste reduction, women in agriculture, disease identification and management, vegetable forage, and cereal crops.

Working in the agricultural industry is full of challenges, from unpredictable weather to small market size and limited infrastructure. Yet despite the challenges, our producers go to work every day to create great products that meet the needs of Yukoners. The agricultural industry is a key component to diversifying and growing Yukon's economy.

Farmers are working hard to innovate and grow the sector. This is critical to improving Yukon's ability to be more self-sufficient in food production and to reducing the greenhouse gas emissions resulting from transportation of products to the territory.

I would like to say thank you to everyone who works so hard every year to bring the North of 60 Agriculture Conference

together — this means the farmers, those who work with the agricultural industry, and all the hard-working members of the Yukon Agricultural Association, and our team at the Agriculture branch. As you probably know, the North of 60 Agriculture Conference is also where Yukon farmer and farm family of the year is announced. To add to the activity, it is also the weekend of the north of 60 local food banquet.

I look forward to seeing everyone at this weekend's conference and continuing discussions on how we can encourage local food production and support farming north of 60. I also encourage everyone to check out the workshops this Saturday and Sunday at Yukon College in Whitehorse. They are free, and subjects are wide-ranging and fascinating.

Applause

Mr. Cathers: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to farmers, market gardeners, and producers across the territory who each contribute to local food production and the agriculture sector of our economy.

The Yukon's agricultural industry is sustainable and is growing here in the Yukon. It is the efforts of the individuals, families, and businesses who work hard to meet the needs of Yukoners year-round that not only keep this part of our economy going, but grow it year after year.

Locally grown meats and food products are available in abundance and in growing number. We are fortunate to have access to the variety that we do here in the Yukon, but there is great potential for further growth. As MLA for Lake Laberge, I am proud to represent most of the farmers who live in the Yukon, and I have had the opportunity to see many of these operations in action and I appreciate the hard work that they do.

It's not an easy job being a Yukon farmer or producer, no matter the scale of the operation. I will be tabling two motions today on behalf of constituents in the agriculture sector about problems that they're having which are caused by government.

The North of 60 Agriculture Conference takes place this weekend. The entire conference is free and open to the public. Presentations on different aspects of northern production and farming in the north will take place over the course of the conference, and anyone interested is encouraged to drop in and take part.

I also look forward to the north of 60 agriculture banquet to be held on Saturday, and I would like to congratulate all the nominees for the 2019 Farmer of the Year Award. Thank you again to everyone involved in Yukon agriculture, the local producers and to all Yukoners who support local agriculture by producing Yukon-grown products, including beef, pork, poultry, eggs, vegetables, hay, grain, and many more.

Applause

In recognition of Yukoner Appreciation Day

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to Yukoner Appreciation Day, which takes place tomorrow, Friday, November 1. Yukoner Appreciation Day is an annual retail celebration focused on giving back to Yukoners. This event, originally Customer Appreciation Night, was started by the

Hougen Group of Companies in the mid-1960s before the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce began hosting it in 2015.

The Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce uses the opportunity to encourage Yukoners to buy local through its “Look Inside” campaign, which is an integral part of the day’s celebrations. Approximately 60 businesses and organizations are participating, and Yukoners stand to benefit from an assortment of sales, giveaways, and hourly prizes. In addition to the incredible deals, there will also be a free shuttle bus, treats, and fun activities, including a photo booth, live music, and dance.

Mr. Speaker, when you buy local, you are supporting small businesses and helping to keep those valuable dollars circulating in Yukon’s economy. Buying local enables businesses, owners, and operators to continue investing in their businesses to expand and hire more Yukoners. In addition to the economic benefits, Yukoners choosing to buy locally are contributing to the revitalization of our commercial hubs and helping to build a sense of community.

The local businesses that Yukoners are supporting are the same ones that rally around community events and causes that matter to all of us through charity drives, fundraising efforts, and sports sponsorships.

Local businesses are investing in our communities, Mr. Speaker. They are helping us build vibrant neighbourhoods through the unique character of each of these businesses. The choice of where to spend your money is an important one, and I encourage Yukoners to shop locally and take the opportunity provided by Yukoner Appreciation Day to get to know your local Yukon businesses. The festive season is around the corner, which makes this an opportune time for Yukoners to start their shopping sooner rather than later.

I want to acknowledge the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce executive director Susan Simpson and office manager Andrei Samson for all of their hard work in coordinating this year’s event. This is in addition to the many other wonderful initiatives undertaken by the chamber, which include training and development for small- to medium-sized enterprises and advocating on behalf of our business community.

Mr. Speaker, if you are in one of our communities and you don’t have a chance, then spend your money in your community — whether it be Dawson or Watson Lake — but let’s support our local businesses throughout the Yukon and attend the events in Whitehorse tomorrow.

Applause

Mr. Istchenko: I am also pleased to rise on behalf of the Official Opposition and the New Democratic Party to pay tribute to all Yukoners on this Yukoner Appreciation Day.

Tomorrow the businesses that work so hard to service Yukoners are taking the time to show their appreciation for all those who make their businesses successful. It will be a “buy local” frenzy, with sales, entertainment, fun, and prizes from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Hosted by the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce, shoppers will be treated to an exciting passport

program, with over 60 businesses taking part — so stamp your way to winning some great prizes.

Last year, Yukoner Appreciation Day had an incredible turnout which saw 1,300 passports turned in for the big draws — which, I might add, are even bigger this year. Despite the northern chill, shoppers excitedly hurried from store to store on Main Street and beyond to fill their passports and take advantage of the great sales. It looks like we will have the added advantage this year of no snow. I am sure folks are looking forward to that.

There is no better time to check out a new business and get a head start on the holiday shopping, as the minister said. This year, it looks like a record number of businesses are taking part and some great activities and entertainment will be taking place at the Old Fire Hall, including performances by the cancan line and the Midnight Sons. So, if you are in Whitehorse tomorrow, I encourage you to get out and participate in this great event. If you live in the communities — I totally agree with the minister — let’s support local businesses. For those who cannot make it to Whitehorse for shopping tomorrow, it’s good to hear that the sales will be extended to Saturday for those rural Yukoners who show their ID.

Thank you again to the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce, the City of Whitehorse for offering free parking to the shoppers, and all the businesses and their incredible staff, who we appreciate for their work in the lead-up to this event and for organizing a great day for Yukoners.

Mr. Speaker, it will be busy on the streets tomorrow — as it probably will be tonight with all the little ones out trick or treating — so let’s be cognizant when we are driving.

Applause

Speaker: Tabling returns and documents.

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Speaker: Under tabling returns and documents, the Chair has for tabling the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office 2018-19 annual report. This report is tabled pursuant to section 24 of the *Child and Youth Advocate Act*.

Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I have for tabling the *Yukon Police Council Annual Report 2018-19*.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I have for tabling today the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition *Living Wage in Whitehorse, Yukon: 2019* report.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I have for tabling the *2018 Yukon Minerals Advisory Board Annual Report*.

Mr. Cathers: I have for tabling a copy of the current *Fuel Oil Tax Act*.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to continue to use the Yukon Forum to address joint priorities with Yukon First Nation governments.

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

THAT this House urges the Premier to explain how Yukon farmers who heat with propane can get either a carbon tax rebate or carbon tax exemption instead of being penalized for increasing production of locally grown food.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Premier to answer the letter he received almost two months ago about the difficulty Yukon farmers are experiencing in receiving an exemption from the fuel tax due to a change in policy by the Minister of Finance's department; and

THAT this House urges the Minister of Finance to recognize that both the letter of the law and the intent of the *Fuel Oil Tax Act* is to provide farming an exemption from the Yukon government's tax on fuel.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Whistle Bend Place

Hon. Ms. Frost: One of my primary goals as Minister of Health and Social Services is to meet this government's commitment to enhancing the long-term well-being and quality of life for Yukoners — all Yukoners.

It will come as no surprise to anyone that we have focused this past year on our seniors and elders and how we can better support them to age in place. Through a significant public engagement exercise, which included engagement of about 1,200 Yukoners, we heard many ideas about how to support individuals to remain in their homes longer and how they can help to remain active and engaged.

While we look to supporting our active elders, we also have to address the needs of our seniors and elders who cannot remain at home and who will be supported in long-term care. It has now been one year since we welcomed our first resident to Whistle Bend Place. Since then, 116 Yukoners have made Whistle Bend Place their home, and an additional 18 individuals have used the facility for respite care.

We started by opening one unit — or "house", as we call them — at the time, and I'm very pleased to advise that, last month, we opened 24 more beds in the fifth standard house, the Porcupine River House. Not only that, but we are preparing to open an additional 18 beds in the community hospice house

shortly. The Wind River House will contain 12 hospice, palliative care, and end-of-life care beds and six long-term care beds. Through several engagements with the community, it was identified that the provision of hospice, palliative care, and end-of-life care had missing pieces.

I am pleased that we are able to move forward to fill the gap of hospice care in long-term care homes. This is not to say that we have not provided this kind of care, because we have. Through our long-term care homes and through home care supports, as well as the hospitals throughout the territory, individuals have been supported on their final journey, in partnership with their families and community caregivers, but this now gives us a dedicated space and dedicated program for quality hospice care.

The Wind River House will offer hospice, palliative, and end-of-life services to individuals with progressive life-limiting illnesses in order to support those who cannot or do not wish to be supported to die at home. The manager of Wind River House has been hired, and we are currently looking within our own staff to see who might be interested in this very specialized kind of care before we consider hiring outside. Some staff are now in place, and we are working to develop the programming necessary to operate this important program within Whistle Bend.

Hospice, palliative, and end-of-life care will continue to be an integral part of the continuum of the health care and social care systems that we provide in Yukon.

We will strive to ensure that we relieve suffering and improve the quality of living and dying. Wind River programming will be anchored in the principles of the Yukon palliative care framework, providing a holistic continuum of integrated services to people living with or dying from a life-limiting illness. These are clearly linked and based on a model of collaborative care — implementing best practice, service delivery, and care based on research and service evaluation and accountability. With an aging population and an increased prevalence —

Speaker: Order. Thank you.

Ms. McLeod: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity to respond. I'll start by saying that it's tough to take what the Liberals say in these ministerial statements seriously. Yesterday, the Minister of Community Services had to cancel his at the very last minute because he forgot that he already announced it all before.

Last March, the Minister of Highways and Public Works delivered one saying that the government would spend \$5 million at the Mayo aerodrome this summer, and that turned out to be completely inaccurate. So, the track record on these statements isn't the greatest.

But thank you to the minister for the update on the update on the opening of beds at Whistle Bend Place. This is an important thing. As you know, the Liberals once referred to Whistle Bend Place as a warehouse, so I'm glad that they're coming around to the fact that it's a very important and beautiful place.

I'm hoping that when the minister gets back up, she can provide us with updates on staffing at Whistle Bend Place. For instance, how many positions are currently vacant? Can the minister update us on the opening of the mental health wing at Whistle Bend Place? As you may remember, Mr. Speaker, the minister delayed the opening of that wing by at least a year. So, I'm wondering if she can update us on when that will open.

Can the minister also provide us with an update on housing for staff? Again, as you know, Mr. Speaker, the minister did not plan for the influx of staff required for Whistle Bend Place and was scrambling at the last minute to move people into spare bedrooms of Health and Social Services' staff.

I'm also wondering if the minister is able to update us on the bed pressures at Whitehorse General Hospital. Prior to the opening of Whistle Bend Place, there were significant bed pressures. So, I'm wondering by how much those pressures have been alleviated.

Now, on the topic of continuing care facilities, yesterday we asked the minister what the plans were for the old Macaulay Lodge and the minister was unable to answer at the time. Perhaps today she can give us an answer when she gets back up.

During the election campaign of 2016, the Premier went around the territory telling Yukoners that the Liberals would be building continuing care facilities in all communities. I'm wondering if the minister could provide an update on that initiative today. On November 6, 2017, we asked the minister about this commitment. In fact, the exact question was: "Aside from Whistle Bend, could the minister let us know how many continuing care beds her government will be building over the next two years and will any of these beds be in communities?" In response, the minister did not give a direct answer, but she did say that her government was building a continuing care facility in Carmacks.

So, since it has been almost two years to the day since we asked the minister this question, I am hoping that she is able to answer us today. Aside from Whistle Bend, how many continuing care beds has her government built over the past two years, and how many of those are in communities? Finally, can the minister provide us with an update on the continuing care facility that she referenced in Carmacks?

With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to respond today. I thank the minister again for an update, and I hope that she is able to answer our questions.

Ms. White: We agree that compassionate end-of-life care is critical to the health of any community. A place dedicated to palliative and hospice care has been talked about and promised in this Assembly for over 10 years. We expect that, with the opening of the 12 hospice beds and the six long-term care beds with palliative care services to individuals with progressive, life-limiting illnesses at Whistle Bend Place, the question of any resident requiring IV services will no longer be an issue at the care facility and that folks will be able to stay in their homes and not need to go to the hospital for IVs.

We wonder why the decision to move ahead with this level of care at this facility was made. Concerns have been raised

multiple times, both during the planning and construction of this facility, about the distance from the hospital and pharmacy services. More than once, Thomson Centre was considered as ideally situated for this level of care, so I wonder why it never came about. How have the concerns raised about accessing pharmacy services in a hospice or palliative setting been addressed? Has Yukon's palliative care doctor been included in the planning and program delivery for these 18 beds?

While on the topic of facilities, what is this government planning on doing for Macaulay Lodge? I noticed last night as I drove past that lights were on. We know from reports that this facility has a few more years of life left, so why not use it? What is the plan for the space?

What about Takhini Haven, located on the Correctional Centre property? We have asked both Justice and Highways and Public Works about it, to be told that it belongs to Health and Social Services. I am glad that the individuals there have been moved to more appropriate community locations, but it remains that this is a five-bedroom facility that has been empty since May. What is the department's plan for that facility?

Mr. Speaker, we look forward to hearing answers to our questions, and we look forward to future planning on both Macaulay Lodge and Takhini Haven.

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to thank the members opposite for their comments and feedback — very interesting comments from the members. Of course, we will attempt to get back to the Member for Takhini-Kopper King with some specific answers that the member opposite asked.

So, both the Porcupine River House and the Wind River House were budgeted as part of our plan for Whistle Bend. In addition to the manager who we have already hired, the new Wind River House will be staffed by registered nurses, nursing home attendants, and a part-time social worker. As I mentioned, we are looking internally first to fill these positions and then we will hire from outside, as necessary.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all of the staff at Whistle Bend continuing care facility as well as the staff at the Department of Health and Social Services for their dedication and hard work. The staff deserve thanks because they have overcome many obstacles to make Whistle Bend Place a success.

As Yukoners know, the previous Yukon Party government had no plan for how to staff and operate the Whistle Bend facility. They had no budget for the operation and maintenance of the largest facility in the history of the territory. Yesterday, in this House, I heard the Member for Lake Laberge talking about the government's "... back-of-the-napkin-approach to planning..." and a "... visionless approach to governing..."

I must admit, Mr. Speaker, that I thought he was reflecting on the Yukon Party's time in office. The comments received just now from the Member for Watson Lake about the staffing and about the track record — the Yukon Party built the facility without any thought put into how it was going to meet the complex needs of the vulnerable Yukoners who it intended to serve. The Yukon Party liked bricks and mortar, Mr. Speaker,

but they didn't have any vision when it came to programming and services to help Yukoners.

Affordable housing is another important example of the Yukon Party's visionless approach to governing. While they were touting population growth year after year — apparently, they couldn't see that this would increase the demand in housing, or building a facility of this magnitude. Instead of doing the important work of addressing housing pressures, they sat on federal housing funding and cancelled affordable housing projects that would have helped Yukoners — that would have helped us ease into managing a facility of this magnitude.

I am glad to hear the Member for Lake Laberge realizing that details matter and numbers matter.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Ms. Frost: It is just too bad that he didn't realize this when he was a Cabinet member, Mr. Speaker, who had influence over decisions that impacted and affected Yukoners.

The good news for Yukoners is that our government is guided by the people — our people-centred approach to wellness to help people thrive and our engagement with 1,200 Yukoners around aging in place, around palliative care, and around essential services necessary for rural Yukon communities that have been left behind for decades. We are making strategic investments to build healthy, vibrant, and sustainable communities across the territory.

We are doing it in a fiscally responsible manner, and we are committed to Yukoners to ensure that they live happy and healthy lives where they reside.

Speaker: This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Budget estimates and spending

Mr. Cathers: Yesterday, the Premier tabled the Public Accounts for the 2018-19 fiscal year. The Public Accounts show the actual spending by government and are reviewed by the Auditor General of Canada. The Premier has talked a good line on being fiscally responsible, but instead, what the Public Accounts show is that his government increased spending by a whopping \$123 million in a single year compared to the previous year. That's a 10-percent increase in government spending in just one year.

How can the Premier pretend that increasing government spending by \$123 million in a single year is responsible?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would love to have an opportunity today on the floor of the Legislative Assembly to talk about Public Accounts. As anticipated by the 2018-19 main estimates, the government Public Accounts for the 2018-19 fiscal year does show a deficit on a non-consolidated basis, and on a consolidated basis, the government's Public Accounts show a small surplus.

The non-consolidated deficit for this year was \$5.8 million, while the consolidated surplus was \$2.3 million. At the end of the fiscal year, the non-consolidated net financial debt was \$0.04 million, while the consolidated net financial assets were \$218.5 million.

Again, Mr. Speaker, these numbers are very close to the main estimates, which proves again that, if you do all of your budgeting up front in one year as opposed to trying to do a whole bunch of different budgeting in two different budgeting schedules, you have better numbers, and at the same time, you eliminate a lot of the extra processes from all the departments that spend a herculean effort in getting budgets out the door.

On this side of the House, we are very confident in the budgeting styles and procedures that we have initiated here in the Yukon government.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, I do have to remind you that, on taking office, the Premier and his Liberal government inherited almost \$100 million of financial assets, basically cash in the bank — the rosiest financial situation any new government in the Yukon has ever inherited.

They have now blown through almost \$100 million in net financial assets and have taken Yukon finances into the red, with \$400,000 in net financial debt.

A couple of years ago, he criticized the previous government for a — quote: "... spending growth of 2.5 percent per year..." and said — quote: "... that this has caused the territory's financial position to deteriorate." Now he has gone on a spending spree, growing government spending by a whopping 10 percent in just one year. That is \$123 million, according to the Auditor General, in increased spending by the Liberals in just one year.

How can the Premier tell us with a straight face that 2.5-percent growth is unacceptable and then turn around and claim that his choice to increase spending by 10 percent in just one year is fine?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, back in the Yukon Party days, we were in a recession. Back in the Yukon Party days, they were spending \$1.50 for every dollar that they earned. It takes awhile to turn the ship around and we have done a very good job of that. We have also increased the capacity of the financial department. We have also increased the capacity of the agencies that plan and prioritize legislation and mandates.

Again, Mr. Speaker, what we have now is a booming economy and we have a government that is reacting, whole of government, to the pressures of a booming economy — getting money out the door for housing, getting the money out the door for infrastructure, making sure that the federal government listens to the unique considerations of not only living in the north, but also a climate change emergency as well. We plan for these procedures.

I know that the members opposite don't like to hear this, but again, we had a government that was growing unsustainably and we have a government now that is trying their best to get their finances back on check. When you take a look at the differences between our mains and our Public Accounts, you will see that there is not much difference in those final numbers. We are very proud of the work that our Department of Finance does with the Department of Community Services and the Department of Highways and Public Works when it comes to the new accounting standards and procedures, which clearly the members opposite don't understand.

Mr. Cathers: I have some bad news for the Premier: Just because he says it, that doesn't make it so.

Their talking points have been disproven by Statistics Canada. The Liberals have shown a disrespect for public money through actions such as when they famously wasted money spraying water into the air hoping for ice in the Premier's riding and voting the Premier a big pay increase. Revenues last year grew, but despite that, the Premier and his colleagues blew through public money at an alarming rate.

People know that the Premier's hiring spree added over 450 new government employees — about the same number of people who live in Mayo or Carmacks. Adding the equivalent of a small town to the government payroll and increasing spending by a whopping 10 percent in just one year are not financially responsible actions. They have piled on millions in new debt and the Liberal government is spending beyond their means.

I have to remind you that this Premier told Yukoners that a 2.5-percent increase in spending is unacceptable for previous governments and then, in a single year, the Liberals increased spending by \$123 million — 10 percent.

Will the Liberals stop their reckless spending spree and start treating taxpayers' money with respect?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would encourage Yukoners to take a look at the scattershot of main estimates from the Yukon Party in the past and then the Public Accounts that came in with ridiculous variances comparatively.

Mr. Speaker, there's a strong demand for labour and it's continuing to rise. Right now, Yukoners are making more per week than ever before — almost five percent higher than last year, at \$1,170 per week — well above the national average weekly earnings. We only trail the territories. We're leading Canada when it comes to that capacity.

We have economic real GDP expected to grow by three percent in 2019, followed by the 2.7-percent increase in 2018. We have real accounting happening now. We have main estimates that reflect actual builds as much as possible compared to these wide scattershots that I mentioned before from the Yukon Party. I'm extremely proud of the financial acuity of this government.

Question re: Mayo aerodrome

Mr. Hassard: Speaking of scattershot approaches to things, this past March, the Minister of Highways and Public Works committed to spend \$5 million on the Mayo aerodrome this summer.

Yesterday, we confirmed that he is lapsing over 75 percent of that money. We've also confirmed that, even though he said that the work would be completed this summer, now it's not scheduled to be completed until 2021. That's about two years late, Mr. Speaker.

The minister has stood in this House for the last three years claiming the amount of planning and thought that he puts into projects means they will be on time and on budget and that the announced money won't go unspent. But now we find out he has completely dropped the ball on this project.

Mr. Speaker, why has the minister failed to deliver on his commitment to spend \$5 million on the Mayo aerodrome this summer?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: As I said yesterday, the Government of Yukon is making some investments in the Mayo aerodrome, including runway reconstruction, runway lighting, and purchasing new maintenance equipment and facilities. We are doing this, Mr. Speaker, because we have an incredible new mining project up in the Mayo district. This brings a lot of jobs and a lot of investment into the territory in producing gold. Because of that incredible economic story, we have to expand our airport. We are doing that, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that there are scheduled flights.

This summer, we applied to Transport Canada to certify the aerodrome as an airport and this will allow scheduled flight service on a long-term basis which will help support resource development and that mine in the region, which is a great improvement to the territory's economy and to our GDP.

Mr. Hassard: The Minister of Highways and Public Works has so badly managed the Mayo aerodrome project that he is lapsing over 75 percent of the budget, and it is now going to be two years late. This is a fast and loose approach to contracting, and it is going to create uncertainty for the industry, but since he committed that there was \$5 million in this year's budget for the Mayo aerodrome but only spent \$1.15 million of that, it should mean that the supplementary budget would show a \$3.85-million line item. However, there is no line item for these lapsed funds.

My question is: Why is there no line item for these lapsed funds? Has the minister reallocated this money to another project? If so, what project is it?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The mine in the Mayo district is just an incredible story, Mr. Speaker, and I am glad that we have that type of investment and confidence in our territory which is allowing our economy to grow and putting people to work. Because of that, we have had to improve the aerodrome in Mayo. We are spending \$1.1 million in upgrades this year and another \$1.8 million next year. We are also contributing another \$300,000 in operation and maintenance so that we can actually keep that airport running year-round.

Transport Canada will inspect the site to ensure that it meets certification standards once all of the reconstruction is complete. Lights will be installed next year to allow for night operations, which have been asked for by the flight operations at Air North and Alkan Air.

Mr. Hassard: I am not sure if my mic isn't working or what, but apparently the minister isn't hearing the question that I am asking.

We know that this minister really doesn't have a handle on his job, and he has a reputation for not paying attention to the details before he makes decisions. If he would like to, maybe he could take a 15-minute break and get briefed on this so that he can actually provide us with some answers, because we certainly haven't received one yet.

My question was: Why is there no line item for the \$3.85 million of lapsed funding for the Mayo aerodrome? Are

the Liberals purposefully delaying this project to try to get the budget back in balance?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Listen — a lot of words from the Leader of the Official Opposition. I appreciate his thoughts this afternoon. The Yukon government is building an aviation system that provides transportation options for Yukoners while supporting economic development. Just yesterday, Mr. Speaker, we heard that Air North is expanding its operations again, creating more work for the territory and creating more opportunities for Yukoners to get Outside.

Why is that, Mr. Speaker? Because of the strategic investments we're making in aviation throughout the territory.

We have a mine up in Mayo. Why is that? Because we're working with First Nations. We're making sure that industry has a secure — and they can be confident that, when they make investments in the territory, that investment will see dividends.

We take pride in providing a safe and secure environment for airport users, and we work closely with Transport Canada to meet or exceed national safety standards and industry best practices. The Yukon government manages and maintains four certified airports and 24 registered aerodromes in the territory, and we are very pleased with the investments — almost \$40 million in aviation this year, including \$1.1 million in Mayo, which is helping make that a certified airport to sustain the mine that has just opened under our government.

Question re: Living wage and minimum wage

Ms. White: Yesterday, the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition released their living wage calculation for 2019. A living wage calculates the necessary hourly rate of pay that a household with two adults and two children, accessing all available government services, needs to earn to survive.

The living wage calculation is a tool that helps us understand the cost of living for Yukoners, and unsurprisingly, it's going up. This year's living wage calculation is \$19.07, a 50-cent increase from last year. Last spring, this government received a set of recommendations from the Employment Standards Board on minimum wage. Rather than committing to implementing the full suite of recommendations, they decided that a one-time hourly increase of \$1.20 — to \$12.70 an hour — went far enough and would task the same board to go back to the drawing board.

Mr. Speaker, how does a government that says they are progressive and claims to understand the struggles of working people explain the continued disconnect between Yukon's living wage and Yukon's minimum wage?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would like to thank the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition for doing this study year over year. They started in 2016. I think this is the fourth annual. In 2016, the living wage was just over \$19 as well. It went down, and then it started to come back up. Over that same period, our minimum wage has gone up — in this past year, by \$1.20, but it has been indexed to inflation, so it has been going up.

I think the report that we read reinforces what we know about this issue that there are many factors that contribute to poverty and poverty reduction. We definitely heard from the Employment Standards Board. I would like to thank them for

their work. We suggested that we go off and do an economic impact analysis and that they consider that. That work is underway right now. I'm happy to talk further about that, but overall, the work of the Employment Standards Board — I'm looking for them to come back to us, and we appreciate the work that they are doing.

Ms. White: I just want to remind everyone that the gap between the living wage and the minimum wage is greater than \$6 an hour. In response to the Employment Standards Board's recommendations last spring, this government increased Yukon's minimum wage, but stopped short of committing to continue to increase the minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2021. At the same time that the government is telling Yukoners that it won't increase minimum wage, this minister is publicly encouraging Yukoners to spend more money on goods so that their purchases last longer. The tone-deafness is off the charts on this one.

Assuming that Yukoners have the disposable income to buy higher quality goods when low- and modest-income households living in Whitehorse pay on average over \$1,800 a month for housing demonstrates a disconnect for a huge cross-section of Yukoners. If this government is telling Yukoners that they need to spend more to do their part to reduce waste, the government could at least increase the minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, when will this government do the bare minimum and continue to raise the minimum wage, as recommended by the Employment Standards Board?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: When I looked, we have been increasing the minimum wage. We have increased it year over year, every year that we have been here, and I look forward to hearing back from the Employment Standards Board. As I said in the spring, we asked that the Employment Standards Board consider some economic data and analysis. My understanding is that report is just about complete. I look forward to getting that report to the board. We have certainly shared some early drafts with them. I look forward to hearing from the board.

I think that one of the things that we are saying to Yukoners around buying goods is that we hope that they will buy goods that will last longer so that they don't have to spend as much. I hope that all of us, as Yukoners, are looking to reduce waste. That includes helping all of us in our pocketbooks as well — including, and especially, for those who are living below the poverty line.

Ms. White: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The living wage report is always a great example of how badly we are collectively failing to meet the needs of lower- and modest-income Yukoners. For a bit of context, if we in this Assembly were asked to live on \$19 an hour — the living wage — it would mean that I personally would take a pay cut of \$65,000; the Leader of the Official Opposition would see an \$85,000 cut to his annual income; and the Premier would be out over \$105,000 a year. And, if we are talking about earning a minimum wage versus earning a living wage, we would have to slash everyone's income by an additional \$10,000 a year.

So, Mr. Speaker, in this year's living wage report, YAPC again advocated that government introduce a basic annual

income pilot project that reflects the cost of living in the territory.

Will this government consider implementing a basic annual income pilot project, as recommended by the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition's living wage report?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I just will acknowledge that today I tabled the very report that is being discussed here. I would like to thank the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition for the great work that they do on providing this analysis for all of us as Yukoners. There are quite a few suggestions in that report. I certainly will look at all of them, but I will turn to the Employment Standards Board to ask for their advice on minimum wage. That's what we're doing here.

I really appreciate that they're taking the analysis that we are supplying to them to consider how this will help in their understanding of the minimum wage for us.

The member opposite talked about a \$6 gap between the living wage and the minimum wage, but the minimum wage and the living wage are different things. What I understand is that gap when we first arrived here was over \$7.50, but that wasn't acknowledged.

Mr. Speaker, I think that it is important that we look to support all Yukoners, especially those who are struggling with poverty. I look forward to talking with the Employment Standards Board about their suggestions for the minimum wage.

Question re: Government employee acquisition and retention

Ms. Hanson: Last spring, the Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission admitted that he had not read the *Talent Acquisition and Retention Performance Audit* — 2017-18 — that had been submitted to him by the internal audit services in August 2018. He has now had an additional six months to read this important audit. This audit is important because it was intended to provide assurances that the talent acquisition and retention process within Yukon government was open, transparent, and inclusive and that it promotes professional merit-based public service.

Unfortunately, the audit could not confirm this and identified a number of significant problems with attracting and retaining employees, including how appointments are made to senior management positions.

Mr. Speaker, has the minister read the report, and can he outline the specific direction given to address the concerns identified in the internal audit services report of August 2018?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I thank the Member for Whitehorse Centre for the question this afternoon.

The audit to which she was referring focused on the Yukon government's human resource processes for acquiring and retaining senior-level, high-impact, and difficult-to-fill positions. The report's recommendations are being addressed through the *People Plan* — a strategy for the Government of Yukon's public service which will guide the Public Service Commission's work and set the priorities for the next three years.

Some of the initiatives currently underway that also support the recommendations of the audit report include the permanent establishment of the human rights service centre on April 1, which centralized high-volume transactional work so that departments can focus on strategic human resource work, including talent acquisition and retention and an organizational review of the Public Service Commission to realign programs and resources, so the department is well-positioned to deliver on the priorities identified in the *People Plan*.

I'm sure there will be more questions; I'm more than happy to address them this afternoon.

Ms. Hanson: The minister may want to reflect and comment on the number of appointments without competition to the ADM level in the last two years. But in reading the minister's mandate letter, the reference is made — and I quote: "Implement the three-year *People Plan*..." — which he just referenced — "... to guide the development of a modern public service that can respond to the challenges of a changing workforce..." — that's a hopeful start, Mr. Speaker.

I Googled the document — that's the only way to find anything on the government's new website. I found a one-page document that was very colourful, very pretty, and very thin on details, timelines, or action items — in other words, a nice schematic plan. But it's not a plan — it's a schematic.

Can the minister please inform this House: How are they going to implement, and how does the new *People Plan* for 2019-23 follow any of the recommendations of the *Talent Acquisition and Retention Performance Audit*?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Once again, I thank the Member for Whitehorse Centre for the questions this afternoon. As I was saying, the organizational review has highlighted the need for a human resource metrics and analytics branch which will lead the identification and development of appropriate performance measures and the evaluation of progress made over time and continued support for the leadership pathways program, which supports the development of emerging leaders and prepares them for senior leadership roles.

The Public Service Commissioner and I have been talking about the leadership pathways program. I was just recently at a graduation program where I got to meet some of the graduates from that program. It was a wonderful ceremony.

Mr. Speaker, the member has referenced the *People Plan*. We're working to ensure that the Government of Yukon public service is strong, engaged, and has a capacity to effectively deliver programs and services to Yukoners. As part of our ongoing efforts, the *People Plan* is a collaboratively developed strategy, intended to help us prioritize and focus on initiatives that are most important for developing an inclusive, engaged, and effective public service.

I'm sure the member opposite has more questions; I'm more than happy to answer them.

Ms. Hanson: The minister's response indicates that he hasn't read the audit. If he had, he wouldn't have made the comments he just made with respect to the pathways program. In the audit, starting salaries of successful candidates was investigated. When hired, new employees may negotiate a starting salary based on a salary range.

A third of new women hires started at the base salary. However, the audit showed that 77 percent of men landed above the midway point in the salary range and that no men started at the base salary level. The audit questioned whether this reflects a fair and merit-based hiring system for the talent group and how it aligns with the spirit of the employment equity policy. This audit raises serious questions about gender bias and indicates that Yukon government staffing does not reflect a fair and merit-based hiring system and does not align with the employment equity policy.

What direction has the minister given the Public Service Commission to address the findings of the audit, and where are they reflected in the *People Plan*?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: As the member opposite knows, in 2012, an audit of staffing was carried out by the Yukon government's Internal Audit Services. The audit report contained 15 recommendations where improvements to staffing practices could be made. Since then, the Public Service Commission has made a number of improvements to staffing in response to those recommendations. I have outlined some of them today. We have done the *People Plan*. We have done a number of things in our approach to the public service in making the process of hiring and staffing our civil service more transparent and open. We are changing the leadership pathways program on an ongoing basis to make sure that it is more inclusive and that there are more opportunities for staff to apply to be part of that leadership pathways program. Those performance improvements are going to continue under the watch of the Public Service Commission and me.

Question re: Nares River bridge project expenditures

Mr. Hassard: As we have discussed, the Minister of Highways and Public Works appears to have a lot of trouble with details, which is causing a lot of projects to either be delayed for significant periods of time — such as the Mayo aerodrome, which we just spoke about — or, in other cases, projects go overbudget. The Nares River bridge project was supposed to cost \$12.6 million, but the final cost came in at \$2.4 million overbudget. When media asked the minister how he had mismanaged this project so badly that it went overbudget by \$2.4 million, he merely shrugged his shoulders.

We know that this minister has a tendency to make an announcement and then worry about the details later, but since he has had plenty of time now to get briefed on this, maybe he could provide us with an answer today. Can the minister tell us why this project is so overbudget?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am happy to address the Leader of the Official Opposition's questions this afternoon on the floor of the House. I really am.

We just opened the Nares River bridge on Friday, as a matter of fact, and it was great to meet with the deputy chief of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation, a bunch of children from the local school, and the community residents. There were about 60 people out on the bridge that afternoon and it was really nice to see them, Mr. Speaker. The reason why that was such a great opportunity to go out and meet with the community is because

that bridge had a troubled launch, Mr. Speaker. It wasn't able to be done under the previous government. We worked with the First Nation very closely to make sure that we had the bridge go forward.

The bridge was budgeted at \$12.6 million. It came in at about \$14 million. There was a lot of extra paving to do within the community of Carcross. We had a lot of roadworks that we, working with my colleague, the MLA for beautiful Mount-Lorne Southern Lakes, had identified while working with the community. So, because we had mobilized some of the equipment down there, we decided to do some paving that improved the road to Tagish and other places. There was a lot of work done there, Mr. Speaker, and I'm happy to talk about this more.

Mr. Hassard: Apparently the minister's response as to why it went overbudget is because they had to do extra roadwork and extra paving. It's my understanding that the bridge is a certain length and it's going to stay a certain length, so I don't know why there would be extra paving or extra roadwork, but maybe the minister could explain that to us.

When the Premier was the Leader of the Third Party, he attributed any cost overruns on projects to incompetence by the minister responsible. Now we have a minister who has mismanaged the Mayo aerodrome project and he has mismanaged the Nares River project. So, to put it in terms the minister will understand, the \$2.4 million could have paid for 20 failed ice bridge attempts, maybe. Mr. Speaker, you'll remember that the minister famously told Yukoners that they will have to get used to lower standards. We didn't know that he was referring to his own job performance.

Can the minister tell us how many CTFN citizens and how many locals from Carcross were employed as a result of this project?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am happy to talk about the work. The Nares River bridge has been completed, the Dawson City runway has been completed, we have just secured \$157 million for the north Klondike Highway, and we are working on Shakwak. There are an awful lot of things that we are doing, Mr. Speaker, and I'm happy to talk about any one of them today on the floor of the Legislative Assembly.

By investing in bridge infrastructure, Mr. Speaker, our government is strengthening the vital links that tie Yukon communities together and bring our resources to market. I won't apologize for that.

Two years after the shovels hit the ground, as planned, we have completed the Nares River bridge replacement project. There is still some work to be done on that — some finishing touches. The construction cost was \$14 million, including the paving of the area roads. There was some work with the Carcross/Tagish First Nation, a YACA agreement, that was about \$300,000. There was a house relocation that is still underway, so there are costs involved with this project.

The project is completed. The community was very happy when I was down there on Friday to open it, and I was pleased that we were able to finish this project.

Mr. Hassard: It is interesting that the minister stands up and says that he is happy to talk about this, but he certainly

doesn't appear to be very happy to actually talk about it. We know that the Minister of Highways and Public Works budgeted \$12.6 million for this project. He has admitted to that. The minister then told this House on October 24 of this year that the final cost came in at \$15 million — so that is about 19 percent overbudget, Mr. Speaker.

If the minister had mismanaged a project in the private sector so badly, he would have been shown the door, but according to the Premier, he won't shuffle his Cabinet because he thinks his minister is doing an amazing job.

So, can the minister at least tell us how much of the \$15 million actually went to local contractors?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: From the onset of this project, the construction of the new bridge supported the community of Carcross and the Carcross/Tagish First Nation. We are actually looking at this project as a model for the next project, which will be the Nisutlin Bay bridge — for which, again, we have a contract agreement charter with the First Nation in Teslin.

For the first time on an infrastructure project of this nature, the government procurement process included a First Nation participation plan intended to address employment and training for Carcross/Tagish citizens and Carcross/Tagish firms. Direct local benefits included training opportunities, development of a quarry, and a number of sole-sourced opportunities.

The community benefited from this project. We were happy to have it open. It is now going to increase the ability for tourists to reach Carcross and the ability for larger trucks to come into the territory from Skagway. It was a successful completion, Mr. Speaker, and I am really surprised that the members opposite are so disparaging of its success.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 80 — Appointment of Child and Youth Advocate

Speaker: Motion No. 80, appointment of the Child and Youth Advocate.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move:

THAT the Yukon Legislative Assembly, pursuant to section 4 of the *Child and Youth Advocate Act*, recommends that the Commissioner in Executive Council appoint Annette King as the Child and Youth Advocate for a term of five years commencing April 30, 2020.

Speaker: Is there any debate on the motion?

Mr. Kent: I thank the minister for bringing this motion forward. I thank Members' Services Board for the work that they did in reappointing Ms. King. Unfortunately, she was in the gallery earlier today, but has since had to leave. The Official Opposition, the Yukon Party, would like to congratulate her and thank her for the work she has done, and we look forward to working with her over the next five years.

Ms. Hanson: The Yukon NDP would also echo our thanks to the Child and Youth Advocate as an officer of the Legislative Assembly. We have seen in recent commentary that there is a mixed bag in terms of her accountability and reporting relationships and she has managed that very effectively and we are very pleased to see how that works. We look forward to working with all members in this Legislative Assembly to perhaps correct some of the anomalies in that relationship.

We are very pleased with the tremendous strides that the incumbent has made.

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would also like to take a moment to acknowledge Ms. King for her dedication to Yukoners, her dedication to ensuring that we have a better place for our children, and doing the comprehensive review and assessment in cooperation with the department. We know that, coming in, we had some major challenges. She stepped up and took that very seriously. I just want to acknowledge she and her staff for doing such excellent work to ensure that children in Yukon have an opportunity to live in a healthy environment. We continue to look forward to future engagements with the Child and Youth Advocate office, and a shout-out to them for doing such awesome work.

Motion No. 80 agreed to

Motion No. 81 — Appointment of Conflict of Interest Commissioner

Speaker: Motion No. 81, appointment of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move:

THAT, pursuant to section 18 of the *Conflict of Interest (Members and Ministers) Act*, the Yukon Legislative Assembly reappoint David Phillip Jones, QC as a member of the Conflict of Interest Commission for a three-year period.

Speaker: Is there any debate on this motion?

Mr. Kent: Again, we would like to thank Mr. Jones for his long service to members of this Legislative Assembly and to Yukoners in general when it comes to advising us on potential conflicts of interest. I know that I have relied on his advice personally, as have colleagues in our caucus, so we would like to thank him again for his work and congratulate him. We look forward to working with him in the future as well.

Ms. White: I echo the comments that have been made so far. Mr. Jones has been a pleasure to deal with in the last eight years and we look forward to working with him into the future.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I might as well add my voice to that as well. I have been working with Mr. Jones for eight years now and he has always been extremely professional in his services. I want to thank him on behalf of the Yukon Liberal Party.

Speaker: Before putting the question, the Chair must draw members' attention to section 18(4) of the *Conflict of*

Interest (Members and Ministers) Act, which says, “In order to take effect, a resolution of the Legislative Assembly for the appointment or removal of a Member of the commission must be supported in a recorded vote by at least two-thirds of the Members present for the vote.”

In order to ensure that the requirements of section 18 of the *Conflict of Interest (Members and Ministers) Act* are met, the Chair will now call for a recorded division.

Division

Speaker: The bells will ring. If all members are present, they can be shorter than five minutes.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

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

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried by the required support of two-thirds of the members of the Legislative Assembly present for the vote and that David Phillip Jones, QC has now been reappointed as Conflict of Interest Commissioner for a three-year period.

Motion No. 81 agreed to

Hon. Ms. McPhee: 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 (Mr. Hutton): I will now call Committee of the Whole to order.

The matter before the Committee is clause-by-clause debate on Bill No. 6, entitled *Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: We will take a 15-minute break.

Recess

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

Bill No. 6: *Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is resuming clause-by-clause debate on Bill No. 6, entitled *Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009*. Is there any further debate on clause 2?

On Clause 2 — continued

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I am just going to welcome the officials again from the Department of Justice: Bhragh Dabbs, from the legislative drafting group, and Andrea Monteiro, who is the director of Corrections. That is what I have to say as a result of my introduction.

Ms. Hanson: I also join in welcoming the officials this afternoon.

When we left off last, talking about Bill No. 6, we were at, as you said, clause 2, on the definitions section. It was there that my discomfort level went up significantly. I had signalled to the minister that I am extremely discomfited, as is my colleague from the New Democratic Party, with what I am seeing coming to the fore with respect to how this all plays out.

Just to reiterate and provide some background as to why I'm concerned: I had asked the minister to provide an illustrative explanation of the difference between disciplinary restrictive confinement and disciplinary segregation. If we look at the definitions of those two phrases, other than the first three words, the rest of the sentence is the same. This is where my discomfort arises.

The minister replied to me that the wording of (2)(b) regarding the difference between disciplinary restrictive confinement and disciplinary segregation exists there for the purposes of a definition section to line up later on with the definition of “segregation”.

“Segregation”, she said, is defined in Bill No. 6 as more than 22 hours. My heart stops there, Mr. Chair. She went on to say that “restrictive confinement” is defined as between 18 and 22 hours and adds an additional layer of oversight and review for individuals who are serving 18 to 22 hours. It's not just that you have to get over the 22-hour limit for the definition of “segregation”, but recognizing that restrictive confinement can also carry difficulties, problems, and concerns that require proper oversight, proper definition, and require proper care, attention, and review — and that kicks in at the 18-hour mark, between 18 and 22, which is defined as “restrictive confinement”.

The minister went on to say that it's designed to address some of the concerns in the recommendations from Mr. Loukidelis. It is designed to address some of the concerns that have been addressed and what has sometimes been defined in the federal process as “segregation light”, or something that is less than meeting the definition of “segregation”, but that it

still needs to be recognized as seriously restricting the services and care provided to inmates who are being restricted in their movement and in their confinement with their respective conditions of confinement at the 18-hour mark.

That is where we essentially — my response was that my concern is, and was, that we are now saying that, in fact, somebody can be put in segregation for more than 22 hours. When I read back what Mr. Loukidelis said — what he found in his report — that's the opposite of what he was trying to recommend to this Legislative Assembly.

I have heard the minister say — through the assistant deputy minister, who has spoken to Mr. Loukidelis — that he understands why the government might change from the 18 hours to 22 hours. I have not had the liberty of speaking to Mr. Loukidelis, because I can tell the Legislative Assembly that I reached out to him and said, "I have this concern." His response was, "It is before the Legislative Assembly, so I can't comment on that."

Now, it's unfortunate that, as a communications exercise, the ADM can do that, but I can't do that — because I am struggling to understand how, on one hand, you know, we can interpret that the person who wrote that report and who sat in this Legislative Assembly and explained to us how serious the consequences are for an individual to be confined — and we are talking about segregation as being essentially solitary confinement — 22-plus hours doesn't give you a heck of a lot more hours a day.

I am not a lawyer — and I will be clear about that: I am not a lawyer. I have no access to legal counsel in terms of trying to figure this stuff out, Mr. Chair. But I do come from a point of view — like many in this Legislative Assembly and many citizens paying attention to what has gone on — not just in this jurisdiction — we have our own little horror stories — but across this country.

But I want to go back to Mr. Loukidelis' report because that is the source document that I thought we were working toward when the government said last year — well, they sort of hedged but generally said, "We generally accept the recommendations of the inspection report." We can go through the 40 recommendations and the little matrix that was handed out to us and sort of say, "Well, yes, but maybe" — and then there were some that they were pretty clear about.

I said at the outset that I was really optimistic and hopeful when I saw the government taking action on some of those recommendations and dealing with — in particular — the very vexatious and difficult issue of how we treat people who are confined in our correctional system. Keep in mind, Mr. Chair: These are not all people who have been sentenced. Some of them are on remand because they are awaiting trial. When I asked the question as to if these conditions or the issues around non-disciplinary restrictive confinement, or non-disciplinary segregation, or restrictive confinement, or segregation would apply to that whole spectrum of — in quote: "inmates", I am told yes.

So, you get picked up and charged with something, but you will be remanded for trial. If — for whatever reason — something happens — I want to be hearing and I'm going to be

asking for some more clarity now that it has become really clear that we are now talking about the possibility of depriving somebody of what is called, as I understand it, the "residual liberties". It is a change in the form and intensity of your or my confinement as distinct from a mere loss of privileges or denial of a request. So that is different. You and I — say I am remanded and make a request, that is one thing — but if you're going to place me in some kind of restrictive form of confinement that restricts my mobility — doesn't allow me to walk down the hallway; doesn't allow me to interact with others — I want to know what the reasons are. I want to know how that conforms to what Mr. Loukidelis talked about.

I am just quoting here from page 45 — he said, "An often-cited definition of 'solitary confinement' is 'the physical isolation of individuals who are confined to their cells for twenty-two to twenty-four hours a day'..." — which sounds pretty damn close to what we're talking about here — "... even where individuals are allowed out of their cells for exercise." He cites the references there. In this one, it's kind of interesting. He also talks about the fact — I think it's important to note that he talks about: "Courts in Ontario and British Columbia have recently ruled on *Charter of Rights* challenges to administrative separate confinement in the federal corrections system. In *Canadian Civil Liberties*, the Ontario Superior Court of Justice held that the fifth-day review of administrative separate confinement provided for under the federal *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* was an inadequate procedural safeguard to ensure that sentenced inmates are not unconstitutionally deprived of liberty or security of the person, contrary to section 7 of the *Charter of Rights*. The Supreme Court of British Columbia went even further in *British Columbia Civil Liberties...*" — a case called *British Columbia Civil Liberties*.

So, we are saying that the frame that has been put around this, Mr. Chair, is that these forms of non-disciplinary restrictive confinement — which, I'm told, can also be for 15 days, and then it could have a break for five and have another 15 days, for a cumulative total of 60. I'm questioning how that fits with a more humane approach that we were talking about.

I have a question, in particular, with respect to these definitions and whether or not, within that 15-day period — so if somebody is told that they're going to be in any one of these forms of restrictive confinement, non-disciplinary segregation, or non-disciplinary restrictive confinement, is there a similar five-day review? An important question in my mind is — I was trying to think this through, and I was trying to write some notes to myself. The only way I can do this, Mr. Chair, is to put myself in this position.

I'm not a lawyer, again, so if I am in there on remand, how do I — what rights to question that decision and what rights to appeal that decision are built into the system? Will I have the right to have a lawyer to make a question of whether or not it's correct for me to be placed in any one of these non-disciplinary restrictive confinements, non-disciplinary segregation, restrictive confinement or segregation for up to 22 hours plus, 24 hours a day, for 15 days? At what point is my voice heard in

terms of the rights of an inmate to raise questions about the basis for the decision?

I'll leave it as a starting point there, but I'm really struggling to understand how this fits together.

It took me until this morning to send a note to the minister just saying that I am having a hard time with this. We have talked about it. I have tried reading some more stuff, and so it is going to lead to me asking more questions. This is the reason why I am asking these questions — because I want to understand. I will leave it there for now.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I am going to see if I can provide an answer to this really important question, because this is the crux of what is happening here with Bill No. 6. In order to do that, I am going to first make reference to — I hope not, but there may be some misunderstanding. Let me just say that the conversation that the assistant deputy minister had with Mr. Loukidelis was a number of weeks ago before this matter was on the floor of the House, so I am not speaking for him. I don't know if that is why his issue was with speaking to the Member for Whitehorse Centre, but I certainly have no issue with that.

Mr. Loukidelis, in his report — and I am reading from the summary of the recommendations, number 13 — says: “The legislative amendments recommended in this report should include a definition of separate confinement, whether called disciplinary, administrative or secure supervision placement, as confinement of an individual apart from others for more than 18 hours a day.” He wasn't saying 18; he said anything more than 18.

He also said, “The Corrections Act and Corrections Regulation should be amended to provide a clearer, more comprehensive, framework to govern use of separate confinement at WCC.” That is part of number 14, and he goes on from there. I know that the member opposite has read that, and I am sure that she has understood it to be the case.

I am going to stop here to say that this is exactly what Bill No. 6 is doing.

I am also going to make reference to *The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners*, also known more colloquially as — although I'm sure that Nelson Mandela never considered it to be a colloquialism — the Nelson Mandela Rules. In Rule 44, which is known as the Nelson Mandela Rule, it states: “For the purpose of these rules, solitary confinement shall refer to the confinement of prisoners for 22 hours or more a day without meaningful human contact. Prolonged solitary confinement shall refer to solitary confinement for a time period in excess of 15 consecutive days.” Again, these are the standards that are set out in Bill No. 6.

Let me go on to say that there are more protections in Bill No. 6 with respect to making positive changes for the purposes of using segregation or separate confinement at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. The Government of Yukon, Mr. Chair, is not proposing to abolish segregation. Segregation is a necessary tool that is used as a last resort to manage risk within the institution. What I want to add there is that the requirement to use this as a tool of last resort, to use segregation in any of its

forms as a tool of last resort, is embedded — or will be embedded if Bill No. 6 passes — in the corrections act of the Yukon Territory. Our current legislation does not require that.

I also want to note that, in order to ensure that segregation is used appropriately, the proposed amendments carefully differentiate between disciplinary and non-disciplinary circumstances. Further, non-disciplinary segregation contains criteria that must be met for an inmate to be held in a condition of segregation. Specifically, under section 19.05, an inmate may only be placed in non-disciplinary segregation under certain circumstances, and they are — so let me stop here. I note that the member opposite said something like, “Well, you could get into segregation for whatever reason.” No, you can't. You can't get in there for whatever reason, because the changes in Bill No. 6 will set out, in section 19.05, that an inmate may only be placed in non-disciplinary segregation under the following circumstances: the inmate poses a serious and immediate threat, the inmate poses a risk to a disciplinary process or to a criminal investigation, or the inmate is at risk.

In addition to meeting these criteria, the Whitehorse Correctional Centre will need to demonstrate that they have exhausted all other options to manage a particular inmate. It's important to note that the Yukon, unlike most other jurisdictions, is limited to one institution and, therefore, is unable to transfer individuals between institutions, which is often what might happen in a larger province if there was an issue with individuals revolving around protection or inmates who are at risk. Of course, that's not available to us here in the territory. I don't think anyone would be suggesting that it is an appropriate remedy.

Transferring inmates to other institutions is often a tool in other jurisdictions to manage, or used to manage, security risks within their institutions. I would also like to note that the proposed amendments contain regulation-making authority — and this goes to many of the questions that were asked today — and the regulation-making authority will allow government to reduce the timelines contained in the definitions, including the timeline for segregation, so that is available as we go forward.

As an additional accountability measure, the proposed amendments provide oversight for the use of segregation — not only oversight within the institution, but external, independent oversight, which is a main part of the recommendation of the Mandela Rules.

It does not, in my understanding, exist anywhere in Canada at the moment. This approach has been taken to allow protective and progressive changes to be made as we move forward.

I would also like to note — as I did at the end of our conversation and debate on Tuesday — but I am happy to add or reiterate here that, again, it is not “for whatever reason”. There are clear requirements set out in Bill No. 6 that will not only define, but set out parameters on how segregation can be used. It is currently not as robust as it must be in the current legislation.

The member opposite has asked, “How is this a more humane approach?” In Bill No. 6, the time limits will regulate the behaviour of the authorities at the Whitehorse Correctional

Centre. Bill No. 6 will place these provisions in the law. Those that do exist that are not as robust as necessary currently exist in regulation. It is not easy to change regulations, but it is much easier to change regulations than it is to change the legislation and the decision has been made here that these provisions must be entrenched in the law.

Again, I said earlier that it will be as part of the law, the requirement that any of this restrictive confinement or segregation at Whitehorse Correctional Centre can only be used as a last resort — again, entrenching that in the law — not currently done.

The caps or time limits that exist — the 15 days, the 60 days — the member opposite is quite correct. In the worst-case scenario — the math that she has done with respect to an individual being in segregation for that period of time are the time limits that exist. The member opposite properly explains what the time limits are in the legislation. But there will be regulations that require the review of that. The references that the member opposite has made with respect to the Ontario and BC cases involving dealing with review provisions have not been — the courts in those cases found that those review provisions were not adequate — and clearly, any of the regulations that we develop under the new corrections act, including the terms from Bill No. 6, will have to comply with the current state of the law or be even more restrictive, if appropriate.

But certainly, waiting five days, as in the BC case, to review provisions of segregation for a particular inmate has been found to be not appropriate; therefore, our regulations will need to be better, more robust, and stronger than that.

In addition — and this is extremely important, Mr. Chair — we have put in Bill No. 6 an absolute prohibition for certain individuals being held in segregation. That absolute prohibition lives in section 19.01. I will, for the purposes of trying to answer this question fully, note that this section reads: “An inmate must not be held in segregation (whether disciplinary or non-disciplinary) if the inmate, as determined in accordance with the regulations (a) is pregnant or has given birth within the prescribed period; (b) is suicidal or chronically self-harming; (c) has a mental disorder, or an intellectual disability, that meets the prescribed conditions; (d) requires medical observation; or (e) has a mobility impairment that meets the prescribed conditions.”

I appreciate that the prescribed conditions are not here for us to consider at this time as part of Bill No. 6. But I also can say with absolute confidence that this absolute prohibition on segregation being used in relation to any inmates who present these issues is unprecedented. It is the protection that Mr. Loukidelis was looking for. It is the protection that we need to be looking for as a Legislative Assembly in controlling what happens at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre in relation to decisions that are made for individuals who will be perhaps irreparably harmed by a segregation condition.

Lastly, what I will say in answer to this excellent question — because, again, it is about the entirety of what Bill No. 6 is trying to achieve — is that there are provisions here in Bill No. 6 for there to be review of individuals — like the cases that

have been taken in Ontario, BC, and others — requirements for review of individuals who are placed in this condition of confinement. They must be reviewed properly; they must be reviewed pursuant to the regulations. They must be recorded properly — records must be kept — and there must be oversight. Lastly, there must be external oversight in certain situations for individuals to be placed in this condition of confinement.

Again, it is unprecedented, except for the Mandela Rules, which is the standard we are trying to meet here, which is certainly above the standard in jurisdictions across the country.

I hope that is, in a nutshell, what we’re trying to do here in Bill No. 6. I completely appreciate that there are some unknowns here, because the regulations will put the meat on the bones or, as we have said in the past, the walls on the house. If this is the foundation and the structure or the skeleton of a home, then the walls, the furniture, and the things that come with that will live in the regulations. I appreciate that there is a leap of faith here with respect to some of that, but what I can say is that we have built into the proposed law that will be Bill No. 6, in conjunction with the *Corrections Act, 2009*, all of the structure that will make this the strongest, most robust segregation law in Canada, and the use of segregation as a last resort — when there is nothing else — will be the tool needed in relation to a particular inmate. As a result, it’s critical that we adopt these provisions.

Let me lastly say — phase 1 — there is more to come. There is more to come in relation to what Mr. Loukidelis has said is necessary. We have talked a little bit on Tuesday about other things that need to come — designations and those kinds of things. We have commented on those a bit. The regulation work will be critical to make sure that this can be phased in, in a way that does protect the rights of individuals, and that’s the balance that we’re trying to strike here — a tool for Whitehorse Correctional Centre to be able to use in relation to its requirement to provide care and programming for inmates, but also a balance to protect their personal rights.

This is my last “lastly” — because I know I have probably said that a couple of times — to do nothing at this point, Mr. Chair, means that we have a system that we know is inadequate and that we, as professionals in the department and who work with the department, know — and the officials in Corrections and in the Department of Justice know — is inadequate. Mr. Loukidelis has told us that it is inadequate; our Supreme Court has told us that it’s inadequate; Supreme Courts and other courts across the country have told us that it’s inadequate, and the United Nations has told us that it’s inadequate.

So, it’s time to make a move; it’s time to put these protections in our law; it’s time to move forward in this way so it is a limited but available tool for the Correctional Centre.

Ms. Hanson: I appreciate the minister’s response, and I think that we would all recognize that when a person is sentenced — again, I have a couple of concerns. One is that we are dealing with people who may not be sentenced, but once you are sentenced to jail, your liberty is — by necessity or by fact — reduced. There is a legal constraint to that. You still

have some liberties even if you are in jail, so this is what we are talking about here today — under what circumstances society and the corrections system can put restrictions on those liberties — as much as they are already constrained by the mere fact of being in a jail. Mr. Loukidelis referred to it — as did the Supreme Court of Canada — when we talk about segregation, we are talking about a prison within a prison. To get a better sense of how this might play out — because I hear what the minister is saying — that a lot of this is in regulations and stuff. But I have been around a long time. The legislation is also really important. We have had many debates in this Legislative Assembly, and I have been a public servant for longer than I would like to think. Regulations do change, and there are lots of reasons why they change and how they change.

I am more comfortable the more the legislation is clear in the guidance that it is giving so that the regulations are required to be giving more life, as opposed to maybe going off in a different direction.

In order to get a sense of how this might play out — when I looked at Mr. Loukidelis' report on page 48, he tracks the kinds of separate confinement by a number of days at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. He notes that there was a marked decrease from 2014 to 2016. In 2014, there were about 1,100 days of separate confinement for all kinds of separate confinement. In 2016, there were 534. I am wondering if there is a breakdown in terms of indigenous and non-indigenous inmates who the number 534 represents.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: It's not something — the question is about whether or not we track indigenous versus non-indigenous individuals in segregation. I should first start by saying — and we can presumably get a statistic for the member opposite with respect to the use of segregation — but certainly there has been nobody in the current definition of “segregation” — which we are proposing to change of course — at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre for some extended period of time.

There is not a process by which indigenous versus non-indigenous individuals are identified, even self-identified. Of course, there is an over-representation in Whitehorse and in the Yukon Territory of indigenous individuals at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre, as is the issue across the country. It's completely unacceptable. We continue to work with our First Nation partners on a number of justice initiatives — including corrections issues — that we hope will address that. Certainly, it is something we would like to be able to break down statistically in the future because then we can know what's happening. I think that the member opposite has said on many occasions that, if we don't keep track of these kinds of things, then we don't know how to address the problems.

I also understand that these statistics are not necessarily kept across Canada. That doesn't mean that we don't want to do it. I have spent a lot of time in the last few days saying that we want to be leaders, so we do.

Certainly, there are racial breakdowns in some other institutions in Canada, but only self-identified, and again, that makes the statistics not necessarily accurate. So, the short answer is that we don't do this right now. I certainly expect that

we will do so in the future because we continue to work with our First Nation partners, and if we don't identify a problem, it is almost impossible to address.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for that response. It is surprising to me that we don't have that data, quite frankly. Historically we have made decisions, in terms of design and programming at Whitehorse Correctional Centre, based on certain assumptions — in terms of the inmate population that is there. So, one would think that it would be driven to some extent by the people who are either sentenced or remanded there. That is curious to me.

So, going back to the underlying concern that I have expressed with respect to the whole issue of how these various forms of disciplinary, non-disciplinary, and restrictive segregation — or restrictive confinement — and confinement all link into segregation — when I asked the minister the other day — she had just outlined the limitations and segregation prohibitions in 19.01, and I had asked the question with respect to 19.01(c) — whether or not the “mental disorder” — we wouldn't call it that — or an “intellectual disability” — I had asked the question whether or not this was encompassing fetal alcohol spectrum disorder or FAE or anything on that spectrum.

I was told that it's not automatic, it's a possibility, and if so, it would be in the regulations. I go back again to trying to understand what “non-disciplinary restrictive confinement” would mean in action. If we talk about a person who — as Mr. Loukidelis does when he talks about FASD — is on the spectrum — and it can manifest in many ways, but one of the common behavioural issues is an inability to respond in what we or a corrections facility would think would be a behaviourally appropriate way so that discipline is counter-indicated.

How are the needs and the real-life lived experience of somebody on that spectrum addressed unless it's expressed? Quite frankly, we know that, even from the attempts — because when this issue was discussed with respect to making changes to the corrections act previously, based on the Canadian Bar Association and the Yukon bar association's recommendations around FAS and FASD — well, no, we won't do that, because we don't have the data; we don't have the stats. Then we do a prevalence study, and then we find that it's voluntary, so you really can't force anybody. I appreciate that, but we also know that FASSY and others have done this work for the last 40 years in the territory and have a pretty good idea of the prevalence of the undiagnosed.

If we restrict our protections under section 19.01 for those who are diagnosed, my question to the minister is: Where, how, and what kind of protections are going to be provided for those individuals who are on remand — because probably they have breached probation yet again — for the non-disciplinary restrictive confinement? What good is 15 days being confined, separated, going to do for that individual — or restrictive confinement — or, if they get really upset and they go into segregation, what good is that going to do?

I'm just unclear as to how this works. We have a pretty narrow definition in 19.01(c), and I guess I'm really not comfortable with how that opens up — I'm just not hearing

how that is addressing someone who hasn't been sentenced yet and could end up in one of those three or four categories.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Let me just start at the beginning. In relation to the last question asked, the member opposite was surprised that we don't have a breakdown of how many individuals are sentenced or on remand or have self-identified as a First Nation individual. We do have that. The question that was asked was: Do I know how many people in the segregation number had self-identified as a First Nation individual? Just to clarify that, we do have details about inmate populations and certainly sentence remand status and those kinds of things. I just wanted to clear that up a little.

I certainly share the member's concerns regarding fetal alcohol syndrome disorder, assessments, the expertise at FASSY, the diagnosed versus undiagnosed question that has been around for quite some time — I won't go into too much detail with respect to that, but we are acutely aware that we are not looking for a diagnosis. That is not the decision that will get someone into a category or not into a category, but all of those categories will be fleshed out through regulation in work with our partners.

I do want to go back to emphasize something that we spoke about the other day, which is that individual assessments are going to become absolutely critical at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. It is something that — I hesitate to use the word "luxury", but with a small inmate population and with the services that we have available here in the Yukon Territory, it is something that not only should be done, but can be done with respect to the reduction of the use of segregation. By reducing the use of segregation and replacing it with the individualized services for those inmates who cannot be managed within the general inmate population — which is what we are really talking about here — the Whitehorse Correctional Centre will be providing a safe and humane environment for staff and inmates. The idea is a more individualized process whereby behaviours — individual needs — can be met.

The goal with respect to this legislation and at Whitehorse Correctional Centre going forward is to provide an appropriate living environment for an inmate who cannot be maintained within the general inmate population, either for security or other reasons. This includes providing the inmate with the opportunity for meaningful human contact, regardless of their status, to participate in programs, and the opportunity to have access to services that respond to the inmate's specific needs while managing any risk posed to any other or by any other inmate.

The reason that this is so critically important is because it is a complete shift in how these inmates' behaviours and services will be provided to them. Some of this has been done across the country in other places — attempts to do this with respect to smaller versions of the population. It is entirely built on the concept that we are well aware of the fact that many individuals who find themselves in the Whitehorse Correctional Centre have mental health issues — have mental wellness issues. As a result, housing them or using old-school correctional pedagogy — if I can say it that way — or practices

is not responding to them. It is not relating to what individuals need.

Of course, our job, ultimately, is to make sure that Whitehorse Correctional Centre inmates don't come back, that we do provide — they are not just housed. They are provided a service and some attention to issues that might help them to not come again.

The Government of Yukon is mindful that restrictive confinement and segregation should be used as a measure of last resort. I have said before that this is being built into the legislation by way of Bill No. 6. At times, segregation may be necessary to maintain the safety of inmates, staff, or others at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre, but inmates who are placed in alternate housing, which is defined in the new bill, for non-disciplinary purposes retain the same rights as other inmates, subject to the practical limitations posed by the need to separate them, if necessary, from individual inmates or classes of inmates.

I guess that's a long way of saying that individual attention — the individual assessment — that will be required upon an inmate coming to Whitehorse Correctional Centre, the opportunity for us to have alternate housing units which are set out in Bill No. 6, and the opportunity and limitations on how these tools can be used will require us — and the experts there — to become more creative and certainly to adopt the process reducing the use of segregation and separate confinement. In order to do that, the individualized services for those inmates have to increase.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for that explanation. I would be interested in knowing: Will the individual assessments that she has mentioned be for every individual who presents at the Correctional Centre? Will individual assessments be done on sentenced individuals? As well, will individual assessments be done on every person on remand at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre?

When she is thinking about that answer — I would be interested in knowing how many of the 37 individuals who are the current population are there under some sentence, and how many are under remand?

The other day, there was mention that there's an average of 64 people over the year at Whitehorse Correctional Centre for the past year — I think that is what I was told. I am just interested in a rough breakdown of how many of that average population are sentenced and how many are on remand.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I will try to answer that in order, Mr. Chair.

At this time, there are admission intakes done with respect to every inmate. Again, by definition, the word "inmate" includes individuals who are there under remand orders or individuals who have been sentenced. Our goal — and it's currently being worked on — is for those admission assessments and intakes to become more like individual assessments and become more robust. Ultimately, the goal will be that, as a result of those, there will be an individual care plan for every inmate, so that will include inmates who are serving sentences or inmates who are on remand.

Since we were here on Tuesday, the total inmate count in the Whitehorse Correctional Centre as of today is 39. There are 35 males and four females. There are 15 individuals who are serving a sentence and 24 individuals who are there by way of remand.

Ms. Hanson: So these individual assessments are going to be integral to assessing what may or may not be an appropriate response to an individual who is either sentenced or on remand at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. So, what is the target for implementation of the more robust assessment process? What is the target period or target date?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you to the member opposite for the question.

These things of course are a bit like a spider's web; they're all tied in together. I don't know if that's a good analogy on Halloween or not.

Part of the issue will be — first of all, let me back up to say that the individual assessments and making the admission intake more robust — that work is currently underway. Part of the opportunity for there to be an individual care plan for every inmate is also contingent on the development of some of the regulations and also in particular on the alternative housing opportunities that are defined there. Bill No. 6 will give us the authority to do that.

Of course, that's partly the case — that's mostly — the authority to make those individual housing conditions is almost entirely what Judge Veale has said recently in the case in the Supreme Court of the Yukon Territory, because he found that there was not current authority in the *Corrections Act, 2009* for that to happen. So clearly, that's part of Bill No. 6 coming forward so that we would have the authority to do that.

It doesn't mean that any of this work stops until those kinds of things can happen; in fact, the work is ongoing with an opportunity, we hope, in the future to see that the decisions around alternate housing and decisions around care for inmates will all come as a result of the changes that are in Bill No. 6 — but they will all come as a result of us trying to use segregation and restrictive confinement only as a last resort. If you're only doing that as a last resort and you're not using it as a tool as it has been used — as has been properly criticized for many years; not necessarily here but in other places across Canada — you must be able to provide the alternatives.

That sort of work is connected one to the other. But Bill No. 6 is integral in that moving forward.

Ms. Hanson: I appreciate getting an understanding of how that care plan links.

I just want to go back to a question that I asked the minister earlier. It links to whatever the current situation is — and as we go forward — it is getting an understanding of what rights an inmate or person on remand has and what process will be in place to question or appeal — or raise questions about the basis for the decision to place one in any of the alternative housing — non-disciplinary, disciplinary, and segregation. If we recognize that somebody who is in jail — and even somebody who is on remand — although there was talk the other day about how we might be thinking of more novel approaches on some of that, too. But when we are changing the form and

intensity of somebody's confinement, does that person have any rights at the outset to raise questions? If not, at what point do they have those rights and how does that work? Who informs somebody who is in jail as an inmate — sentenced — or who is there on remand that they may have some rights, and that is a process that they could follow to raise objections to or appeal a decision that has been made?

I want us to be clear about the reference to the five days — saying that this wasn't adequate. So, what is the intention of the Yukon government with respect to assessing whether or not solitary confinement of 24 hours a day, or 23 hours a day — whatever we want to call it — more than 22 hours — should be shorter? Because the definition says, "... unless a shorter period is prescribed..."

So, I am just curious as to how and when any of that might be triggered so that we minimize the circumstances that Mr. Loukidelis and so many others have pointed out — that there are times when there are reasonable restrictions of somebody's liberty — their residual liberty — because they have lost the main form by being in jail. But the research and that shows us that the impact or the effect of solitary — restricted; whatever you want to call it — confinement starts at 48 hours for many people. I would just ask us all to think about — some of us may think we would like to be kind of quiet some days and just go and contemplate, but that's very different from knowing that you have no ability to be in contact with others for 48 hours, for 15 days, for 60 days.

I'm just wondering if the minister could outline sort of what those measures are to safeguard that residual liberty of the individual.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Let me see if I can unpack that a bit, because I certainly understand the point that is being made. I think there are a few parts that I should note here.

I am going to go here first: 19.06(1): "If an inmate is being held in non-disciplinary segregation or non-disciplinary restrictive confinement, the inmate's circumstances must be reviewed in accordance with the regulations." So, that needs to go into the regulations. Of course, the standard that will exist in the regulations — I am saying "of course" because we talked about it a little bit earlier — will be as directed by the case law across the country and the limitations that are being placed on the law as it develops with respect to segregation going forward. There have been conversations about that being every 24 hours. There have been cases that have not prescribed that, but are saying that five days is way too much, is not constitutional, not secure, or not appropriate for inmates.

That is just an indication. I don't want to quote the cases that I haven't read, but certainly, as I've said, this law is developing going forward.

With respect to hearing processes set out in Bill No. 6 and underway at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre — now and in the future — there are tenets of administrative law that require fair process. They require individuals to know the case against them. They require the individuals to have representation and a full copy of the information. If we are talking about a disciplinary matter, for instance, they must have an opportunity to review that. They must have an opportunity, if they want

someone to help represent them there, to avail themselves of that.

There is a process by which those hearings must be held. The process must be respected. That will apply both to the review process in Bill No. 6 that deals within the Whitehorse Correctional Centre, as well as the external independent review. Those processes exist external to the *Corrections Act, 2009* — external to the requirements of Bill No. 6. In fact, they are the foundation of administrative law and the body of law that regulates those behaviours and those activities.

Inmates who are held in conditions that amount to segregation and restrictive confinement will continue to have access to visitors, elders, and other spiritual advisors. They will continue to have access to legal counsel, health care, mental health services, and — when it is safe and feasible to do so — they may have access to modified programming and personal belongings, if it's safe for them to do that.

I can note that — again, this is part of the puzzle that is involved in this question — but section 19.05(3) — I can remind the Legislative Assembly and Mr. Chair that if, at any time, the director of Corrections or an authorized person determines that the requirements that someone is in segregation no longer exist — you know, along with the tenet of it being least restrictive — if those provisions, if those circumstances — if I can say that word — of putting an individual in that condition of confinement no longer exist, they must immediately be released from that condition of confinement. That is again there in 19.05(3).

What I would also like to say is that, at the moment, currently at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre, the operational standard is that, if an individual is placed in segregation or separate confinement for any reason, an interdisciplinary care team is developed for the purpose of reviewing that situation and that condition of confinement. What we want to do with Bill No. 6 is put those operational plans — put those operational practices — into the law, and that's not something that currently exists.

I think I have answered all of that, but I can certainly get up again, if I haven't.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister. I'm just going to come back to the distinction between disciplinary and non-disciplinary. I'm going to go back again to Mr. Loukidelis' report.

On page 64, where he talked about the seven significant changes that he identified — the fifth one — and I'll just read it. He said, "... in recognition of the mental wellness risks that can appear as early as 48 hours, non-disciplinary separate confinement should be limited to no more than 48 hours in the first instance. Non-disciplinary separate confinement should be renewable in successive 24-hour periods, up to a maximum of 132 further hours, but only in the most exigent circumstances, such as continuing real and imminent threats to the safety of the individual in separate confinement or the safety of others." Again, this is where he comes back: "As recommended earlier, there should be a 15-day maximum for non-disciplinary separate confinement in the one-year period following first confinement" — which, in his case, would be 48 hours.

I guess my question is: From a best-practice perspective for non-disciplinary separate confinement, why are we retaining the 60-day maximum?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you for the question. Again, I think it's critical to understanding what we are presenting here in Bill No. 6. I will say it this way — what Bill No. 6 is doing when it passes — I hope — and will be part of the *Corrections Act, 2009*, is building a tool that can manage the most difficult behaviours presented at times by some — very few — inmates in Whitehorse. It is building a tool of last resort.

The reason we need a tool of last resort — as I've said on a couple of occasions — but I'm happy to reiterate here is that, again, we have one institution. Often in other larger places, much of this behaviour is managed if they have the opportunity, for instance, to remove an inmate who is part of a gang and affiliating with other gang members inside an institution. There may be a person who is moved to a different institution. We just don't have that opportunity here in the territory.

I also want to draw attention to section 19.05 again, because it indicates that, "... an authorized person may order that an inmate be held, or continue to be held, in non-disciplinary segregation or in non-disciplinary restrictive confinement..." — which is the question — if "... the inmate has committed, attempted to commit or plans to commit acts representing a serious or immediate threat..." Again, we talked about that the other day — "serious or immediate" — so actual threat to the physical security of the Correctional Centre or to the personal safety of any other person there — and "... that the inmate's associating with other persons in the correctional centre would substantially interfere with a disciplinary process or a criminal investigation..." Again, often there are situations continuing to be investigated, and even if a person — an inmate — is in a correctional centre on remand or for other reasons, they could interfere in that investigation going forward. Also, if "... the inmate's associating with other persons in the correctional centre would jeopardize the inmate's own safety..." — there are certainly circumstances where that might occur — and "... all other options to manage the inmate without segregating them or imposing restrictive confinement on them have been exhausted." So, this is the requirement.

Again, we are placing it in the law, the purpose of which is to make it that much more robust to require the compliance of the Whitehorse Correctional Centre and the officials there to make sure that this is a full understanding of how individuals are to be managed. I can indicate as well that those provisions of section 19.05 — and I may have slightly misspoken; I was trying not to paraphrase, but I got it for the most part — are in line with what Mr. Loukedelis has recommended. I think that has been noted by the member opposite in her question.

Ms. Hanson: I think it is a "yes, but", because I totally understand what the minister has outlined with respect to the focus being on imminent risk, not on potential risk, when we talk about section 19.05. My question is: Why has the government chosen to use a blunt instrument as opposed to a more refined one, as was proposed by Mr. Loukedelis?

What we have here is no constraints. When you are doing non-disciplinary separate confinement, what he recommended

is that it should be limited to no more than 48 hours in the first instance. What we have is a blanket 15 days — five, 15, five — to a total of 60. That is an exaggeration, but it could go that way, as I understand it and was confirmed the other day. The inspection report said that non-disciplinary separate confinement should be renewable in successive 24-hour periods. He also said it would be a maximum of 15 days in a year.

My question is — we are talking about non-disciplinary. Surely to goodness, if there is apprehended sense of physical security of the Correctional Centre — within 15 days you would have resolved that, I would hope. Given that the centre has 64 people on average there, you have a problem if you can't do that.

My question is — it is more the use of the appropriate tool to address the situation at hand. I am really looking to understand why. The recommendation was that: "... in recognition of the mental wellness risks that can appear as early as 48 hours..." — we are talking about non-disciplinary separate confinement or non-disciplinary segregation. "Segregation" as it is defined right now is basically a 24-hour lockdown and is only renewable to a maximum of 132 hours, on top of the 24.

Why wouldn't that be built in to demonstrate — to me, that is more reflective of understanding the risks associated with this kind of separate confinement.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I completely appreciate what Mr. Loukidelis has put in his recommendation, but what I think is not in his recommendation is the limits that are built into section 19.05 — that only in certain circumstances can non-disciplinary segregation or non-disciplinary restrictive confinement be used.

Because those sections are there, I'm prepared to point out that, in my view, we have built in when it could be used and only when it could be used. I think that, while the 24 hours mentioned — I'll just come to that in a second.

What we're dealing with here at the Correctional Centre — and I know that the members in this House know this — are very, very complex clients with very complex needs. We know that many of them are related to mental health issues. We know that they will be properly assessed coming in, and we will be looking for further and more opportunities to provide services and care to them, but I read this section noted by the member opposite about Mr. Loukidelis' recommendation — that he is really talking about and advocating for a review process, as are we.

A constant monitoring of individuals who are placed into this condition of confinement is and will be required. This is and will need to be built into our recommendations going forward when we work with our partners to do so. We know very well that individuals can, again, have adverse impacts at a very early stage of separate confinement. I want to go back again because this is all related.

I noted earlier about how individuals who are in this condition of confinement will still have access to visitors, to spiritual guidance, and to elders. We're not talking about — and perhaps years ago we were — depriving individuals of

meaningful human contact in a way that was, perhaps, inappropriately done in the past.

I also want to note that there are certain categories of individuals — and I appreciate that I'm repeating myself — who will not be able to be held in these conditions and that the assessment process will build into that with the idea of providing them better care in a way that it is not available at the moment.

Chair: Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

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

The matter before the Committee is resuming debate on Bill No. 6, entitled *Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009*.

Ms. Hanson: I think I just drew a blank — my last question was on definitions, Mr. Chair. We'll come back to definitions, because we have pulled it into the body of the amendments by trying to get an understanding of how these definitions relate to the various statements and recommendations in David Loukidelis' report of May 2018.

I'm going to end on the definitions section, where we left off the other day. Really, my bottom-line question is: Why is it necessary to retain the ability for the Correctional Centre to have somebody in solitary confinement for 24 hours?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: At the risk of sounding repetitive — and I appreciate that this may not satisfy the member opposite; her questions have been extremely thorough and she has obviously worked hard through this bill. But this proposal in Bill No. 6 does not propose to abolish segregation. It is a necessary tool of last resort to manage risk within the Whitehorse Correctional Centre, in this case, or within an institution. I want to say that not only is that recognized by Mr. Loukidelis in his report, but it is recognized by the United Nations in their rules regarding how prisoners should be treated — which is also known as the Mandela Rules — and it is critical for that reason. That is why the definitions exist the way they do in Bill No. 6, because it is — although we wish it weren't — necessary. It is a necessary tool. It is to be used as a last resort. It is used to manage risk in a correctional institution. It is used sparingly. We know the dangers of it. We know that it can have adverse effects on individuals.

We have built into Bill No. 6 many protections to alleviate what we know are potential problems with the use of segregation. We will continue to build those into the regulations. I want to note that segregation, when it is used — and we ensure that it is used appropriately — the proposed amendments here carefully differentiate between disciplinary and non-disciplinary circumstances. As I said earlier, we are entrenching this in the law — practices that have been in place — and we are limiting how non-disciplinary and disciplinary segregation can be used.

The non-disciplinary segregation contains criteria that must be met for an inmate to be held in a condition of segregation, specifically under 19.05 — as I have noted on a couple of occasions — an inmate can only be placed there in certain circumstances.

Lastly, meeting the criteria that are in 19.05 — in addition to that, the institution has a responsibility to make sure that they have exhausted all of their options. I guess that is the answer. Segregation is not being abolished. We are improving its use, we are limiting its use, and we are making sure it must be reviewed. We are instituting external independent review processes and we are bringing the Yukon law to the standard that is, worldwide, held up as the best possible use, recognizing that segregation is a necessary tool when we are dealing with correctional institutions and that it must be used as a last resort.

Ms. Hanson: I appreciate the member's response.

It was a statement about what the government is going to be doing. That they are doing this — I guess my question is still: Why is it necessary to retain that? Why was it not considered to put into law those constraints on the use of solitary confinement? Effectively, what we are saying is that it is okay for 15 days as opposed to a graduated approach.

Given the minister's comments before the break with respect to the complexity of many of the individuals who present or who are incarcerated or on remand at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre, it seems to me that we de facto recognize that many of the people who are in the Whitehorse Correctional Centre or who will be there are there because of other mitigating circumstances that lead to less-than-robust mental wellness. Why would we not be building that into the legislation so that, instead of saying that there will be a review contemplated through regulations, we want to make a statement in our legislation that we recognize the impact of separate confinement — particularly separate confinement of a prolonged period of duration in terms of the number of hours in a day? I am at a loss to understand why that cannot be built into the constraints that are in any of the sections that describe the kinds of conditions that apply in each of the areas of 19.01, 19.02, and so on.

I said it was the last, but it's very difficult.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: A couple of times, the member opposite has used the term "solitary confinement", and I appreciate that's the term that has historically been used, in addition to some others. Of course, the modern process involves the concepts of "segregation" and "restrictive confinement". The reason I'm noting that here is because, as I have said earlier — and I wouldn't want this to be missed — inmates who are held in conditions that amount to segregation or restrictive confinement in the Whitehorse Correctional Centre continue to have access to visitors, elders, other spiritual advisors, legal counsel, health care, mental health services, and — when it's safe and feasible to do so — they may also access modified programming and personal belongings.

So, gone are the days of solitary confinement — one being in a place, a cell, a hole — you know, a location where individuals would be held and deprived of not only meaningful human contact, but any human contact — deprived of light,

deprived of proper service and proper care. I just want to be clear about that, because even in all of the conversation we have had with respect to these conditions of confinement, individuals will have access to all of those things, because we know that they are so important.

I also just want to note again that the proposed amendments to the *Corrections Act, 2009* redefine our approach to segregation. Through this new approach, "segregation" will be defined as a form of custody where an inmate is held, absent association or some association with other inmates, for a period of 22 hours or more a day. That's the definition of "segregation", but it is a condition versus a place. I know this brings us back to some of the conversation we had earlier.

With these amendments, the department will be moving away from identifying individuals as being in segregation, based on the unit that he or she is housed in, and we will instead be recognizing that an inmate who is held in a condition of confinement and meets the definition, regardless of where they are physically placed in the institution — and this is an important piece, because when they're being held under a condition of confinement, it means that all of these protections kick in. I think I spoke the other day — but one of the criticisms of the concept of segregation and the definition of "22 hours or more" is that institutions have, in the past — and I'm not suggesting WCC or Whitehorse Correctional Centre has — gone right up to the limit to where somebody is not defined as being in "segregation" for the purpose of not having to provide them with the proper care.

If the limit is 22 hours and they are held for 20 hours and then released, or held for 21.5 hours — I mean, that is just not acceptable and is not what we are suggesting here. We are defining "restrictive confinement" as anything over 18 hours, between 18 and 22 hours. Again, the conditions of confinement permit individuals to have meaningful contact. This approach is proposed and designed to ensure the appropriate oversight for individuals who are segregated and thereby making the Yukon government, making the Department of Justice, and making correctional services more accountable.

Ms. Hanson: I thought I was finished, but the minister's comments have just triggered another question with respect to how that actually works, then. "Segregation" means: "... any type of custody where an inmate's association with other persons is significantly restricted..." — so for 22 hours or more. How does that facilitate interaction with elders, care providers, or visitors? I don't get how that works.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: It actually brings us back to section 2, Mr. Chair — which is, I think, where we got stuck — and the definition in section 2 of "segregation". It is set out there in that section, so I won't read that. That is the definition of "segregation". The concept of the definition of "segregation" is that, if that condition of custody is applied to an individual inmate, the safeguards have to be in place. Once they are defined as being in "segregation" for that purpose, then the review safeguards, the reporting safeguards and all of those things have to happen as a result of making sure that the individual is properly cared for, because in the past, it has

certainly been the case where someone could go into segregation for two, three, four, or five days and not be reviewed and not see someone.

If an elder were to come to visit someone for an hour during that period of segregation, that wouldn't change the definition of the fact that they were in the segregation category or that condition of confinement. We also want to be clear that we know — and I think we are saying the same thing — that the deprivation of meaningful contact for individuals is almost always a problem — despite the conditions where someone might want to be alone for awhile.

We know that this is a problem. We know that it is not going to improve the conditions of an inmate or their attempt to reconnect with their family or reconnect with behaviour that will keep them out of the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. So, while that definition is there of “up to 22 hours”, it is truly there for the purposes of saying that, if that is the condition in which they are being held, all this other stuff has to happen.

My point about meaningful contact was to dispel the concept of solitary or an opportunity for someone to be held confined in a situation where there is no meaningful contact. I hope that gets us there.

Clause 2 agreed to

On Clause 3

Clause 3 agreed to

On Clause 4

Clause 4 agreed to

On Clause 5

Clause 5 agreed to

On Clause 6

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I can speak to either clause 5 or clause 6, Mr. Chair. I am going to speak to clause 5 if I can have your indulgence to do so, Mr. Chair.

Chair: We need unanimous consent to go back.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Unanimous consent re revisiting clause 5

Chair: Ms. McPhee has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to revisit clause 5.

Is there unanimous consent to revisit clause 5?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Clause 5 — revisited

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I will be very brief. I appreciate that this has been a long conversation, although a very thorough one. I appreciate very much the opportunity to speak to it.

I want to note that section 5 is the concept about the regulation-making authority. I just want to note that on the record because, while the clauses have gone pretty quickly, there is certainly lots of detail in each of them. Section 5 deals with the regulation-making — sorry, I have a copy that may not be accurate.

Section 6 deals with those — I misspoke. My version is an older copy, and I think the numbers are incorrect. We're in the right place. Section 5 — 6 — deals with the regulation-making authority. That's the only point that I wanted to make.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for asking for unanimous consent, because you were going really quick, given that it took two days to get through the definitions section.

I just wanted to ask the minister to confirm for the record that, when we look at section 19.08(1) where it says, “The Minister may appoint persons, in accordance with this section, as review adjudicators to review, in accordance with the regulations, the segregation and restrictive confinement of inmates in a correctional centre and perform...” — the functions that are enumerated. Does this appointment of persons require a trigger — i.e. an incident — or will there be appointments concurrent with the regulations, or before?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: If I could just have one moment. I want to make sure I understand the section.

I think the question is about section 19.08, so am I in the right place?

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Okay. I just wasn't sure that we were back there. In accordance with the regulations, the assistant deputy minister may appoint review adjudicators to review the segregation and restrictive confinement of inmates to perform the following functions — and a number of them are listed there.

I think we spoke about this the other day. The adjudicators will be appointed or lined up to be appointed because it will be necessary to have them in place when the act comes into force and effect in order to give life to those very important external review provisions.

Ms. Hanson: I'm just curious as to why the ability in section 26(1) — under the hearing adjudicators — to appoint persons is a ministerial appointment process, as opposed to a public service appointment process now?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I think I said “deputy minister” or “assistant deputy minister” — so I apologize for that. Clearly, section 19.08 says, “The minister may appoint...”

The decision was made to proceed in this fashion because the review adjudicators, contemplated by section 19.08, cannot be government employees and are designed to be independent of government, and as a result, connecting them to the public service was determined to be a situation — if the minister does the appointments, they could be just that much more separate from the working machinations of the department.

Ms. Hanson: I understand that entirely, but there is subsection 26(2): “The Minister may delegate the power to appoint persons as hearing adjudicators under this section to the deputy head.” So, in fact, we have pulled it back into the public service. How does that work?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I want to draw the distinction that, in section 26 — where section 26 will be amended — deals with ministerial appointments to the hearing adjudicators and the hearing adjudicators are not — are internal to the process, not necessarily the external reviewers who are required by the Mandela Rules and other cases — as suggested by other cases across the country.

The difference between hearing adjudicators and the review adjudicators are distinct in Bill No. 6. I can note that the delegated authority to the deputy minister is possible. Again,

it's one of those forward-looking concepts in that, of course, their being as independent as possible is required. Deputy ministers can do that. I don't anticipate that they would initially have that authority delegated to them, but it's one of those forward-looking issues as the law develops. There may be opportunities for other adjudicators to be appointed as well through that process. That's vested, not in the public service, but at the level of deputy minister or minister.

Clause 5 agreed to

On Clause 6

Clause 6 agreed to

On Clause 7

Clause 7 agreed to

On Clause 8

Clause 8 agreed to

On Title

Title agreed to

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Chair, I move that you report Bill No. 6, entitled *Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009*, without amendment.

Chair: It has been moved by Ms. McPhee that the Chair report Bill No. 6, entitled *Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009*, without amendment.

Motion agreed to

Chair: The matter now before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

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

Bill No. 200: *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is resuming general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Silver, you have 17 minutes, 35 seconds.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thanks to Chris Mahar for being here today. I'm a little upset that she didn't keep her costume, but that's okay. We can still endeavour to continue.

I do have some updates from previous questions that I told the members opposite I would get some answers for. So, I would like to start my time answering some of those questions that were asked in Committee of the Whole on October 17. The first question I have a response for — and I'm going to paraphrase these questions, as opposed to getting them perfect. I was asked if the minister would consider providing

specialized maternity certification to provide local nurses interested in opportunities to fill nursing gaps.

Mr. Chair, maternity nurses require a specialized certification in order to be considered fully competent maternity nurses, and it can take close to a year for a nurse to complete the certification. Yukon Hospital Corporation supports mentorship for maternity nurses to complete the certification.

On a continuing note as well, this is one of those things that is a continuing conversation happening at the Council of the Federation with the premiers, whether it be nursing certification and how we can do better cross-jurisdictionally as well, and also with doctors — trying to see if there is a way to streamline some of these processes. Right now, we are looking to Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, which have been doing a lot of really progressive work — working with the agencies that are responsible for doctors and nurses as well — to see if we can expedite that process. Again, it is not necessarily helpful today, but there's continuing work not only necessarily with the Department of Health and Social Services and the Yukon Hospital Corporation, but ongoing work at the Premier's level as well.

Another question that was asked was: Why is the MS clinic in jeopardy of being cut, and why were the MS gym and therapies at the hospital closed? Mr. Chair, we have not reduced any services, but we are exploring ways to more effectively deliver these services to best meet those needs of Yukoners. In-territory services continue to be provided by a visiting neurologist. This reduces the need for Yukoners with MS to travel out of the territory.

In some urgent cases, Yukoners with MS may need to travel outside of the territory to access specialized services and multi-disciplinary team members via an established MS program in larger cities. Again, the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Hospital Corporation are assessing the current model of care for clients with MS to determine possible solutions to improve accessibility and sustainability of MS care, whether here or with our partners in health care.

I was also asked what the status of the school program is and if it is reaching the communities of Destruction Bay, Beaver Creek, and Haines Junction. Mr. Chair, we are changing the way in which — again, this is the status of the school program in response to a dental program — we are changing the way we provide dental services to children through the Yukon children's dental program in order to best meet the needs of children throughout the territory. This is not a reduction in services, but it is a change in services to better utilize the resources that we have.

All Yukon students from kindergarten to grade 8 will continue to be offered enrolment in the Yukon children's dental program. To date, Mr. Chair, the enrolment process has been initiated with select schools in a way that prioritizes rural students and rural schools with the highest needs for dental services — in Whitehorse as well.

Enrolment has been initiated in Haines Junction and the Yukon children's dental program will run in Haines Junction for the 2019-20 school year. Beaver Creek and Destruction Bay

have only 15 students between the two schools, and neither school has a proper clinic that meets the standard protocols for infection control. I don't think that is anything new. Students in Beaver Creek and Destruction Bay can enrol by contacting the program directly and completing a consent for enrolment form. Once complete, the program participants will be given a referral to a dentist in Whitehorse. All treatments will be pre-authorized and the cost of the service will be covered by the referral. Students also have the option of attending the children's dental program in Haines Junction if they so chose.

Another question asked was specific to proof of residency. I was asked: What happens to fix issues raised in summer, through casework, about proof of residency? What is the process for proof of residency? How do we ensure that people are covered? Those were three specific questions that were asked.

Mr. Chair, we have reviewed all letters sent out in the past year and confirmed that this was the only error. Upon learning about the error, the family was immediately contacted and all insurance benefits were reinstated. We have reviewed our process and will improve upon our current decision-making criteria and accountabilities before letters are issued to the public. When applying for Yukon health insurance, people can use the following as proof of residency — they can use utility bills, plane tickets to Yukon, pay stubs, bills in their name from Yukon businesses, rental agreements or receipts in their name, or also a letter from their employer.

Moving on to the next question asked that we didn't have an answer to on the floor of the Legislative Assembly: How much should seniors expect to pay for increased co-pays on medical services and drugs?

There have been no recommendations from the independent panel to date. The panel is still collecting information. Currently, there is a public consultation and we are looking forward to seeing the recommendations, which we will take into consideration at that time.

I was also asked: What is the current wait time for cataract surgeries? How many people are on the wait-list? We did have a conversation and I did provide some information at that time, but just for more clarity on this issue — from January until the end of September of this year, 508 cataract surgeries have been completed and 294 patients have had their cataract assessments. Both the number of cataract surgeries performed and the number of assessments are ahead of the targets for this year. Wait times for assessments are down from 37 months to 18 months.

Health and Social Services, in partnership with the Yukon Hospital Corporation, has made cataract surgery wait times a priority, obviously from these results and these numbers. We have developed a plan to address the wait times for Yukoners for consultation with the ophthalmologist and for those waiting for cataract surgery.

The plan that was implemented in January provides funding to allow the Yukon Hospital Corporation to more than double the number of patients seen for consultation and the number of surgeries being performed each year. Again, kudos

to Health and Social Services and to the Hospital Corporation for reducing the wait times and making this a priority.

I was also asked: "Can the Premier advise us as to what the hospital is having to do right now to deal with what are, in real terms, cuts imposed on their funding by this Liberal government, which chose not to provide enough money to keep up with the rate of inflation?" That was a direct quote.

Health and Social Services has increased its investment in the Yukon Hospital Corporation from 2018-19 to 2019-20. This investment includes funding priorities, such as cataract surgeries — as mentioned — orthopaedics, chemo drugs, diagnostic procedures, and also wage growth. We continue to work with the Yukon Hospital Corporation to ensure that its pressures are identified and funded for the benefit of all Yukoners.

The Yukon Hospital Corporation is an active participant in the comprehensive review, looking for ways to improve quality, access, sustainability, and coordination of care.

I was also asked: What are the current estimated capital and O&M costs for the secure medical unit? The Department of Health and Social Services and the Yukon Hospital Corporation are in the process of planning for a new secure medical unit at Whitehorse General Hospital. Further engagement with YHC and other partners is taking place on the proposed clinical models to ensure a clear, clinical pathway across providers, given the current health system.

I have a few more questions here that were asked, questions from October 17 in Committee of the Whole. I was asked — and this is a direct quote: "Will the Premier rule out a \$900-per-person-per-year health care tax — yes or no?"

"In this case, it is a fair assumption that Yukoners are not going to support the \$900-a-year health care premium that is in the survey that is out right now from the government's handpicked health care review panel. Why worry people, if you're not prepared to go there?"

Mr. Chair, the independent expert panel is not making any decisions. The panel is making recommendations to the government, and I am pleased to announce that the panel is on schedule to make recommendations to the department in December to inform the 2021 budget process, and it is on schedule to provide its final report to the department by March 31, 2020.

We made it clear to the panel at the very beginning that they are free to go in whatever direction they want to go to make whatever recommendations they wish if they deem them beneficial to Yukoners, and we will continue to keep the independent panel exactly that — independent.

I was also asked — and I quote: "For seniors who are planning right now for their retirement and may have to be in a continuing care facility, how much should they be budgeting and expecting to pay in increased continuing care fees and increased co-pays for medical services and drugs?"

Again, Mr. Chair, the independent expert panel has still not made any recommendations to the government. Right now, they are in phase 4 of the review, which includes a second round of public engagement. It is holding a series of public meetings to hear Yukoners' thoughts on building a system that is

effective and sustainable for decades to come. These meetings will be held in 14 communities. That's between October 7 all the way until November 8.

Phase 2 of the public engagement focuses on six primary themes, one of which is aging in place. The panel is reaching out to NGOs — non-governmental organizations — and community organizations to solicit further feedback on how to improve the health outcomes for all Yukoners and how to help Yukoners age well. It works with senior-focused NGOs. It builds on the momentum of aging-in-place public engagement, during which the government heard from more than 1,200 Yukoners.

Coming to the end here, Mr. Chair — thank you for your patience. I was also asked, in speaking about the two foundational elements of the comprehensive review — and I quote: “Where is the reference to quality health care, patient outcomes, and reducing wait times? Why are none of those matters important enough in the view of this Liberal government to make any of those a foundational element of the comprehensive health review?”

Mr. Chair, the comprehensive review of Yukon's Health and Social Services focuses on how to improve health care and the wellness of Yukoners to make sure that patients, clients, families, and providers have positive experiences and provides better value for money.

In addition to the two fundamental elements of (1) data collection, analysis, and performance measures and (2) cultural safety and cultural humility, the comprehensive review is framed around six other key themes. Those six themes are: primary health care and delivery models; coordination of care within and outside of the territory; systematic structures to better meet the needs of individuals with multiple layers of needs; aging in place; pharmacare and pharmaceutical benefits; and social supports. The two fundamental elements are not separate from the themes, but they underlie all of the themes that are being considered, as they relate to each theme.

The last question we had to get some clarity and background on was about wait times for an MRI at Whitehorse General Hospital. The question was — and I quote: “We don't see that anywhere in the health care review — the investment in increasing technology here — and we don't see any action from the government.”

Mr. Chair, the independent expert panel is, again, not making decisions. They are making recommendations to the government. That comprehensive review of health and social programs and services focuses in on how to improve the health and wellness of Yukoners to make sure that everybody in that continuum — patients, clients, families, and providers — have a positive experience. Again, we are trying to find better value for money as well. We made it clear to the panel at the very beginning that they are to be independent. Again, there is a very similar answer to that question as well.

I will now cede the floor and see if there are any more questions from the members opposite.

Mr. Kent: I too would like to welcome the official here today to provide support to the Premier during general debate on the budget. I am going to focus on education questions

today. We only had an afternoon in the spring budget debate to talk about education — which wasn't very much time given the size of the budget, unfortunately. So, there are a number of questions we have left over from the spring, and some questions on the budget and other aspects regarding education that have happened since the spring.

I am going to first of all focus on the 2017 mandate letter that the Premier gave to the Minister of Education, as well as the 2019 version of that mandate letter — some of the changes in there. As these are authored by the Premier, I am expecting that he will be able to answer some of the questions that I have with respect to both of these mandate letters and some of the differences that are between them.

I know that we probably won't have time today, but when we come back into general debate, I will look for some additional answers on school busing, some of the after-school programs, attendance areas, and a number of capital projects that are underway with respect to schools — whether it is portables, expansions, new builds, or some of the promises that are laid out in the mandate letter.

I also want to touch base with the Premier on the Auditor General's report that was recently sent out. I know that it will be the subject of, I'm sure, a future Public Accounts Committee discussion, but I have some questions with respect to the departmental responses on these recommendations that the OAG put forward and some progress reports on what is being done, because a lot of it is described as being done in the 2019-20 school year or the 2019 calendar year.

I am going to start with the 2017 mandate letter. In it, there is a request — I will just read a brief excerpt: “In particular, I expect you...” — the Minister of Education — this is from the Premier — “... to work with your colleagues and community partners in the near term to deliver on these key goals...” So, the first one is to: “Implement the new student-centred, Yukon version of the revised BC curriculum”.

That appears in the 2017 mandate letter, but is not specifically in the 2019 mandate letter. So, I am assuming that this work is done. Can the Premier confirm for us that work is done or give us a reason why he didn't include that implementation piece in the new mandate letter that he provided for the Minister of Education?

Hon. Mr. Silver: As the member opposite can understand based upon his experience as the Minister of Education, we are always continuing to go forward as far as curriculum development. When it comes to BC and Yukon's modernized curriculum — that is based on some leading practices in education across Canada and absolutely internationally as well. Some of the locally developed curriculum that we see from this pedagogy is fantastic — whether it is programs like First Hunt or First Fish of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, in partnership with the Department of Education and drawing down on chapter 17.7 of their own self-governing agreements. It is just an amazing opportunity for us to take a real look at how traditional knowledge mixes and matches with scientific knowledge. It is an amazing opportunity to allow locally developed curriculum to move forward as well.

I know that when the member opposite was in his role, there was curriculum developed based on residential schools — just really powerful and important curriculum — so I will give him the credit where it is due. To see that type of curriculum being applied in this overall framework shows an importance here locally, but also a framework or a curriculum that allows this type of modern curriculum to be led by local knowhow.

This year is the first year that all students are learning in the new curriculum, from K to 12, and following the same implementation schedules as BC schools as well. There is no difference as far as that goes.

The redesigned curriculum is student-centred, with more hands-on learning opportunities and more career and financing education, which is great. I had the opportunity, Mr. Chair, when I was working in education, to teach the Planning 10 courses and the health and career courses for grades 8, 9, and up. What a great opportunity to get some financial literacy into the minds of our youth. Our focus, through the planning courses, always was — if a youth, for whatever reason, has to, at the earliest possibility, leave their community and go to a city, you have to make sure that they have the resources and the understanding — to be able to balance a chequebook, but also be able to take care of themselves as far as understanding self-worth. Sexual education is in Planning 10. There is a whole gamut of things. I really always thought that we underutilized that amazing program. So, it is always good to see and to talk to teachers now about how they are implementing their own ways of using that curriculum. I have heard of teachers taking people from the public in — nurses to come in and do the sex education component, or people from the local banking community to come in to teach financing. It's just a wonderful opportunity.

The difference between the two mandate letters specifically was mentioned in the minister's mandate letter for 2017. That curriculum implementation is ongoing, and so, as it was struck and implemented and now is ongoing, we decided to make the new mandate letter more of a — that's ongoing work, but we want to expand the mandate letter to other specifics.

I do have to add too that Yukon schools maintain extremely high academic standards. Every grade level and subject area in the curriculum has performance standards to measure student achievement. Yukon educators are helping to develop and redesign curriculum with the BC ministry and continue to embed Yukon and Yukon First Nation content and resources as it rolls out — so just a little bit of background of the continuing work that is happening, which is great to see.

I had some personal development days and professional development days when I had opportunities as a young teacher in the education system to correct provincial exams, work with my colleagues down in BC, and compare best methods and best strategies. It's nice to see that, with this modernizing of curriculum, these important values and these important experiences are still being continued through the Department of Education.

Mr. Kent: Just for the record — and perhaps the Premier can confirm for us that it's not the new student-centred Yukon

version of the revised BC curriculum; it's an ongoing task. It was flagged in 2017 as a key goal, but it's not flagged in 2019, but it's still ongoing. He can perhaps just confirm that. That's what I think he said.

The second goal that was identified — or key goal that was identified in 2017 but is not mentioned in the 2019 mandate letter is to review teacher hiring practices in conjunction with the Yukon Teachers' Association, or YTA. I'm assuming that it appearing in 2017 and not in 2019 means that this review is done.

Can the Premier confirm that this review is finished? I don't recall ever hearing any of the results of it, so if he has any results that he can share, that would also be great.

Hon. Mr. Silver: To answer the member opposite's original question, yes, the curriculum implementation is ongoing.

When it comes to teacher-hiring practices and the review therein, it's extremely important — effective teachers are an important factor in students' success, and the Government of Yukon needs to continue to work to ensure that we are providing caring, quality teachers in the Yukon schools. The Government of Yukon has been working with the Yukon Teachers' Association, as the member opposite referenced, to enhance those hiring practices for teachers to ensure that they are fair and that they are transparent and consistent. Those hiring practices need to meet the requirements of the legislation, but also the collective bargaining agreement and the needs of all the individual schools in which we're educating.

We reviewed the hiring practices, and we continue to review those on an ongoing basis and consult with the YTA, as required, on any revisions, changes, or issues as they are raised.

I do want to thank the Yukon Teachers' Association. It is thanks to the recent hard work of both parties in bargaining that the staffing protocol for hiring teachers is part of the current collective agreement with the Yukon Teachers' Association. That new collective bargaining agreement, just to refresh members opposite's memories, was ratified on January 14 of this year, and the staffing protocol is now within the collective agreement.

Mr. Kent: Can the Premier confirm if there have been any changes to the teacher-hiring practices as a result of this review that is being done in conjunction with the Yukon Teachers' Association? Again, it was a key goal two and a half years ago when these were initially done, but it no longer appears to be a key goal for the minister. Does the Premier consider that this work is finished at this point?

Hon. Mr. Silver: As I said, Mr. Chair, this is ongoing work. Just because it's not in the new mandate doesn't mean that it's not a priority. It means that it is ongoing work. This work has started. It is moving forward. It has been embedded in the collective bargaining agreement. The department consults every year with the Yukon Teachers' Association on the guidelines that relate to teacher hires, education assistants, and aboriginal language teachers. So, there have been changes, and it's good to see that this is now implemented in that process.

In recent years, there were a higher number of grievances with regard to staffing issues, posting vacancies, priority

placements, employment probations, and those types of issues. The updating of the staff protocol in the collective agreement increases the preference for the hiring of, for example, Yukon First Nation teachers who are interested in returning to their traditional territories, which again, is fundamental to how this government wants to ensure that not only do we have local curriculum, but we also have local teachers teaching local curriculum, which is extremely important to building rapport.

In my experience, Mr. Chair, I was teaching for four or five years. Every year after four or five years, you wouldn't think that you would be meeting more and more people, but you would. They would say, "Well, okay, I see that you are staying, so because you are staying, we are going to open up to you a little more." That's extremely important. A lot of times in the past, you would have a situation where you are not only teaching a particular subject, but you are actually working through some of the most complicated years of a young person's life.

To show up as a teacher from away and then for whatever reason leave again, it's heartbreaking to students and to the community. It is understandable how important it is that we keep local teachers in the communities, allow people to have the ability to grow roots in the community and thrive, and allow the students' educational experience to also thrive.

Mr. Chair, many changes were discussed as the *Education Labour Relations Act* was amended — also in the spring of 2018, just to refresh the member opposite's memory.

Mr. Kent: Perhaps the Premier can come back — or we'll follow up with the Minister of Education at some point about what changes have been made to the teacher-hiring practices as a result of this key goal that was set for her in the 2017 mandate letter.

The next part of that mandate letter, the next key goal, was to work with the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation to initiate a new approach to staff housing that increases opportunities for teachers to remain in communities. Some of the announcements that came out earlier this year — we heard some concerns and saw some concerns from the YTA with respect to new staff housing policies.

Maybe the Premier can tell us how those changes increase opportunities for teachers to remain in communities — the changes that were announced earlier this year.

Hon. Mr. Silver: We recognize on this side of the House that staff housing has a role in supporting the recruitment and retention of teachers in Yukon communities, and we are continuing to work with all available resources to assist staff in rural communities with housing.

It is interesting, Mr. Chair, that when I was first elected in 2011 and I was in opposition, I was thrilled to come down and start working on my community's behalf in the Legislative Assembly. The individual teacher who replaced me did not have guaranteed housing under the former government. He was from Toronto. For two months, he tented on the banks of the Klondike River at a good friend of mine's house — trying to get housing. At that time, there were policies that didn't really make sense, as far as having some houses that were there but were kind of earmarked — and some needs from people who

were there at the ground floor wanting to be part of the community, wanting to have an investment in the community, needing some housing — and it just wasn't available for them. Again, we are continuing to work on that policy — absolutely.

Just a little bit of background, Mr. Chair — the Yukon Housing Corporation manages the Yukon government housing units in accordance with the *General Administration Manual*. Yukon Housing Corporation acts as landlords to lease the units to employees, and the YTA staff have expressed concerns about whether the revised housing policy for May 2019 applies to communities where there is no private housing market, and especially whether the maximum tenancy of three years will apply.

Again, there has been a lot of work by the Housing Corporation. I want to say to them that this is great work in trying to modernize how we work with communities. I learned a lesson when I was presenting at the Association of Yukon Communities — I said something that I ended up having to retract. I said, "Oh, every community has housing issues", and then the representative from Faro came back and said, "Yes, but it's not the same in every community" — and that was so true.

So, to have a policy that is developed writ-wide through the Yukon might not be the best way of approaching this. Again, to have the Education department working with the Yukon Housing Corporation to work together in the communities outside of Whitehorse — it is great to see a willingness to see how we can support our employees.

There are currently 52 teachers in the Yukon Housing Corporation staff units, as we speak. So, that is great — and including my community of Dawson City — I believe there are six who are in staff housing. Watson Lake has 12. So, it is good to see this policy, for sure.

I will sit down now. I don't know if I answered all of the specifics of the member opposite's question, but I will give him an opportunity to ask more.

Mr. Kent: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do have a number of other questions, but seeing the time — and seeing that it is Halloween — I move that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Kent that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

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

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Silver that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Hutton: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 6, entitled *Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009*, and directed me to report the bill without amendment.

Committee of the Whole has also considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

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

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to

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

Happy Halloween.

The House adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

The following sessional papers were tabled October 31, 2019:

34-3-16

Advocacy in Action — 2018/2019 Annual Report — Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office (Speaker Clarke)

34-3-17

Yukon Police Council Annual Report 2018-19 (McPhee)

The following document was filed October 31, 2019:

34-3-17

2018 Yukon Minerals Advisory Board Annual Report (Pillai)

The following written questions were tabled October 31, 2019:

Written Question No. 1

Re: Members' Services Board agenda (Istchenko)

Written Question No. 2

Re: Carbon price exemption for farm propane (Cathers)



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 17

3rd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Monday, November 4, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
Don Hutton	Mayo-Tatchun

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King
Liz Hanson	Whitehorse Centre

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Dan Cable
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Monday, November 4, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.**

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.
At this time, we will proceed with prayers.

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Cathers: I would like to ask members to join me in welcoming to the House constituents of mine, including: Yukon Farmer of the Year Sarah Ouellette of Sarah's Harvest; and Brian Lendrum and Susan Ross as well as Jennifer Hall from the Yukon Agricultural Association.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Pillai: As well, here today for the Farmer of the Year tribute, I would like to welcome: Anne Savoie who is here with Senior Industry Development Office of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada; Brad Barton, research technician in the Agriculture branch — and a key member who puts our banquet together every year; Shannon Gladwin, agriculture lands coordinator in the Agriculture branch; and Kirk Price, acting director in the Agriculture branch as well.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Monsieur le Président, s'il vous plaît, aidez-moi à dire bonjour et bienvenue à beaucoup de gens qui sont ici pour un hommage: for FLSD employees — André Bourcier; Coralie Langevin; Laurianne Grenier-Deschesnes; Nancy Power from L'AFY — who, by the way, is hosting Business After Hours this Thursday at L'AFY at 5:00 p.m., I think, and I think that all of Yukon is welcome — Marie-Alexis Dangreau; Jean-Sébastien Blais; Louise-Hélène Villeneuve; Emilie Thibeault-Maloney; Marc Champagne; Madame President Jeanne Beaudoin; Roch Nadon; Edith Bélanger; Stéphanie Nobécourt; Jean-Pascal Ladroue; Hannah Engasser; Isabelle Bouffard; Kim Ouellette; Emeline Brocard; Audrey Percheron; l'Aurore boréale Julien Latraverse; et deux jeunes pour l'hommage aujourd'hui, Miléna Georgeault et Maxime Gouyou-Beauchamps. Bienvenue.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors? Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Farmer of the Year

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to Yukon's Farmer of the Year Sarah Ouellette of Sarah's Harvest.

Every year, our Agriculture branch — with the help of the agricultural community — recognizes a farmer based on their accomplishments, volunteerism, good farm management skills, and use of innovative ideas.

Sarah Ouellette is a perfect example of a farmer who shows commitment and passion for agriculture in Yukon, and we cannot think of a better person to honour with Farmer of the Year. Sarah has been farming for six years, and her certified organic operation is currently established at the Lendrum Ross Farm on Lake Laberge.

Her nominators describe a professional, highly skilled operation that not only produces high-quality food, but it is also a place that contributes to our community's knowledge and appreciation of agriculture.

On a small half-acre plot, she produces incredible quantities of quality vegetables, which she sells to Whitehorse restaurants, grocery stores, and the Fireweed Community Market under the brand name Sarah's Harvest. Her production is well-planned and well-suited to her climate and soil conditions. She uses succession planting, row covers, raised beds, drip irrigation, minimal tillage, and the simplest of tools. She uses strictly organic methods, and her farm is certified by the Pacific Agricultural Certification Society.

Sarah is very committed to encouraging and inspiring others to grow food. For the past three seasons, she has trained participants in the agriculture internship program and has worked hard to provide them with a rich and varied experience. She is often joined in her garden by customers and other volunteers who catch her infectious enthusiasm for gardening, the outdoor life, hard work, and good food.

Sarah is very involved in many organizations that advocate and move Yukon agriculture forward. Sarah has been involved with Growers of Organic Food Yukon, the Agriculture Industry Advisory Committee, and the Fireweed Community Market. She has been coordinator of the successful Kids on the Farm program. She produced a beautiful, informative booklet on the program, which is headed by the following credo: "Cultivating knowledge, appreciation and awareness of agriculture through experiential learning". I would like to close by reading what one of Sarah's nominators said about her amazing produce: "The vegetables and herbs were always beautiful and tasty. I managed to get enough of her Klondike-sized cabbages to make my winter supply of kraut and a few good pots of borscht with the beets, cabbages, and dill. Once at the market, I saw all of Sarah's carrots scooped up before my very eyes by a visiting chef."

Mr. Speaker, this is the kind of success and dedication that we can all be proud of. Congratulations to Sarah, Yukon's Farmer of the Year, and I wish Sarah all the best in her farming career into the future. To all of those listening today, please continue to support Yukon agriculture, and I hope the delicious food from Sarah's Harvest and many other Yukon producers has a regular place on your tables at home.

Applause

Mr. Cathers: I'm pleased to rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to Sarah Ouellette of Sarah's Harvest as our 2019 Farmer of the Year.

As the minister mentioned, she operates a farm on the Lendrum Ross Farm, and it's really notable that Sarah not only grows fresh organic produce for distribution to stores, caterers, chefs, and for purchase directly at the Fireweed Community Market, but the quality of that produce is always excellent and it is a great example of Yukon-grown produce and vegetables.

Sarah has also played an incredible role in promoting farming in the Yukon to a younger generation of Yukoners through coordinating the Kids on the Farm Program, which brings students and farmers together on educational farm visits. She is actively involved with the Growers of Organic Food Yukon and the Fireweed Community Market, and she is a member of the Agriculture Industry Advisory Committee, which provides advice and guidance to the Yukon government on a number of agriculture and agri-food issues.

I would like to thank Sarah for her continued involvement in and contributions to the agricultural sector here in the Yukon. Her dedication to organic farming and to the industry is a significant contributor to the success of farming here in the Yukon as well as to local food production. The Yukon has great potential for growing more of our own food and through Sarah's hard work and dedication both in growing that food and in promoting the potential to a new generation of Yukoners — it is helping take us down the road to an even brighter future.

Again, congratulations, Sarah, for this well-deserved award and thank you.

Applause

Ms. White: It's a pleasure to rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP to join today's voices to celebrate the 2019 Farmer of the Year, Sarah Ouellette — owner and operator of Sarah's Harvest.

Nestled in the gently rolling hills along the north Klondike Highway a stone's throw from Lake Laberge, you can find row upon row of certified organic vegetables. In her acceptance speech, Sarah pointed out that farming isn't something you can do in isolation. It requires a community of consumers who value your product and folks around you who share your vision and are willing and able to help you achieve it.

One thing that we hear over and over in Yukon is how the agricultural community recognizes the challenges and the rewards of farming and supports one another. We often see that in the sharing of land.

After having met Brian Lendrum and Susan Ross through the Fireweed Community Market and other venues, I would suggest that Sarah won the mentor lottery. Sarah's Harvest is located on the Lendrum Ross Farm property. She talked about how, despite retiring, the help and support that she gets from Brian and Susan makes all the difference.

Sarah sells her certified organic produce all over town and was quick to point out that, without buyers, her business wouldn't be booming. During the summer months, you can find her on Thursdays at the Fireweed Community Market behind

beautifully laid-out tables of orderly vegetables and herbs. Her table is so popular that you need to get there early or you might be disappointed when she is sold out of the top sellers. You can find Sarah's Harvest produce at both Riverside Grocery and Wykes' Independent Grocer, which she thanks for giving a small operation like hers an avenue for sales. She also highlighted the importance of the restaurant and catering industry in Yukon for investing in local produce and how that connection strengthens farming opportunities in Yukon.

If anything was clear on Saturday night at the North of 60 banquet when Sarah Ouellette was named the 2019 Yukon Farmer of the Year, it was that Yukon farmers are supportive and enthusiastic of others who are passionate about farming, because she made her way to the stage through a standing ovation of her peers.

Félicitations, Sarah. You totally deserve the break.

Applause

In recognition of National Francophone Immigration Week

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Monsieur le Président, c'est un grand honneur de rendre hommage aujourd'hui à l'occasion de la semaine nationale de l'immigration francophone au nom de tous les membres de l'Assemblée législative du Yukon.

Plus d'une centaine d'activités locales, provinciales, territoriales et nationales auront lieu partout au pays cette semaine. Ces activités permettront de favoriser les échanges et de célébrer la différence qui nous unit.

Le Yukon est riche en accents de diverses origines et possède une communauté francophone dynamique. Nous sommes la troisième région la plus bilingue au Canada.

Je rends hommage à Miléna Georgeault et Maxime Gouyou-Beauchamps à l'occasion de la semaine nationale de l'immigration francophone. Miléna et Maxime forment un couple originaire de France qui contribue à faire du Yukon un endroit accueillant et prospère. Alors ils sont un bon exemple de l'immigration francophone d'ici. Ils dirigent Terre Boréale, une agence de tourisme d'aventure bien établie à Whitehorse.

Miléna et Maxime ont emménagé au Yukon en deux-mille-onze. Biologistes de formation, ils ont d'abord travaillé en protection de la biodiversité. Cette proximité avec la nature leur a donné envie de faire découvrir le Yukon et ses endroits reculés aux visiteurs. C'est ainsi que Terre Boréale a vu le jour en deux-mille-treize.

Le sens des affaires s'est avéré une seconde nature chez Miléna et Maxime. Après seulement trois ans d'activité, ils ont remporté un Laurier de la PME. Ce prix souligne l'excellence de petites et moyennes entreprises francophones et acadiennes à l'extérieur du Québec.

Monsieur le Président, comme beaucoup de Yukonnaises et Yukonnais, Miléna et Maxime adorent le plein air et ont à cœur la préservation de la nature. C'est pourquoi leur vision d'affaires est axée sur une pratique responsable du tourisme. En plus de minimiser l'impact écologique de leurs aventures guidées, ils versent un pour cent des bénéfices de Terre Boréale à la Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative.

Miléna, Maxime, votre contribution au territoire va bien au-delà des retombées économiques. Votre parcours est une source d'inspiration pour les entrepreneurs d'ici et d'ailleurs. Je suis persuadé que votre contact chaleureux et votre passion convaincront plus d'un visiteur à suivre vos traces et à s'établir au Yukon.

Merci à vous deux, à votre équipe et à toutes les personnes immigrantes qui contribuent à la richesse du Yukon. Bonne Semaine nationale de l'immigration francophone!

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Ms. White: I have for tabling a government press release dated August 28, 2018, entitled "Whitehorse Legion helps Yukon students learn about service and sacrifice" and a letter dated November 1, 2019, to the Minister of Education from the president of Legion Branch 254 in Whitehorse.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 300: *Act to Eliminate Daylight Saving Time* — Introduction and First Reading

Mr. Istchenko: Mr. Speaker, I move that a bill entitled *Act to Eliminate Daylight Saving Time* be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Member for Kluane that a bill entitled *Act to Eliminate Daylight Saving Time* be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 300 agreed to

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

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House directs the Yukon government to immediately remove restrictions placed on opposition Members of the Legislative Assembly's access to the Internet by directing Yukon IT services to:

(1) move opposition MLA IT access from behind the firewall; and

(2) provide the same access to the YLA domain as is provided to government Members of the Legislative Assembly.

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

THAT this House congratulates the Government of Canada on the issuance of the first carbon rebate cheques to Yukon residents.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with Royal Canadian Legion Branch 254 and the City of Whitehorse to create a planning committee to find a prominent, convenient, and safe location for a memorial to pay tribute to members of the Canadian Armed Forces who have served our country.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to hold a public consultation about the twice-yearly time change, including asking Yukoners:

(1) whether they want to eliminate the time change; and

(2) if so, whether they want the Yukon to stay on Pacific Standard Time or to spring forward one hour and use that as our new standard time.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to hold public consultations in early 2020 regarding the future of daylight saving time.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: **Lead in drinking water**

Mr. Hassard: This morning, the results of a year-long investigation by more than 120 journalists, nine universities, and 10 media organizations — including *Global News* and Concordia University's Institute for Investigative Journalism — on the topic of lead in drinking water was published.

This investigative report found that hundreds of thousands of Canadians could be consuming tap water laced with high levels of lead leaching from aging infrastructure and plumbing.

Now, these issues have recently come up in Yukon schools as well. At the beginning of last month, we asked the government for an update on the lead testing in our schools and mitigations. In response, the Minister of Highways and Public Works said that they had completed mitigation in 11 schools but that they would not complete work in the remaining 13 until the summer of 2020.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell us which 13 schools have yet to be remediated and why there is a delay in completing this work?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Highways and Public Works and Education are working collaboratively to ensure that the drinking water in schools is safe. Education recently tested the tap water in all schools, as lead can be contained in piping and

drinking water fixtures. Lead levels exceeding safe levels were found in 24 schools, as I said earlier this year. Highways and Public Works replaced fixtures in 11 schools and successfully remediated the problem. The remaining 13 schools are underway and they are expected to be completed by 2020. No lead components were used in the repairs.

I look forward to future questions, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Hassard: As noted in this morning's report, while the water generally contains no lead when it leaves municipal treatment plants, the main sources of the contamination are the pipes that connect homes and apartment buildings or schools, as well as plumbing fixtures that contain lead and lead solder.

While testing has found lead to be a problem in a number of Yukon schools, there are a number of major buildings that the Yukon government owns here in the territory.

Has the government undertaken lead testing throughout the rest of the buildings it owns and operates? If so, what were the results of those tests?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: As the member opposite has alluded to, the fact that we have very old buildings in the territory is certainly something we have to be cognizant of and make sure that, when we're dealing with our employees and residents of any of these schools or any of these buildings — be they schools or other public buildings — we have to make sure that the infrastructure we have is safe.

As I've said earlier today, we are working to make sure our schools are safe. Currently, we have fixed the fixtures in 11 schools. The remaining schools will be fixed by next year. They are on schedule and they are being done.

Highways and Public Works is working with Health and Social Services to test the water quality in buildings that are occupied by children and youth that were built before 1990, as these groups are at higher risk of being negatively affected by lead in the drinking water.

Many jurisdictions across Canada are dealing with similar drinking-water issues because of older infrastructure. That is what we heard from the media reports this morning. Of course, this is now a national issue, and we will certainly do our best to make sure that the facilities that are public and that our children inhabit are safe.

Mr. Hassard: The question that I actually asked was about some other buildings that the government currently owns, not just schools. We know that there are certainly some old buildings up on Range Road. There are some old buildings across the river on Hospital Road.

Mr. Speaker, the question was: Has the government undertaken lead testing throughout the rest of the buildings that it owns and operates? If so, what were the results of those tests? Maybe the minister could actually try to answer the question this time.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I said in my earlier response that the safety of people who are occupying our buildings — be they schoolchildren or other people — is, of course, our concern. We have so far focused our efforts to remediate the drinking-water infrastructure in our schools. We have remediated 11 schools. The other 13 are underway, and I expect them to be completed next year. We are also working with Health and Social Services

to make sure that the water quality in buildings that are occupied by children and youth built before 1990 are also assessed and fixed as need be. We are going to continue this effort, Mr. Speaker. This is a national issue. It has come up this morning. There is a story that hit.

Of course, we will continue to work to make sure that the older buildings that we have in the territory — and there are many of them — are remediated in the name of public safety.

Question re: Budget estimates and spending

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, a few days ago, we finally learned how much money the government actually spent last fiscal year. The Liberals increased spending by a whopping 10 percent over the previous year. That is an increase of \$123 million in a single year. It is right there in black and white on page 3 of the government's Public Accounts. The Premier can try to muddy the waters again with his talking points, but a 10-percent increase in spending in a single year is a pretty big spending increase. Will the Premier explain why he and his Cabinet are spending public money so casually?

Hon. Mr. Silver: It is always a great opportunity to un-muddy the waters. The member opposite has a tendency to compare consolidated with unconsolidated — depending on what narrative he is trying to establish. At the same time, the non-consolidated debt of \$5.8 million differs by \$1.3 million from the budgeting deficit that we forecasted of \$4.5 million. The change in the deficit results primarily from higher than estimated revenues of \$32.3 million offset by higher than anticipated expenses of \$33.6 million.

As anticipated during the 2018-19 main estimates, the government's Public Accounts for the 2018-19 fiscal year show a deficit on a non-consolidated basis, but on a consolidated basis, the government's Public Accounts show a small surplus.

Again, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to hear from the member opposite. We have a massive debt right now that we inherited from the previous government. We are trying our best to make sure that our Finance department has the scrutiny it needs to make sure that we turn this ship around and get to a small surplus by the 2010-21 time frame.

Mr. Cathers: Well, like I predicted, the Premier is trying to muddy the waters again with his talking points.

Last year, despite significant growth in revenue, the Premier and his Liberal government spent beyond their means and added millions of dollars in new debt. They increased overall spending by a whopping 10 percent in a single year. That is not my calculation, Mr. Speaker. That comes right from the Public Accounts. That is according to page 3 of that document, signed off on by the Auditor General of Canada. Not only did the Liberals increase spending by \$120 million in a single year, but they also went deeper into debt. Thanks to the Premier, the Yukon is now \$14.9 million deeper in debt than it was the year before.

Can the Premier explain why he didn't give the Legislative Assembly the opportunity to debate this before he ran up \$14.9 million in new long-term debt?

Hon. Mr. Silver: So, Mr. Speaker, again, with our budgetary process, we do all of our budgeting in the mains and

have kept our supplementary estimates very small because we believe that it is important for the record to have an open and transparent accounting process. We are doing more in that capacity than ever before, Mr. Speaker.

The supplementary estimates, as we see, have a small increase of \$20 million in operation and maintenance and also a \$43.3-million increase in gross capital. We have been on the floor of the Legislative Assembly a few times explaining that, when you're in a booming economy and you have low unemployment, there are certain factors that increase the costs of projects, but also opportunities to make sure that we get ahead of the private sector and have the facilities and the infrastructure — whether it be horizontal or vertical — that is necessary to keep this economy going.

Mr. Cathers: The Premier is throwing a lot of words and terminology out there trying to confuse Yukoners, but the simple fact is this: According to their own Public Accounts, signed off on by the Auditor General, the Liberal government increased spending by a whopping 10 percent in a single year — according to the calculation in their Public Accounts. It says that right in black and white on page 3 of the Public Accounts.

When I asked him about it, the Premier claimed his government was — quote: "... trying their best to get their finances back on check."

Mr. Speaker, if you're trying to be financially responsible and balance the books, increasing your spending by 10 percent in a single year is not the way to do that. Avoiding scrutiny of the Legislative Assembly to add millions of dollars in new long-term debt is also not the way to do it. \$14.9 million in new long-term debt and \$123 million in increased spending — that's what the Liberals did last year.

Will the Liberals explain why they didn't tell Yukoners they were planning on adding millions of dollars in new debt to the books before they did it?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I really do appreciate the opportunity to un-muddy the waters that are muddied by the Member for Lake Laberge as far as the changes and differences between consolidated budgeting and unconsolidated budgeting — which he has done in the past as well, Mr. Speaker.

Again, as we put a supplementary budget forward — it's a very small supplementary budget — I would like Yukoners to compare our supplementary budgets to the previous government and they'll see a complete change in the accounting process.

The changes to capital — and we've explained this a few times already, so this is a great opportunity for me to reiterate those changes — was to accommodate land and infrastructure development to meet growing housing demands, to replace outdated and failing infrastructure, and to help communities meet the needs of their residents. The majority of the increases will be offset by recoveries.

Now, as the member opposite takes a look at Public Accounts compared to main estimates, I will take our record compared to theirs when it comes to infrastructure and how upfront the costs are — what the members opposite would say they would actually get out the door for the private sector

compared to what the Public Accounts would actually say that they actually could accomplish.

Question re: Whitehorse Correctional Centre segregation cell

Ms. Hanson: A Friday *Yukon News* article stated that an inmate on remand at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre was left in his jail cell covered in his own feces and vomit for a number of hours. At the time of the incident, the inmate was being held in segregation for being aggressive toward staff and acting erratically. The inmate, who had been prescribed anti-anxiety, anti-psychosis, and attention deficit disorder medication, spread his own feces on himself and on his cell, later recalling that — quote: "... my mind wasn't all there."

Corrections officers removed the man from his cell for a shower. They then returned the individual to his cell and left him there. During this incident, the nurse on staff reportedly told Corrections officials that it was not advisable to leave the man in a feces-covered cell, yet Corrections staff apparently took no action.

Why did Corrections officials return an inmate who was clearly suffering from mental health issues to a feces-covered cell?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I can confirm that the Government of Yukon — that there has been a resolution reached for a complaint that was received. I'm not able to provide any further details, but I will happily share the questions that the member opposite has raised today back with the department.

The Department of Justice has taken steps to change the approach to segregation at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre, which includes: putting in place additional oversight and accountability both inside and outside the institution; ensuring that all segregation placements are reviewed by senior officials; creating an interdisciplinary care team that includes health care professionals which is in place to review all segregation placements; developing individual care plans for all segregation placements — each plan includes the rationale for placement and the work that is underway to reintegrate the individual back into the general population, and these care plans are developed and reviewed weekly by an interdisciplinary care team and are intended to reflect the needs of the individual; and finally, ensuring that there is active involvement and monitoring of all cases where an individual is in segregation.

Ms. Hanson: You know, Mr. Speaker, at the time that this inmate was being held on remand, he had not been found guilty of any charges. The treatment that this inmate received and the actions of the Whitehorse Correctional Centre management speak to a serious problem at Whitehorse Correctional Centre.

Officials were told by a medical professional that the inmate should not have been returned to a feces-covered cell. They knew that he was behaving erratically and they knew he had been prescribed a number of medications to treat mental health issues, yet rather than reacting with compassion, they chose to punish him further.

Were the Corrections officials who decided to return this inmate to his cell held accountable, and are the specific steps that the minister outlined to avoid a repeat of this type of treatment at Whitehorse Correctional Centre actually in place, or are they simply being planned?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thank the member opposite for her questions and, again, I will share them with the Department of Justice and ask that they speak with the Whitehorse Correctional Centre to get specific responses for the specific questions.

What I want to say is that we have always given direction to work to ensure the safety and security of all inmates and staff. I acknowledge that there was a situation and a complaint was received, and I understand that there was resolution to that complaint and those concerns. I just will say again that the Department of Justice has taken steps to change the situation at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre and, again, I will share the questions that the member opposite has raised. They are questions that we take seriously. We will seek to get a response for the member opposite.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, sadly, we have seen this picture before — recall Michael Nehass, or December 2008, when an RCMP officer told Raymond Silverfox to — quote: "... sleep in your own shit."

We, along with many Yukoners, were hopeful when the Yukon government commissioned the Loukidelis inspection report on Whitehorse Correctional Centre. That report made clear recommendations. This government has stated that the amendments to the *Corrections Act, 2009* will mean the end to nightmare scenarios.

The amendments to the *Corrections Act, 2009* provide for continued use of segregation, albeit cloaked under a range of new names. The bottom line: A person who was remanded to WCC before being tried in court could end up in segregation for over 22 hours a day for up to 15 days in a row.

Mr. Speaker, what real differences will the amended corrections act provide at Whitehorse Correctional Centre?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thank the member opposite for acknowledging that, based on the Loukidelis report, we have brought in new legislation to change separate confinement here in the territory. We had that report as part of the 2018 agreement with the Yukon Human Rights Commission. We are taking the steps to improve the legislative framework and policies that define and regulate restrictive confinement and segregation.

Our government is changing its segregation practices by incorporating independent oversight and enhancing the availability and delivery of mental health interventions at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre.

We are mindful that restrictive confinement and segregation should be used as a measure of last resort and may at times be necessary to maintain the safety of inmates and staff in the Whitehorse Correctional Centre.

Question re: Energy retrofit program for homeowners

Ms. White: On October 23, the Minister of Community Services made a ministerial statement about a possible program

where homeowners could receive a loan from the Yukon government for home energy efficiencies and then that loan could be applied to their property taxes as a local improvement charge, or an LIC, for repayment.

Currently, homeowners can do the same thing with both the residential well program and the rural electrification and telecommunications programs. Property owners and municipalities may also have LICs applied to their property taxes for surface improvements in front of their homes.

Mr. Speaker, before this announcement — not after the October 23 statement — did the minister speak to Yukon municipalities or to the Association of Yukon Communities about this proposed program?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will have to look back through my notes to see whether I talked directly about this program. I certainly have talked many times with communities across the territory about wanting to try to support all of our communities in support of Yukoners to help them retrofit their homes. We have had many conversations over the years about trying to enable Yukoners so that they (1) reduce their energy costs and (2) reduce their emissions footprint. We are supportive of that over the long term.

Some of those conversations, for example, talk about the differences that these loan programs have depending on whether we as a government are supportive of the administrative costs that go to our municipalities. I expect that we will have many conversations going forward as well because, as the legislation is developed, we will need to work directly with municipalities.

Ms. White: It would seem to us that, before the government started announcing new programs that will affect other levels of government, they might want to talk to those other governments before making those announcements. The domestic water well program and the rural electrification and telecommunications programs are predominantly applied to properties outside of municipalities, so property taxes are collected by the territorial government. It is true that some residents living on country residential properties within city boundaries have applied for the well program, but their numbers are small. A program for energy retrofits, however, could result in hundreds of applications just within the City of Whitehorse, not to mention the other municipalities.

Has the minister considered the implication and the cost to municipalities if this energy retrofit loan program were to go forward as structured? Would it not make sense to mirror existing programs that see the loan amounts tied to a mortgage?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: There are a couple of things that I want to say. First of all, not everyone in the Yukon lives within a municipality, so, as a government, we are interested in moving forward on this in partnership with municipalities, but as well for all Yukoners who live across the territory and in many of our more rural areas. Second of all, not everyone has a mortgage, so we are looking for a universal program.

It is a great suggestion that the member opposite has raised. I'm happy to have that in conversation with municipalities and to look at the program to make sure that it is as encompassing as possible for all Yukoners.

In my first response, I stood up and said that, absolutely, we want to make sure that we work with municipalities so that we don't add an administrative burden to them. I think that is what she asked me — whether I would acknowledge that we want to make sure that we don't add an administrative burden to municipalities — and my answer again is yes.

Ms. White: The program as laid out by the minister would see the loan be treated as a local improvement charge that would be applied to the property taxes of the home and would remain with the property. If a homeowner was to sell their home, any remaining loan amount would be transferred to the new owner's property taxes. We spoke to a real estate agent about the implications of such a program and had an interesting discussion. I would suggest that the minister could add the Yukon Real Estate Association to his list of people to talk to.

A homeowner could apply for a loan for a home energy-efficiency upgrade and have the loan applied to their property taxes. They could then sell the home, and the loan would be transferred to the new owners on their property taxes. Hypothetically, a person could make \$50,000 worth of energy improvements, then sell their home at a higher listing price because of those improvements, yet the costs of completing those improvements would still be attached to the property tax.

Mr. Speaker, does it seem reasonable for a new homeowner to pay the costs of the home improvements through both the higher selling price and then pay the remaining loan for those improvements on their property taxes?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: My answer, Mr. Speaker, is yes, it does seem reasonable. The reason is that when you add those charges to the home, the improvements are there and they are being paid back over time. It's similar to a mortgage or a loan. That is exactly how it works.

I thank the member opposite for suggesting that we talk with real estate agents — absolutely. Again, the point that I raised is not whether a mortgage or an LIC is better, just that not all Yukoners have mortgages, Mr. Speaker, and we want to try to make this as universal as possible.

I am happy to take these suggestions, I am happy to work with municipalities, and I am happy to consider it all as we work toward this legislation — and the reason is because we really want to make sure that retrofits are available not only for government buildings, but also for all Yukoners and all Yukon commercial business owners as well, Mr. Speaker.

Question re: Canada Remembers commemorative school project

Mr. Kent: On August 28, 2019, the Liberals issued a press release promoting a new initiative to show a six-part documentary film series to Yukon students in partnership with the Royal Canadian Legion. Earlier today, my colleague, the Leader of the Third Party, tabled that news release, as well as a letter detailing the Whitehorse legion's dissatisfaction with the Government of Yukon's handling of this project.

The legion secured approximately \$21,000 in cash and in-kind donations to purchase copies of the film series on Remembrance Day to be shown in Yukon schools. As of Friday, with only four teaching days left before Remembrance

Day, this film series has not been distributed to all schools. Obviously, this is hugely disappointing and is made worse by the fact that the delays are due to government.

According to the letter, the legion was given a guarantee that the film would be distributed to schools immediately following the August announcement. When will the government commit to get copies of this film series to all Yukon classrooms?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I thank the member opposite for the question. I will certainly have to look into this situation and the information that was brought to the Legislative Assembly today. I will commit to get back to the member with more information as it becomes available.

Mr. Kent: To quote from the letter that the legion sent to the minister on Friday — and I quote: "Countless hours were spent by volunteers at the Whitehorse Legion in securing the funding and approval for these DVDs so that they would be available this year in time for the weeks leading up to Remembrance Day 2019." The letter also states that the minister's staff confirmed on October 31 that copies of the film were still stuck in the department. This despite the fact that the government had them for quite some time, and in August, in a presentation to the minister, the government gave the guarantee to the legion that the film would be distributed to Yukon schools immediately. In fact, the letter details delays caused by the government dating back to early July 2019.

Mr. Speaker, why did the government make the legion jump through all of these bureaucratic hoops only to delay the release of these DVDs to Yukon schools?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I thank the member opposite for the follow-up question and for bringing this matter to the attention of the Legislative Assembly. I certainly will endeavour to get the information back. I want to say just how important heritage and history is to our Yukon Territory — and sharing those values within our school systems. We are coming to November 11 and we are honouring our veterans. Thank you again for the question.

Mr. Kent: To quote from the letter again — and I quote: "This project has proudly provided students across Canada with historical knowledge and an emotional insight into the service and sacrifice of our Veterans." It goes on to say — and I will quote again: "It was our sincere hope that these documentaries would reach schools throughout the Yukon and inform students this year and for generations of students many years to come."

Mr. Speaker, the final portion of the letter says, "The Whitehorse Legion is very displeased and was saddened to learn of this situation." Unfortunately, this has meant that a lot of students have lost the opportunity to see this film series this year prior to Remembrance Day.

Will the government do a review of what happened in this case to ensure that it doesn't happen again?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I appreciate the member opposite bringing it to the attention of the Legislative Assembly. Hopefully there is still time to get these videos into the classrooms.

The member opposite acknowledged how many days that we are working with here, but — from the Minister of Tourism

and Culture's perspective and from my own as well — we will make sure that we find out what happened in this particular case and apologize if the ball was dropped. Again, it is an extremely important initiative and we want to make sure that the hard work of the legion is reflected in an educational opportunity for all of our students.

Question re: Watson Lake hospital staffing

Ms. McLeod: At the end of August, the Minister of Health and Social Services wrote a letter indicating that 45 percent of the nursing positions at the Watson Lake hospital were vacant. In the letter, the minister stated that aggressive staffing efforts were undertaken to fill the vacant positions. In the last month, I have raised this issue and pointed out that 45 percent of the nursing positions at the Watson Lake hospital were still vacant. In response to questions from media about the current staffing levels and plans to fill them, the minister said that she could not answer, in her words, “prescriptive questions”. It is now November 4, and according to the Yukon Hospital Corporation's website, 45 percent of the positions at the Watson Lake hospital are still vacant.

Mr. Speaker, what is the minister doing to ensure that the Watson Lake hospital is fully staffed?

Hon. Ms. Frost: To clarify, the question that was asked was specific to the Hospital Corporation, and I just want to thank the Hospital Corporation for working with Health and Social Services to address the nursing pressures that we have seen most recently. We are working on addressing them through our collaboration and our collaborative approaches. With respect to the Watson Lake hospital and the current nurse ratio right now, we have 8.9 full-time employees.

The letter was written on August 29 in response to the Member for Watson Lake, very specifically detailing what the ratio was in Watson Lake and how then the vacancies are covered. Presently, Watson Lake has 3.9 FTE vacancies for registered nurses. However, if we are experiencing challenges in the various communities, then we do cover that off. At the moment, as I understand it, we don't have any specific pressures that we are not able to address with all of the resources that we have available to us.

Ms. McLeod: When we discussed this issue last month, the minister said that she can assure Yukoners that we have all of our health centres fully staffed. However, according to a mail-out by the Watson Lake Health Centre, there will not be flu clinics at the craft fair or ambulance station this year due to staffing.

The Liberals' lack of action is having negative impacts on Yukoners. This past year, the minister's strategy to deal with these nursing shortages was to fly in and fly out southern nurses. This is not a sustainable long-term strategy, nor does it seem to be working. More needs to be done to recruit and retain nurses to live in communities.

Combined between the hospital, the health centre, and the mental wellness hub, how many nursing vacancies are there currently in Watson Lake?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I certainly recognize the importance of health care for all Yukoners. I want to ensure that all Yukoners

are provided the necessary supports. We recognize the important role that nurses play in delivering health care to Yukoners, no matter what community they live in. If a position is advertised as vacant, that doesn't mean that the position is not filled in some capacity where we are providing support.

Currently, the community nurses — as I understand it, as of mid-October — we only had two vacancies for float primary nurses. We have undertaken a number of steps to ensure that nurses are able to reside in our communities. We are working with the Yukon Hospital Corporation to ensure that we have a recruitment and retention strategy that is collaborative and focused on recruitment pressures, because we have multiple pressures across the government for nurses — that means also our home care support team, the hospitals, and the health centres. There are multiple approaches, and we are not dealing with a one-off. We are now looking at a comprehensive approach to ensuring that nurse recruitment and retention strategies are consistent throughout, and we will continue to work with our partners to ensure that happens.

Ms. McLeod: The minister's August 29 response to concerns raised by the Official Opposition with respect to nursing shortages in the communities, as pointed out — at least in the case of Watson Lake — it does not appear that the minister has taken any action to address this issue. Months later, the situation hasn't improved. In fact, it is getting worse, as the Watson Lake Health Centre has indicated that the flu clinics will be cut back due to staffing.

In the minister's letter, she states that aggressive staffing efforts were undertaken and have been successful in filling vacant shifts through the remainders of August and September, and while not necessary at this time, contingency plans have been developed.

So, Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell us what those contingency plans are, and if not now, when will they become necessary?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to respond by saying what an honour it is to work with the staff at the hospital and also with Health and Social Services. They are doing an impeccable job in ensuring that every Yukon community is supported in one way or another and that no matter if a position is defined as “vacant”, it's filled by a nurse — either a nurse practitioner or a health care professional. We ensure that happens throughout, and if there is a specific concern from Watson Lake, we will endeavour to work with the Hospital Corporation to ensure that they have their necessary supports. As I understand it, they have not raised this as a major concern, but I will certainly endeavour to follow up with the Hospital Corporation to ensure that we have the supports there.

I want to just acknowledge that we are here to ensure that we provide necessary collaborative care to all Yukoners where they reside in our communities.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

Speaker: It has been moved by the Acting 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 (Mr. Hutton): The matter now before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 200: *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*. Resuming general debate, Mr. Kent, you have 19 minutes and 48 seconds.

Mr. Kent: When we were talking about education matters on Thursday afternoon, we were going through the mandate letters from the Premier to the minister and talking about staff housing. I do want to get back to that. But I want to touch on what I raised earlier today in Question Period with respect to the Canada Remembers commemorative school project.

There was this letter that was sent on Friday, November 1 to the Minister of Education, copied to the Leader of the Third Party, as well as the MLA for Kluane. It was from the president of Whitehorse Legion Branch 254, and it sort of walked through some of the concerns that they have about this DVD series not being distributed to schools, as promised by the government.

In the second paragraph of this letter — and I quote: “It was brought to the Legions attention that these DVDs could not be located in Christ the King School and Holy Family School in Whitehorse on 30 October 2019 by the staff who wanted to use them. It was later confirmed that Selkirk School had also not received their copy. The presentation of this series was made to you at Selkirk School on 28 August 2019, with the guarantee that they would be distributed immediately to all Yukon Schools. This would ensure that Teachers would have these DVDs available prior to the Remembrance season leading up to Remembrance Day 2019.”

Mr. Chair, ironically, the photo op that the minister participated in was at Selkirk School, which is of course one of

the schools that did not have these DVDs. I’m not sure if the Premier can answer this or not but it would be great to know if these are the only affected schools or if there are other schools that haven’t received these DVDs that were promised to them in August.

Again, this letter states that “... in early July 2019, the Department of Education was very insistent that the covering letter from the Legion be completed as soon as possible so that it could be included with the packages. It was decided by the Department of Education after consultation with the Whitehorse Legion that the distribution of these packages should wait until after the official presentation. Due to scheduling conflicts, the presentation had to be delayed to 28 August.” Again, we have established that not all schools received them by that time.

I know that it has been a very short time, obviously, since we talked about this in Question Period, but I am wondering if the Premier has any further information on this situation and what caused the delays. Again, how many schools — beyond the ones mentioned in the letter — haven’t received these DVDs yet?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I appreciate the member opposite giving a little bit of background as far as the date of the 28th being so pivotal and that being kind of a go-time for the department to be able to get the videos out to the schools.

Again, we endeavoured right away to look into this, and as of this morning, Whitehorse has all received the resources — all the schools in Whitehorse. On Friday, November 1, the resources were hand-delivered to all Whitehorse schools except for Vanier, Whitehorse Elementary, Hidden Valley, and Golden Horn, which received their resources by priority delivery. Priority mail-out to all rural schools as well was done on Friday, November 1. There were a couple of days in transition and this was as result of an error at the department. They are very apologetic for this error. Suffice it to say, as of today, all Whitehorse schools have received their resources and all of the other resources are a priority post as of Friday, November 1.

Mr. Kent: Can the Premier just confirm that these resources have been sent to rural schools? Or were they sent immediately after the announcement in August? Do all schools in the Yukon have these resources? He referenced the Whitehorse-area schools, and I’m just looking for some clarification or perhaps just for him to recommit that rural schools also received these resources as well.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I apologize if the member opposite didn’t hear me, but I also said that all rural schools had priority delivery as of November 1.

Mr. Kent: Hopefully the Premier is able to talk with the minister and the department to ensure that these types of clerical errors won’t happen again, especially since it goes back to July — by the sounds of things — where this was first identified but then waited until the end of August. An administrative or a clerical error at the department has essentially probably cost a number of students the opportunity to view this documentary series this year.

Perhaps I'll just let the Premier confirm that he'll talk to the minister about this issue and make sure that it doesn't happen again.

Hon. Mr. Silver: If these videos were mailed out as of Friday and it is priority mail, it won't take a whole week to get to the communities. I know in my experience as a teacher, a lot of these presentations do happen closer to November 11 Remembrance Day ceremonies. So, hopefully, even though there was an error recognized by the department, these videos will be there in time for Remembrance Day and also for Remembrance Days in the future as well.

The department is very apologetic as far as the late date, but we do hope — now that we know that all of the Whitehorse schools have the resources, except for the ones that I have mentioned and the rural schools — both of the Whitehorse schools that didn't get it right away were hand-delivered, but also, the rural schools have been priority delivered as of November 1, which does give time this week and the next couple of days. We will check in and make sure that the schools do have it in time, and we will go from there.

Mr. Kent: I mean, it is a six-part series as well, so it is too bad that they didn't go out after the news release and the photo op were done in August. You know, making sure that there is a priority put on ensuring that those commitments are made following the photo op and the press release is something that is extremely important. Hopefully this doesn't happen again. We certainly value the work of the legion. It shouldn't be understated that they either put in or were provided with in-kind donations to a total of \$21,000, as identified in the news release — just under \$20,000 in the legion's letter. It is a significant amount of time and volunteer effort that goes into these things. Again, it is disappointing that this mistake occurred this year, and hopefully the department and the minister are able to stay on top of those things going forward.

When it comes to last week's discussions, when we left off, we were talking about the staff housing for teachers in communities. After the government put out their new policy on staff housing, there was a news release issued on Thursday, June 6, 2019, by the Yukon Teachers' Association talking about their concerns with the new staff housing policy. I will quote from that news release. It says, "With growing Teacher shortages in B.C. and NWT, our government has adopted a tone-deaf staff housing policy that will make it even harder to attract and retain Educators in rural Yukon."

Obviously, the news release is quite critical of the government's new staff housing policy saying that three years after — I'm sorry; I'll read another full paragraph, Mr. Chair — I quote: "In 2016, prior to the election, YTA wrote to the now Government asking what it planned to do about the rural housing shortages that affect most Educators wanting to work in Yukon communities. The Government committed to undertaking a full assessment of the needs, and to developing a plan to address the gaps. Three years later, the new staff housing policy does nothing to address the gaps. Instead government has imposed an arbitrary 3 year time limit on staff housing without a plan to increase the supply of housing."

I'm just wondering if the Premier would like to comment on these passages or other passages from this June 6 news release by the Yukon Teachers' Association and let the House know what has been undertaken since then to work with the YTA on their concerns?

Hon. Mr. Silver: As the member opposite knows, the 10-year housing action plan — HAP — for Yukon was launched in 2015 and it provides guidance on housing priorities for the territory. A committee made up of key housing stakeholders and partners from across the territory oversaw the implementation and we worked with all stakeholders. Not a lot of change had happened in Yukon housing over the years. It was time to take a look at that policy.

I remember being in opposition and asking at the briefings all the time if we were talking about social housing as an initiative or affordable housing as an initiative and questioning whether or not those policies actually matched up with what the mandate was.

Again, I am happy to have that engagement with the stakeholders to look at a 10-year housing action plan. Lots has happened from that. We have had major investing in housing. But before I get into that, it's important to talk about the community-based action plan — the plan to prevent homelessness — Safe at Home, which was launched in November 2017.

Another example of us doing more when it comes to the whole — the complete picture of providing homes, whether it be affordable housing, social housing, or different types of initiatives therein or working with the private sector to make sure that we're freeing up lots and land — we're continuing to make land available to support the construction of new housing for Yukoners as well. This includes the land development in town here — in Whitehorse with Whistle Bend — but also in the rural communities. For example, the rural land development program is another initiative that relocated to the Department of Community Services in July 2018 — the Land Development branch implementing and integrating land development programming to maintain lot inventories across Yukon to provide private sector development and support First Nations in developing their land for citizen housing.

I would push back a bit on the statement of not working to make more lots and more housing available. We have a \$6-million commitment over two years — 2020-21 and 2021-22 — to the Challenge Cornerstone project, in addition to the funding for the purchase of land and project development therein. We are in the second year of funding for the \$3.6-million housing initiative fund. Also, Mr. Chair, there is \$2.4 million that will flow to Yukon through the northern housing fund under the National Housing Strategy. Under the low-carbon economy fund, there is \$6.9 million for First Nation energy-efficiency programs and \$8.4 million for social/staff retrofits, subject to approval of the agreement with Canada. That funding, again, is allocated on a 75:25 ratio, so 25-cent dollars here for us in partnership with the federal government.

There is \$3.19 million in 2018-19 for the construction of Housing First residences for vulnerable individuals, and we are getting that out the door as well. There are lots of initiatives that

I could speak to. There is a continued commitment of \$1.5 million from the Government of Yukon toward First Nation housing partnership programs for repairs and rebuilds. Mr. Chair, in light of the climate situation as well, we are not only just replacing buildings, but we are modernizing them and making sure that they are built for the new standards of the new normal here in the north.

We have a continued commitment of \$1 million by the Government of Yukon toward the municipal matching rental construction program for new rental units. It is a program that came out the opposition when they were in government after holding on to about \$20 million in social housing for a few years and then coming out with some other initiatives through the Association of Yukon Communities — or at least announced there — for the municipal matching rental construction program. We are continuing on with that. Again, there is another commitment of \$1 million there.

Social housing transformations will re-imagine the supports that the Yukon Housing Corporation provides for Yukoners and will integrate the rent-geared-to-income programs and the rent supplement programs into the housing continuum. We will also consider the ways that the territorial government can influence social and affordable housing by providing funding and supports to our partners in housing.

Mr. Chair, when we're considering working with our stakeholders and getting the information, this is about an opportunity to not only effectively have housing programs that suit each community but also helps us work hand in glove with the private sector and to make sure that we provide housing, and it's really important. I have had the benefit of moving to a rural community in Yukon and having Yukon Housing for me when I was there. But I will admit that, after several years, I was in a situation where I knew that I was going to be living in Dawson for the rest of my life and I wanted to grow roots, but I had a really good deal with Yukon Housing where I had a set amount of money for a house that was three bedrooms — one person — and I knew that the generosity of the government might be better suited to at least take a look at each community's needs and be able to see if we could flex the program better so that we provide social housing, we provide affordable housing, we work with the private sector, and we make sure that we can hopefully cast a wider net when it comes to community housing.

We are currently working to transform our approach to social housing, as I mentioned. Part of that transformation includes the adoption of the term “community housing” which is more reflective of the national housing strategy — so looking to the communities for stakeholder involvement but also looking to national trends, as well as the good work being done by the Yukon Housing Corporation.

Community housing and how it's more reflective of the national housing strategy — that represents a broader range of programs. It removes the stigma attached to social housing as well. This includes changes to our rent-geared-to-income social housing programs for low-income Yukoners and seniors, our rent supplement program, and our rental allowances for the family program.

Again, as we take a look at a whole gamut of housing needs and issues and pressures in all of our communities, making sure that Yukon Housing Corporation can be flexible and can respond to the needs of each community, and by working hand in glove with the private sector and defining “affordable housing”, defining “community housing” — we believe that all these endeavours together make it so that anybody moving to a rural community has more options instead of less options when it comes to either using Yukon Housing Corporation, the private sector, or even First Nation governments — or private sector endeavours, like I said.

Mr. Kent: I appreciate those remarks from the Premier. I'm sure our critic for the Yukon Housing Corporation will review those when it comes to questions that we have later on in general debate about the Yukon Housing Corporation, but I was focused in on staff housing.

There was a new policy announced by the government. The Yukon Teachers' Association put out a news release in early June 2019, and again — I will quote from this news release: “YTA asked hard questions of Government before the new policy was implemented but did not receive a considered response to these issues prior to roll out. The majority of staff effected by the changes are Educators, so we are disappointed to learn the ins and outs of Government's plans via the public media. What we now know is that despite Government's promise of creating a program that will encourage rural Educators to set up permanently, there is no plan or program in place to support the new policy and this publicized ‘political’ goal.”

I will continue with the news release with the final paragraph — and I quote: “What this all means for rural Yukon communities and schools is higher turnover and lower teacher retention. Kicking Educators out of staff housing after 36 months does nothing to fix the shortage of adequate and available housing in Yukon rural communities — it just gives them a good reason to look for a job elsewhere.”

Obviously, not every rural community is the same. Some will have access to market housing potentially, but of course some do not.

I am just curious as to if the Premier has instructed his minister or talked to his minister about this news release, and have they reached out to the Yukon Teachers' Association to address the concerns that they have outlined in this release?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Chair, I am sure that the member opposite can appreciate that it is important for us to take a look at the complete housing continuum when we are talking about issues — whether that be with housing issues here in town or in the rural communities when it comes specifically to housing for teachers.

It is also interesting to note as well that, when housing is not available in a community, the department can provide the employee with improved terms of employment — things like rental subsidies in consultation with the Yukon Teachers' Association. We do continue to work with available resources to assist staff in those rural communities with housing. That is what we can do in the short term while we look to longer term solutions.

When looking at those longer term solutions, it is extremely important to understand the community needs that are broken down per community — in community housing, stakeholder initiatives, and engagement — when it comes specifically to housing for teachers. We went through all the communities. Beaver Creek identified as a community with no private markets. Housing needs for the principal and the teacher — they have been met in the community of Beaver Creek.

There is a teacherage in the school and a department lease agreement for a cabin — so to be able to have that flexibility per community to identify needs and to hopefully work with the community and work with the Yukon Teachers' Association as well to identify short-term and long-term solutions.

Carmacks is another great example. There is a housing shortage in that community. Housing needs for teachers have been met through staff housing or through private housing — again, with that supplementation. Yukon Housing Corporation provides one additional unit for Education staff — but again, having these opportunities through the private sector as well.

My community of Dawson City in the Klondike definitely identified as a community with a private housing market. We want to give shout-outs to organizations like the Klondike Development Organization for the good work that they have done to help in providing housing — taking some pressures off of not only general housing for private citizens, but also taking pressures off for people in government jobs. In Dawson, housing needs for the principal and for the teachers have been met through staff housing or through private housing — but again, either housing directly or through an agreement made to help work with that private sector.

Destruction Bay — with not much of a private market, the housing needs for the principal and for the teachers have been met in that area as well. There is a teacherage in the school, and the principal owns their own home in that community — again, every community is different.

Faro — housing needs for the principal and the teachers have been met through staff housing or through private housing.

Haines Junction — housing needs for the principal and the teachers have been met. It's the same thing — either through staff housing or through private housing.

We can go through the list of each of the communities, but what you can see and what I'm trying to relay here to the members opposite is that community-specific problems are being met with solutions, and we are working in coordination with those communities to make sure that we have the housing needs identified on a short-term basis — and also looking to have more of a long-term policy as we continue to move forward in partnership.

Mr. Kent: Can the Premier confirm if there has been some sort of dialogue with the Yukon Teachers' Association about the concerns that they have raised here? I know that he went through a list of several different communities and what is happening in each of those communities. Has there been a conversation with the YTA about the concerns that they have raised here?

I am curious as to if there is any money in this year's budget to either increase the stock of staff housing — so to increase the quantity of staff housing or to improve the quality of staff housing. Because we have heard some complaints about some of the quality of the different units that are located in some of the communities that rely on staff housing for teachers. Again, has there been dialogue to address these concerns raised on June 6 of this year? What is done in this budget or previous Liberal budgets in this Legislature to address the staff housing shortage and the quality of existing stock?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Our government recognizes that staff housing has a role in supporting the recruitment and retention of teachers in Yukon communities — absolutely. We will continue to work within the available resources to assist staff in rural communities with housing. I have identified the work that we are doing community-wide to make sure that we are focusing in on not just a specific area of housing, but a bigger gamut of considerations of how we can best make sure that our communities have housing available for private sector or government employees or teachers specifically.

As the member opposite knows, the 2019-20 estimates for appropriation in capital for housing — whether that be renovative and rehabilitative to existing stock, energy retrofits, unit conversions, or prior year projects — total \$2.2 million in those estimates, and whether I can confirm or not meetings with the Yukon Teachers' Association and the minister — there is always ongoing dialogue with the Yukon Teachers' Association and the Department of Education on all issues related to education.

Mr. Kent: So, a big concern from the Yukon Teachers' Association appears to be the imposition of an arbitrary three-year time limit on staff housing without — and this is from the news release — a plan to increase the supply of housing. A couple of questions for the Premier then come out of that. Does this three-year time limit on staff housing apply across the board in rural Yukon, or is it only in certain communities? I believe that the number he mentioned from the mains was \$2.2 million for housing retrofits, I think, and renovations — but how much of that went into staff housing versus social housing?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, I have outlined not only those specific dollars for retrofits and for existing staff — this is completely for staff housing — completely — so that \$2.2 million is just specifically for staff housing. We outlined a bunch of other initiatives to provide housing in the communities. We have gone through the list as well in general debate about — that currently there are 52 teachers in Yukon Housing Corporation staff housing units, seven in Carmacks — there will be eight, but we're getting an additional unit for that particular community. In Dawson, there are six. In Faro, there are three teachers who are in Yukon Housing Corporation staff housing. In Haines Junction, there is one; in Mayo, there are four; in Old Crow, there are five; in Pelly Crossing, there are five; in Ross River, there are five; in Teslin, there are four; and in Watson Lake, there are 12.

Again, when talking about this process — the new teacher housing stakeholder engagement — the Yukon Teachers' Association was in consultation on that process.

Mr. Kent: I thank the Premier for clarifying that \$2.2 million was all for staff housing.

He mentioned 52 teachers in staff housing in Yukon communities. Does he have a figure for what the total inventory of staffing housing units is in the Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I do not at this time.

Mr. Kent: Hopefully the Premier is able to get that number to us before the Fall Sitting rises by either a letter or a legislative return or perhaps later on in general debate over the coming weeks here.

One of the projects that is mentioned in both the 2017 and the 2019 mandate letter is obviously the completion of a new francophone secondary school. In the first version of the Premier's mandate letter to the Minister of Education, it says, "Complete the planning for a new Francophone secondary school working with..." — CSFY, l'AFY — "... Yukon Francophone families, and Francophone and French immersion schools." Then, in the second one, the mandate goal is to: "Complete the French first language secondary school in Whitehorse, in partnership with..." CSFY.

I guess that raises a couple of questions for me: Are the other organizations that were mentioned in the first mandate letter no longer required? Is it because construction has started? Why are they no longer part of the second mandate letter? Aside from CSFY, all of the other organizations that I mentioned are no longer to be involved — according to what the mandate letter says — with this project.

I'm also hopeful that the Premier can confirm the budget. We know that there have been cost overruns on the francophone high school here in Whitehorse. If he can confirm the latest number for the total construction of that project, that would be great.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Chair, when it comes to the complete amount of units, I don't have a specific number in front of me. I believe that it's around 170. If I am anywhere off on that number, then I'll get back to the member opposite, but I don't have a specific number for him as far as the complete stock.

Mr. Chair, when it comes to the French first language school, it's worth noting at this point that we have budgeted \$19 million from the 2019-20 year to build that French first language secondary school. That construction obviously — if you're driving through Riverdale — is underway and looking good.

The new school and its community space will provide a modern and flexible learning space for students and community groups. The new school is part of the campus model for Riverdale where groups, communities, and cultures can gather and learn and play in a variety of facilities as well. Our government will continue to work closely with all three school communities on the Riverdale campus to collectively implement the new campus model and to ensure that the needs of all students are being addressed.

Mr. Chair, I think, when it comes to the comparison between an old mandate letter and a new mandate letter — and we went through this with a few items the last time we were here in general debate — generally, if we see that there is ongoing progress on those or a completion of the first mandate letters, we want to make a focus on the new mandate letters for visionary new items or items that haven't had time to be considered or completed. Again, to automatically assume that just because there is not a transition — what it is most times is that there is enough progress that we know that it can't be unravelled. These particular programs, initiatives, or policies are already well underway.

I want to touch a little bit, too, on money for staff housing. We are always looking to modernize and to upgrade our existing units. Some of the single-family dwellings are being retrofitted to provide for dual units — again, another way for us to be able to take a look at the stock that we have and the resources that we do have to make sure that our housing units fit the communities in which they serve — the Yukon Teachers' Association — modernizing staff housing policies with consideration therein for possible extensions, if needed, and considering core needs of rural Yukon communities. It is important that we recognize the partnerships that we do have with communities but also with the Yukon Teachers' Association when it comes to social housing.

In housing, there is an additional \$80,000 in Education for rural supports — just to mention that as well. I want to make sure that I get all the information out on the floor in general debate.

Mr. Kent: I apologize if the Premier mentioned it and I didn't catch it, but I am curious about the latest budget number that the Premier has for the francophone high school — how much it costs. We know that it is overbudget, but what are the latest numbers for the school?

Hon. Mr. Silver: At this time, the Yukon government has budgeted \$19 million in the 2019-20 main estimates to build the French first language secondary school. Like I said, that construction is underway. We welcomed the contribution from the federal government of up to \$7.5 million over the three years to support the building of this community space. Those are the numbers that we have now.

As the member opposite knows, this particular project is not in the supplementary budget for an increase at this time. We will be continuing to monitor all of our tenders as they go out the door. Of course, we will come up with appropriate budgeting for all of our projects to make sure that Yukoners know exactly how much money projects cost. In this year's 2019-20 budget, we have budgeted \$19 million for this. As the member opposite knows, based on the tendering, the complete contract was awarded to Ketz Construction in 2018 to construct that new school. From the main estimates of 2018-19, that included \$3 million for the French first language secondary school. The actual expenditure at that time was under that. It was \$2.3 million — almost \$2.4 million. The department is projecting that the expenditure for the 2019-20 year will be \$21 million due to accelerated construction this fiscal year.

Mr. Kent: I am looking for the total cost estimates to build that school. We have talked about this school a number of times throughout the past three years here in this Legislature. I think that the initial budget, including that federal contribution, was \$27.5 million or \$28 million. It's our understanding that, after the construction bids came in and other things were factored in, it went up to \$35.7 million. I think that is the number; I don't have the figures in front of me. I am looking to the Premier to confirm what the total cost to build the French school is. As of right now, is it still at the number that was previously announced? Have there been any increases? I know that, with a design/build, there are not a lot of change orders, but there is the opportunity to have some. Has it gone up, or has it gone down with some of the tariff wars on steel potentially affecting that project?

I am just looking for a number. What is the Premier anticipating the total cost to be of building that French first language high school?

Hon. Mr. Silver: The contract was awarded to Ketza Construction. The number is \$29.6 million, and that is for the construction of the project itself, not including all the extra costs and that. We did speak as well of the \$3 million in the 2018-19 French language school project, yet the expenditures came in under that at \$2.3 million — or, to be very specific for the member opposite, \$2,345,068.

We are projecting that the expenditures for the 2019-20 year will be \$21 million, and that is due to accelerated construction this fiscal year — not some of the things that the member opposite is hedging on, whether it is increased steel prices because of tariffs — and again, the numbers that I have are \$29.6 million for the construction, and the projected O&M cost for the school will be approximately \$850,000 per year, plus there are going to be additional costs for increases in enrolment, if and at what time those increases happen. These are the numbers that I have for the member opposite at this time.

Mr. Kent: The Premier mentioned \$29.6 million for construction and then referenced some extra costs without giving us an amount for those costs. I am assuming that is infrastructure related to the school property — water and sewer hook-ups, paving, and any design work or consultants who had to be hired to support the project. Again, \$29.6 million for construction — and the Premier identified some extra costs. Does he have a number for those extra costs at this time?

Hon. Mr. Silver: The member opposite identified correctly the other ongoing costs. Of course, he would know with his experience from being Minister of Education in the past that those would be exactly the extenuating costs that I have identified. Again, those are the numbers that I have right now for the member opposite.

Mr. Kent: Does the Premier have the amount of those extra costs? We identified some of the things that would be factored in, but does the Premier have the amount for what — again, it's \$29.6 for construction. That was the tender that was awarded to Ketza Construction. How much are these extra costs that we are talking about?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, I don't have those numbers with me right now, but I will definitely endeavour to get those numbers for the member opposite.

Mr. Kent: I thank the Premier for that. We will look forward to getting those numbers and getting an update. It has been awhile since we were given a new total for the francophone high school and the overall construction costs to do that.

The Premier — when we talked just a few minutes ago about the mandate letters, he said that, if something was in 2017 and wasn't in 2019, that it meant that there was some ongoing progress or they felt there was some progress with respect to that. In 2017, he asked the Minister of Education to explore opportunities to enhance community involvement in school governance. I know that they've talked about additional school boards. In the past, the government has talked about bringing in additional school boards. Is there progress on exploring these opportunities? Perhaps the Premier can explain to us what exactly he meant when he included that key goal in the minister's mandate letter in 2017.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Just to clarify again my comments about the mandate letters — based upon the conversations that we've already had in general debate, I would say that the specific questions that the member opposite had asked me about items that were on previous mandate letters compared to the ones that are on current mandate letters — the trend there with the answers was exactly that — significant progress had been done or those items had been completed — either one — therefore, not being on the new mandates.

That's not to say necessarily that would be the answer for everything. I hope the member opposite didn't take me to say that. If there's a specific — and this is what we're doing now — concern like school governance that the member opposite wants me to talk about, then definitely, we can talk about that importance to this government.

We are committed to enhancing that community involvement in school governance and we are working with Yukon First Nation governments and educational partners to collaborate and to support the success of all of our learners.

We're working with Yukon First Nations to address their educational priorities, including exploring ways for Yukon First Nation governments to assume greater levels of authority and control over the education of their citizens, because they are best placed to understand and to respond to their citizens' educational needs and to direct targeted educational resources and initiatives.

I know through speaking with chiefs and councillors that they had a fantastic trip down to British Columbia to take a look at best practices and some other practices as well. I want to thank specifically Chief Dickson of Kluane First Nation for his involvement on the Chiefs Committee on Education. He had an opportunity to hang back after their meeting and to do more work and to see other schools and how things are happening. We all agree that more involvement from First Nation governments when it comes to the education of indigenous citizens really is to the benefit of all Yukoners.

I keep on saying that, if we get this right and if we use the BC curriculum as well as we can — because there are so many places where we can put in local curriculum, local know-how, traditional knowledge — and developing those courses based upon the communities and based upon how communities have thrived through colonialization and into the future — how we do things in the Yukon differently than other jurisdictions — I really believe that our citizens are going to be well sought after in any post-secondary opportunity that may arise because of the very unique coordinated effort that we can get to. Again, the vital importance of that is to make sure that we have the First Nation governments assuming greater levels of authority, because again, they are best suited to understand the needs and the directives for those citizens.

Our government is working very closely also with school councils and other partners in education through the Advisory Committee for Education and joint priorities and initiatives in education in Yukon, including those related to school governance.

The advisory committee provides advice, and recent discussions have focused in on providing opportunities for students, for student voice in education, for school growth plans, student performance indicators, and modernizing learning spaces in the schools. Again, all this is coming from the first mandate letters to the minister. This committee is continuing to meet during the 2019-20 school year to discuss the recent audit report recommendations and advise the department in its response.

Mr. Kent: I'm glad the Premier brought up school councils because it just allows me to pivot away from the mandate letters for a second and talk briefly about the Premier's introduction of the lobbyist legislation in an earlier Sitting.

We were talking during debate over that bill about school councils and whether or not they were going to be exempt. It wasn't written into the legislation that they were going to be exempt, but the Premier — and he can correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe he gave assurances that would be dealt with in the regulations. Maybe he can give us an update on the development of those regulations for the lobbying legislation and also confirm that, in those regulations, school councils will be exempt from having to fill out the paperwork associated with being a lobbyist.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Chair, I don't believe that anything has changed since the debate in the Legislative Assembly on that bill. The member opposite correctly identified the progress forward. There is nothing new to report based on the thorough conversation we have had from that bill.

Mr. Kent: Can the Premier tell the House when he expects those regulations to be completed — associated with that legislation?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I don't have that information readily available with me right now. Again, when it comes to regulations, as the member opposite knows, it is a formalized process that involves many departments — in this case, specific to a specific bill that we put forward. Suffice it to say that the department, working with Justice and other departments, is working expeditiously on these files.

Mr. Kent: I appreciate that response, and I am sure that we will have an opportunity to follow up with the Premier on that particular issue.

I have a couple of other points from the 2017 mandate letter that I don't believe were transferred to the new one. I'm just looking for an update from the Premier. The first one is to work with Yukon College and the Minister of Health and Social Services to provide for an annual intake into the college's licensed practical nursing program. Again, that is in 2017, not in 2019. The second one is to work with the Minister of Tourism and Culture to engage Yukon First Nations, Yukon College, and community partners in developing an indigenous fine arts program at the Yukon School of Visual Arts. I have a couple of questions on that.

I am assuming that there is still an annual intake into the college's LPN program. Could I just get the Premier to confirm that for us? Also, can he tell us if the indigenous fine arts program at SOVA has indeed been developed, working with the Minister of Tourism and Culture, First Nations, Yukon College, and community partners?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I will begin with SOVA — the School of Visual Arts. Our government continues to provide consistent and predictable funding to Yukon College to support the School of Visual Arts in Dawson City and in training artists with the skills and the knowledge that they need to have careers in a very vibrant northern setting. We are working with the School of Visual Arts toward cultural inclusivity programming, with the goal of establishing an indigenous fine arts program as well.

For the 2019-20 fiscal year, the amount budgeted for funding for SOVA was just over a half-million dollars, and the department worked with the college and with SOVA to do some creative work to make sure that the base funding agreements for the core operations of strategic initiatives — which was required for the government to directly engage with the SOVA governance council so we would get a move there. This will facilitate upcoming discussions with the governance council about developing a plan to establish that indigenous fine arts program, and so it is extremely important to make mention of that and the continuing work.

Again, this is another example. There is continuing work with the Department of Tourism and Culture and the Department of Education when it comes to SOVA specifically. To alleviate any concerns from the member opposite, that work from the original mandate letter is ongoing.

When it comes to the LPN program — same thing. There is an annual intake for the LPN program. So, again, items that were in the initial mandate are continuing to move forward — haven't been dropped — and I appreciate the question from the member opposite.

Mr. Kent: Just a quick question then for the Premier: the indigenous fine arts program has not yet been developed for the Yukon School of Visual Arts in Dawson City? I am just looking for confirmation.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, we are working with the School of Visual Arts toward more culturally inclusive programming with the goal of establishing that indigenous fine arts program. This work is ongoing; it is ongoing.

Mr. Kent: The Premier will probably be happy to know that this concludes my questions about the 2017 mandate letter and some of the initiatives that are no longer reflected or that I was looking for updates on.

When it comes to the 2019 mandate letter, the second bullet identified here is to: “Complete a strategic framework for early childhood development, initially focused on rural Yukon communities, in collaboration with the Minister of Health and Social Services.”

In the Speech from the Throne, it specifically mentioned K4 and the expansion of K4 into all rural schools and then looking potentially to eventually bring that into Whitehorse as well. When the Premier wrote this bullet for the Minister of Education, is that where the K4 would be developed, or is it found somewhere else — or perhaps not reflected in this mandate letter, but rather just reflected in the Speech from the Throne?

Hon. Mr. Silver: To be very clear, in relation to early learning initiatives, we absolutely recognize that high-quality early learning opportunities contribute to improved outcomes for children in all aspects of their development.

It is interesting. In my experience in education, there are many different numbers in different studies that basically all say the same thing. They may have different dollar values attached, but money up front, early in a child’s education, equals considerable savings later on. As an educator in the Yukon, I can definitely concur with that statement — especially in teaching subjects like mathematics. I have to tell you that those earlier initiatives are worth their weight in gold.

To support young children to be ready to learn and to help families to get there, we here in the Yukon government will expand that early learning programming — and it’s also known as “K4” in the rural schools. Rural families will have the opportunity to enrol their children in kindergarten programs when they are four years old instead of when they are five. These early kindergarten programs are an extremely important step to support young children in rural communities through literacy-rich, play-based learning environments where they can practise their skills for learning and also prepare themselves for school routines. It also helps to alleviate some pressure on some daycares when we have children and youth who are four years old now able to be enrolled in the K4 programming. In the long term, we will be exploring the feasibility of this optional program to Whitehorse schools as well.

Mr. Kent: I think the Premier answered one of my next questions in that last comment where he said that it was optional. I was going to ask him if K4 was going to be mandatory. I don’t even think that kindergarten is mandatory in the Yukon. Mandatory education starts in grade 1. He did mention that — I believe — it was an optional program. He mentioned alleviating some of the pressure on daycares and day homes. Has the minister consulted or will the ministers responsible for this be consulting with the daycares and day homes and their associations, or has that work already started?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Chair, both Education and Health and Social Services — they are continuing to work together to develop the strategic framework for early childhood learning

and development and are focusing first on the rural schools and the communities therein. The objective of that framework will be to provide that stable environment that I spoke of earlier as well.

Again, I did mention to the member opposite that it is at the first stage. What we’re contemplating now is that this is not mandatory — the programming — but an opportunity. The Department of Education and the Department of Health and Social Services are working together to develop that strategic framework. Just for context, Mr. Chair, the government — we’re in the last year of a three-year Canada/Yukon early learning and childcare agreement that provides more than \$7.2 million to enhance and to support early learning and childcare — ELCC — programs in the territory. That agreement ends March 31, 2020.

Again, we mentioned the pressures. Dawson City, for example, has a local daycare, so establishing K4 programming will likely decrease that enrolment of the community’s established child care facility. Yukon Teachers’ Association has expressed some concerns about reporting requirements for K4 and teacher training in early childhood development and assessment processes. This is in collaboration and coordination with the stakeholders as the departments roll this out.

But again, I can’t over-emphasize how important it is — looking at the type of supports that have been developed through the Little Blue Daycare in Dawson and the pressures that they have to compete with other services being provided in Dawson. We are absolutely blessed — just anecdotally, in the Klondike — to have the Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in providing a quality daycare experience as well. Little Blue Daycare does so much to make sure that they have equal opportunities. We have a growing population and not all youth can go to one place, so to have that secondary option and a board that is made up of dedicated volunteers — it is great to see anything that can reduce the enrolment there and the pressures on places like Little Blue Daycare.

Again, the departments will continue to explore further collaboration and consultation as we unroll K4 programming offered in most rural schools. For the record, most K4 programs are going to be half-day programs combined with K4 and K5. It’s just a great opportunity to expand our educational opportunities for our rural and hopefully all Yukon students.

Mr. Kent: That goal in the mandate letter says, “Complete a strategic framework for early childhood development...” Does the Premier have any time estimates as to when that framework will be finished?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, just to reiterate the member opposite’s question, the Speech from the Throne that was delivered on October 3 announced that the early kindergarten or K4 will be offered in all rural schools. I don’t know if that was clear when I spoke earlier, but to answer the member opposite’s question, we do expect that before the end of this mandate — that would be the timeline that the member opposite is looking for.

Mr. Kent: Currently, I believe École Émilie Tremblay is the only school in the Whitehorse area that offers K4. I don’t have a copy of the throne speech in front of me, but I believe it

spoke to investigating opportunities to expand K4 into Whitehorse area schools. Would that be done along the same timelines that the Premier mentioned for the rural ones before the end of this mandate, or are we looking beyond the next election?

Again, our commitment to the kindergarten K4 mentioned — again, I believe it is for all of our schools. I'll confirm that, but yes, I believe that the mandate is mandatory — not mandatory. We're looking at the long term right now for that feasibility into the Whitehorse schools. We're focusing on the rural schools right now. We made a commitment to offer that to all rural schools. I believe that the commitment at this point is for all rural schools and all Whitehorse schools, but if I'm incorrect on that, then I will get to my feet as soon as possible to correct that, but I believe it is K4 Yukon-wide within this mandate. Again, this is not mandatory programming — just for the record.

Mr. Kent: Just jumping off on that point that the Premier made, a number of the schools — in particular, in the Whitehorse area — are at or near capacity. When I look through the 2019-2020 enrolment reports, there are currently 22 students in K4 at Émilie Tremblay and then 33 K4 students throughout rural Yukon. The schools that don't offer it — and again, this is off the enrolment reports — are Johnson Elementary School in Watson Lake and Robert Service School in Dawson City. Everyone else offers it. A couple of schools don't have any uptake.

So, it would be expanding that to Johnson Elementary in Watson Lake and Robert Service School, but I'm curious what the Premier's solution is for some of the schools in Whitehorse — Whitehorse Elementary, for instance, which is at 469 students currently, and Jack Hulland Elementary is at 401. We've talked about Selkirk Elementary at 194 in the English stream and 121 in the French immersion stream, and that's growing over time. Then, of course, we've talked quite a bit about Golden Horn Elementary School, as well as the Catholic schools. I'm curious where we're going to find room for K4 in all of these Whitehorse-area schools.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I am going to apologize to the member opposite. I didn't catch all of the beginning of his question. I will say a bit about the pressures when it comes to enrolment.

Again, we are at over 40,000 as a population now, and growing. Again, the early French immersion program is extremely popular in all of the communities, and it is offered at Whitehorse Elementary and Selkirk Elementary, as the member opposite spoke of.

With those pressures — and with the programming within our mandate — that is why we are focusing on the rural schools for K4. It is because it is extremely important to move forward on this mandate. Within our mandate, the rural schools are what we are projecting as being capable, but at the same time, we do recognize that there are lots of pressures when it comes to having K4 schools in Whitehorse — all the schools in Whitehorse — by the end of the mandate.

Again, we are working as expeditiously as possible. At this point, we believe that the rural schools, within the mandate, will be able to have the K4 opportunities, but again, the member

opposite identified that there are enrolment capacities in our elementary schools. A trend of increasing enrolment in Whitehorse schools is expected to continue, so that is going to be adding pressure to us being able to get the Whitehorse schools onto that K4 system within the mandate as well.

We are hoping for the best, and we are working with our partners in that. We are monitoring enrolment in all of our schools to help administrators and our school communities to plan for changing enrolment trends, and that is three-pronged — short term, medium term, and the long term.

Some schools have increasing student enrolment, while others have decreasing enrolment. If schools or specific grades reach enrolment capacity, then we will work first to try to accommodate students at their attendance area school, and then we will work with families on a case-by-case basis to place students in another school.

I will cede the floor for a second here just to make sure that I am on the right track to answer the member opposite's questions. I apologize — I didn't catch the first couple of sentences of his question.

Mr. Kent: Initially, I had asked the Premier what the timing of the K4 expansion was going to be.

I will have to review the Blues tomorrow, but I believe he said that they were looking at rural and Whitehorse-area schools in this mandate. I pointed out some of the enrolment challenges and capacity issues. He is now saying that Whitehorse will not be done in this mandate. I am just hoping that he can clarify for me — I think we have established that it is in most rural elementary schools right now outside of Johnson Elementary in Watson Lake and Robert Service School in Dawson, so those would be the two priority areas, I guess, to put it into and then perhaps look for expansion in some of the schools that don't have any students enrolled in that.

That was my question. Obviously, there are some capital projects and some different things that we will be discussing here a little bit later on this afternoon. Can the Premier just clarify that, outside of École Émilie Tremblay — which is the French first language elementary school here in Whitehorse which offers K4 — not all of the Whitehorse schools will have K4 offerings in this mandate?

Hon. Mr. Silver: All rural schools within this mandate — and again, identifying certain pressures, identifying that it would be more complicated to get it out in Whitehorse. I can't, on the floor of the Legislative Assembly, say that we will get it all done in Whitehorse as well. We will make our best efforts. Certain schools have more pressures on enrolment than others. We will focus on those schools that are better equipped to be able to start this programming. We will do our best to get out K4 in the mandate, but to make a commitment to all Whitehorse schools — I wouldn't be able to, in good faith, say that right now in the Legislative Assembly. I will double-back and will talk to the Minister of Education to look at the priorities, to take a look at which schools — and the member opposite mentioned a few as well — would probably be more quickly able to transition to K4 compared to some of the other emerging pressures. We have identified a few here on the floor of the

Legislative Assembly — enrolment and capacity in some of the elementary schools, prioritization, and that type of stuff.

Mr. Kent: Just before I leave this line of questioning, I noted that the Premier talked about the Little Blue Daycare in Dawson City during one of his previous responses. We know that he mentioned during his time in opposition that a Yukon Liberal government would increase funding to that daycare, and I know we asked a question earlier on — sometime within the last three years — I can't pinpoint exactly when — about that commitment. I am just wondering if the Premier can provide us with an update on that commitment. I believe it was \$1 million that a Liberal government would provide to the Little Blue Daycare. I'm curious as to if he can provide us with any update on if that money has been provided or not.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Yes, it has been. In my five years in opposition, I asked many questions about the Little Blue Daycare. When I stopped asking questions about the Little Blue Daycare, I was then accused about not caring about the Little Blue Daycare.

We have been engaging with them since the first year of our mandate. We presented the board with some options that didn't necessarily work for the board and I get it. I understand why. When it comes to the building they are in right now, although they don't own it, they do have a really good arrangement as far as rent. The problem is lots of money goes into that building, whether it be the roof or electrical — you name it — and it's for a building that the Little Blue Daycare doesn't own. Looking at solutions with the Little Blue Daycare is an ongoing process. Again, K4 does help us out with that endeavour. We remain committed to finding solutions with the Little Blue Daycare.

A couple of my suggestions to begin with didn't necessarily fit, which were met with that board at that time — they definitely were happy that we were looking into some suggestions and solutions. But I do have to admit that the pressures are still there with the Little Blue Daycare. There are similar pressures in Watson Lake, these being the two areas that have the not-for-profit daycares.

Again, we're continuing to work with the board of directors, and again, K4 is a very helpful piece of that. We are looking at coordinated efforts as well. We know that we have other stakeholders and other NGOs in my community that might be able to provide us with solutions. I don't have anything to report here today in the Legislative Assembly other than we have been working with the Little Blue Daycare since the first year of the mandate. Certain suggestions weren't necessarily the best ones for the Little Blue Daycare and I appreciate that. I also appreciate that we haven't found a long-term solution yet for the Little Blue Daycare, but again, we are continuing to work with them.

Mr. Kent: The Premier mentioned Watson Lake daycare. Obviously, there are a number of not-for-profits that run daycares throughout Yukon, particularly in rural communities. Has this same level of engagement been taking place with the Watson Lake Daycare Society that the Premier mentions has been taking place with the Little Blue Daycare in Dawson City?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Absolutely; funding has increased to both Dawson City and Watson Lake daycares. We have established a rural daycare strategy to focus on ensuring the sustainability of not-for-profit rural childcare in Yukon, especially when it comes to those two communities. They are at a certain population threshold that does add considerable different variables other communities wouldn't necessarily have. That rural childcare sustainability is a pilot project. It has been developed with the Child Care Services unit and — let's use the real name — Little Blue Early Child Care and Learning Centre — in both Dawson City and in Watson Lake daycares.

Health and Social Services representatives met with both daycares in mid-September 2019. The proposal was favourably received by both daycare programs, and they are now working with Health and Social Services to develop budgets.

Mr. Kent: I thank the Premier for that. He mentioned funding increases for both Little Blue Daycare in Dawson City and the Watson Lake daycare. Does he have the amount of the increase for each of those centres? He mentioned a rural daycare strategy. I don't believe that I've seen that or if it has been tabled. Can we find that on the Health and Social Services website or the Education website? Can he direct us to where we can find a copy of that strategy? I know that we would be interested in seeing that as well.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I don't have the increases to the direct operating grants or those specific numbers here for general debate today, but I can endeavour to get back to the member opposite with those numbers. Again, when it comes to pilot projects, Child Care Services staff are working in partnership, as I said, with both childcare centres to have these new pilots take effect in January 2020. Both will still recover parent fees for those families using the services and will participate in an evaluation of this pilot program.

These pilot projects will ensure that critical childcare services have stability in Dawson City and in Watson Lake. Child Care Services unit staff — they assisted in fast-tracking — I would say — level 3 designation of an individual in Watson Lake so that they were able to start work right away in that daycare — so very thankful for that as well. That is all I have for the member opposite right now specifically — but good news again — moving forward and having these new pilot projects taking effect very soon in January 2020.

Mr. Kent: The Premier mentioned this rural daycare strategy and then he mentioned pilot projects. Are those the same thing, or are they different? I apologize for the confusion, but I am trying to get a sense of — is there a rural daycare strategy that has been developed, or are there a number of pilot projects that are ongoing? I asked where we could find a copy of the rural daycare strategy. Is it on one of the websites, or will he provide us with one? Then he started talking about pilot projects, so I am not sure if I'm confusing the issue, or if they are the same thing — just being called a different thing.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Yes, the strategy is the pilot project.

Mr. Kent: Thank you. So, the strategy is the pilot project, then. Is that correct? That's what the Premier said? He is nodding yes, so I thank him for that. We will look forward to the outcome of some of these pilot projects or perhaps getting

into them a little bit more as we move throughout the fall here over the next number of weeks.

I wanted to switch gears. I do have some questions on First Nation education, but I will come back to those when I ask about the Auditor General's report and get some updates on the departmental action plans with respect to First Nation education.

I am going to touch now on a few issues that have been brought up by constituents or other Yukoners or constituents of some of the opposition MLAs here.

The first one is dealing with school buses. We have touched on this issue in the Legislature before, but it still remains a concern for many parents and there are a number of concerns, but one of the first ones I want to ask the Premier about is — many parents are concerned that, in the event of an emergency, bus drivers and school administrators are unaware which students are on a bus at any given time. This isn't specific to a certain incident or anything like that. It has come up at school council meetings that I have attended and I am curious as to what steps — if any — have been taken to rectify this situation with respect to who parents are to contact in the event of an emergency and how they are able to find out if their children were on a bus or not — particularly after school, obviously. In the mornings, many parents drop their kids off at a bus, especially the younger kids. I am just curious as to if there have been any steps taken to fix this particular situation when it comes to busing.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I do recall the Minister of Education on the floor of the Legislative Assembly saying in the past that, if parents do have concerns about busing, they may contact their school or they can contact the Department of Education or even Standard Bus to work on a very specific issue — for example, in the rare event of a student being on the wrong bus.

School staff work extremely well with Standard Bus staff to ensure that students are getting on the right buses. Attendance lists are provided to the drivers and to the schools. I want to thank Standard Bus for their diligence on this particular issue. This is a rare issue, Mr. Chair. But if that does happen, Standard Bus dispatches a call-out to all drivers immediately to address the situation.

Mr. Kent: Just so that I can provide some clarity to the parents who asked me about this — if they are concerned about whether or not their child is on a certain bus, do they contact Standard Bus, do they contact the principal at the school, or is there somebody at the Department of Education? I'm not sure how long, obviously, the staff at schools stay beyond the final bell. I'm not sure how long they are there in the case of an emergency. When I am reporting back to the parents who asked me about this, who is the individual who knows who is on which bus at any given time?

Hon. Mr. Silver: There is a multitude of people to call. Some parents have a stronger relationship maybe with the school administration. Some might want to call the Department of Education. Some might want to call Standard Bus. With consideration of this particular issue — the rare event of a student being on the wrong bus — there are options to make sure that a call can be placed to any of those agencies —

whether it be directly to the school administration or to the Department of Education. Immediately, Standard Bus gets into action with a call-out to drivers to address that situation.

I do have some different information on specific actions outside of this particular issue, but I think that it's pretty clear that there are a multitude of different options for the parents to call.

Mr. Kent: So, just to be clear on this, if I reach out to school administrators or through school councils to school administrators and the Department of Education, as well as Standard Bus — are those the three options? All three of those bodies, for lack of a better term, will know which kids are on which bus at any given time. There is not one point of contact when it comes to this. I guess it is sort of all of the above when it comes to who you want to call or who you should call. All three of those entities will then know which kids are on which bus after school.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, I think that I have been very clear on this. If parents have concerns about busing, they may contact their school, the Department of Education, or Standard Bus, and we all work together to address that issue.

As far as what would happen in the case where you believe that your child is on the wrong bus — again, it's a very rare event — Standard Bus dispatches a call-out to all drivers immediately to address the situation. The good news is that, if you don't have the number for Standard Bus but you have a good rapport with your school, that's good. You can use that connection to make sure that the three — whether the specific school, the Department of Education, or Standard Bus — will prompt themselves into action to make sure that the protocol for this particular and very rare event gets immediately put into place.

Mr. Kent: Standard Bus will know — that is essentially what I'm getting from the Premier — but if you have a relationship with the school administrator, you can phone them instead. If you don't know or if you don't have a relationship with either Standard Bus or the school, you can call the Department of Education. That will be useful information, I think, to get out to the school councils. At some of the meetings I have attended, as I said — the situation that the Premier is describing has not been confirmed by the parents on those school councils. It would be great if the Department of Education could reach out through the councils and then to the broader school communities that these are the options for them if they have this concern.

I'm pleased that it's a rare event. I couldn't imagine if it was my son — or the child of one of my family members, friends, or anybody in the community — and something like this happened. What we're trying to do is to just get to the bottom of how this communication or how this line of communication works.

I'll pass on the responses from the Premier to the school councils that I have been engaging with. If there are more questions from that, then I'll be certain to let him know or raise them again as we move through this Fall Sitting.

The next question that I have on school busing — in the event of an emergency, parents of children registered on each

bus should be notified directly to be apprised of the situation. Whether or not their children are on that particular bus at any given time, parents should know when a safety-related issue takes place. Again, this came out of some parent responses to the actions that occurred along the Alaska Highway between Golden Horn and Marsh Lake last year.

Can the Premier either tell us or commit to get the Minister of Education to provide information for us on how parents are notified when an accident takes place?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I appreciate the question from the member opposite. As you know, the health and safety of our students and our staff is our first priority, including safe and effective student transportation to and from schools every day. Again, we are working with Standard Bus. We also work with the RCMP and communities to promote safe driving near school buses to reduce the risk along bus routes.

I have to tell you anecdotally that my whole classroom sat above — on the second storey of our lonely school bus in Dawson. I was amazed at some of the practices of some people when it comes to flashing red lights and school buses. This is the type of stuff that should be ingrained in everybody's heads — the importance of yielding to school buses when they have their red lights on and their stop signs on. It's extremely important. I keep on asking myself — I wonder what the rush is when the safety of our students is so very important?

The first priority in any emergency situation, Mr. Chair, including for busing, is to ensure the safety of the students and staff, as I mentioned. We share information with the families as soon as it is safe to do so. That is an extremely important part of answering the member opposite's question. If the parents do have concerns, they may contact the school, the department's student transportation officer, or Standard Bus.

Talking very specifically about operational procedures — and this is important, because there have been incidents in the 2018-19 school year. There were two collisions where a driver hit a school bus at Marsh Lake. In addition, over the years there have been approximately 14 different reports concerning Standard Bus drivers to the RCMP, specifically about cars and vehicles ignoring bus flashing lights. Bus drivers have informally also reported other unsafe driving behaviours.

School buses regularly stop on highways to pick up and drop off students at designated locations. By stopping on the highway, other drivers can see the bus and the flashing red lights from a distance, and all vehicles are required to stop. This allows the bus to take control of the roadway, stopping vehicles in both directions so that it is safe for the children to cross the road. Following incidents, the bus driver first works with the RCMP on scene. They submit company incident reports, which are then shared with the department. The department and Standard Bus then work together on any specific responses or actions, such as outreach with the RCMP. Standard Bus drivers prepare specific incident reports.

In incidents involving school buses, the department coordinates with school bus companies and the RCMP to ensure the safety of the students and to share the current information with parents as it becomes available.

Mr. Kent: I appreciate that response from the Premier, but one thing jumped out at me, and perhaps he can confirm that he said this. I jotted it down, but I kind of hope I got it right — that parents would be informed as soon as it is safe to do so. Can the Premier explain what he means by that statement — "... as soon as it is safe to do so"?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I think I was very clear in identifying the process. Following an incident, the school bus drivers must first work with the RCMP, so they will do that. They will share current information with the parents as soon as it becomes available, but again, reporting needs to start with the RCMP.

Mr. Kent: I appreciate the Premier clarifying that. So, it is as soon as that information is available after they have talked to the RCMP, not as soon as it is safe to do so.

I am going to ask a couple of other questions. I know that there was a petition response earlier this Sitting with respect to school bus safety that the government gave. We had spoken about the possibility of installing dashcams on school buses to monitor traffic violations, near misses, or accidents involving buses. I am hoping that the Premier can just give us a little bit more information on that. I think that there has been a pilot project with a dashcam on a bus. Has that been successful? Has it led to the installation of these dashcams on other school buses?

Hon. Mr. Silver: What I can share with the member opposite at this time is that the pilot project is underway with cameras being installed on four buses in Whitehorse. That pilot project will be evaluated before the end of the 2019-20 school year to consider the integration across the fleet.

Mr. Kent: Last fall, before the throne speech and the prorogation, we did pass an amended motion unanimously in this House about a number of issues around school bus safety, but one of them specifically dealt with the federal government's role on the issue of installing seat belts on school buses. I am curious as to if there is any progress that the Premier can provide us with — with those discussions that have been taking place with Transport Canada since we passed that motion last year.

Hon. Mr. Silver: As the member opposite knows, the Yukon government is part of a national steering committee to identify measures to further improve school bus safety in Canada.

The regulations for physical safety requirements on school buses, including school bus seating and, therefore, seat belts, are set by the Government of Canada, and Yukon school buses are required to meet those national standards. In response to that, we are participating on a national basis. I do appreciate the unanimous support of an amended motion on the floor of the Legislative Assembly. All of these considerations must be deliberated with the national standards and the Government of Canada, and that work is ongoing.

Mr. Kent: Can the Premier tell us when he thinks that the work of the national panel — working on a federal-provincial-territorial level — will be complete and when we will get a response from the federal government on whether or not they will require seat belts on school buses?

Hon. Mr. Silver: With all due respect to the member opposite, of course, with the election and changes therein — Cabinet needs to get sworn in. Hopefully that work has been happening this week. It's hard for me to say right now when that work is going to happen. It is a priority for this government — that's for sure. Initial meetings have happened, and so that work will continue.

Mr. Kent: We look forward to getting some responses to that after the federal Cabinet is sworn in. Perhaps we will have a chance to revisit that in the spring.

The Premier may or may not have an answer to this, but a constituent of mine contacted me with a few questions with respect to school busing. Is there training for school bus drivers when one of the students on the bus has a medical condition, whether they require insulin or perhaps they're prone to seizures or some other type of a medical condition? Is there training, and are those students identified? Obviously, there is a role for the parents here, too, but are those students identified from the department to Standard Bus after the registration? Is there a requirement, I guess, during the registration process for the parents to identify any medical conditions for their kids?

Hon. Mr. Silver: When it comes to the safety of our students, the member opposite is correct. There is a responsibility for parents to not only inform the schools of medical conditions or the need for the use of an EpiPen, for example, but also for sharing that information with those who are providing those services for transportation.

I do know that those conversations fit into the school year and those conversations. I have seen different opportunities for a school council to become involved as well in those conversations about setting certain protocols. I know that, as a teacher, we have definitely gone through personal development days therein as well.

I am not up to speed right now as to whether there is an official policy when it comes to the contracting from Standard Bus or in the transportation of our students, but I will look into that for the member opposite to see if there's a specific policy for the busing of students and whether or not there's an agreement with parents, the school, the school board, and the students to make sure that these things are being considered in the transportation of our students as well.

Mr. Kent: I look forward to that response from the Premier. Again, as I mentioned, this is something that has come to me from a family living in my riding. Obviously, one of their children has a medical condition, and it's to make sure that they are safe from the time they get on the bus until the time they get off that bus.

When it comes to the registration process, I know that, each year, in the springtime, people are encouraged to register, but my understanding from one of the school councils is that, although the forms are online, it is not necessarily an online registration. It's the downloading of a form and you submit it. Some parents have filled out that form in May or when it first comes out, and then by the time the fall comes around, they are still not registered on a specific bus. I am assuming that a lot of that has to do with the clerical work that has to take place — having officials enter that information manually rather than

having it automatically entered. Again, this is something that has come up at school council meetings that I have been at.

Will the government consider moving to an electronic or an online registration system when it comes to school buses so that it can be done in real time and errors can be corrected in real time? Again, this is no slight on the officials in the department who are doing this work, but perhaps this is one of those concerns that the government can address through their e-services projects.

Is it on the radar now, and if it is not, will the Premier consider asking either the Minister of Highways and Public Works or the Minister of Education to consider making that a priority for e-services?

Hon. Mr. Silver: A very good question from the member opposite. Writ-wide in the Yukon government, we are doing our best to modernize systems, whether that be in the Department of Health and Social Services, Department of Education, — or the lion's share of the work being done in the Department of Highways and Public Works. In a whole-of-government approach, they are really quarterbacking and coordinating a lot of these efforts. I do want to give credit where credit is due to the minister and his team in the Department of Highways and Public Works. A lot of work has gone into digitizing and modernizing systems.

In my Department of Finance as well, we are always trying our best to make sure that we have the most modern approaches to the work that we do. It does come with an initial price up front, but the cost-saving, benefits, and efficiencies are, in the long run, hard to argue.

When it comes to registering children, we do encourage families to register their children for the school buses each spring, as the member opposite noted, so that we can plan the bus routes for the upcoming school year. Late registrations over the summer absolutely can result in some adjustments to those bus routes, scheduling, stops, and changes therein the first month of school. The first month of school is, from an administrative perspective, always challenging and it is awe-inspiring to watch the administration in each school adjusting and working on the fly every year, with teachers coming in and students coming in and changes in enrolment. Credit is deserving there as well — what would I do as an educator without the dedicated administrators at the schools that I worked at?

We are working with school councils through the school busing committee on ways to improve that school bus registration as we speak. That does include discussing the registration process and the timing of posting routes.

Again, the member opposite asked about modernization and digitizing that system — we are always looking to improve school bus registration and that process is ongoing. We are getting access to those things, and again, that is an ongoing process — but again, a great suggestion from the member opposite.

Mr. Kent: The Premier touched on the root changes as well, and that was another concern that was raised — where the stops were moved and the parents weren't informed about that. Again, I look forward to following up with the minister either

later this Sitting or into the Spring Sitting to get a progress report on the school bus committee and some of their work.

I just want to touch again on those two accidents that took place on the Alaska Highway between here and Marsh Lake. After those accidents, there were some larger signs that were put up that identified school bus routes. I know the Minister of Community Services — the MLA for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes — was involved in working on a couple of committees. I think there were some high-visibility vests potentially supplied to some of the kids who were picked up along the highway. All of that seems to have disappeared as we move into the winter months. This year, there's no — I know those bigger signs were used for some of the construction projects out in that neck of the woods, but I'm just curious as to if there's a plan to put in some higher visibility signs when it comes to alerting motorists — especially some of the commercial truck drivers who may not be as familiar or aren't on those roads as much as some of the residents or the school bus drivers — that they are on a school bus route. What happened to some of the initiatives that came out of the Minister of Community Services' meetings last fall? I know that there was a group of concerned Marsh Lake parents who approached him. He opened his budget reply in the spring talking about meeting with some grade 6 students, I believe, from Golden Horn Elementary School.

I'm just curious — it seems like some of the momentum and the initiatives that came from those meetings has disappeared. I hope I'm wrong — perhaps it's being addressed at a different committee — but I'm curious as to what is happening when it comes to alerting motorists that they're on a school bus route and to watch for school buses with red lights flashing, and then the visibility of the students. We have talked about the dashcam pilot project, and we look forward to the results of that project.

Again, I'm curious as to what's happening now on these rural routes — not only the ones south of town, but I think those signs were also in the Member for Lake Laberge's riding after those two unfortunate accidents happened. Again, I'm curious as to an update on what's going on with those discussions as we move forward.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I believe this has been discussed on the floor of the Legislative Assembly through the Minister for Highways and Public Works and the Minister for Community Services. That increased signage and visibility for bus safety was completed and the digital signage was placed on the highways the week of March 25 to 29, 2019; that digital signage with speed indicators was placed on Wann Road for the first two weeks of school in August 2019. What we're seeing is a changing of those locations and that's a continuing process.

The member opposite also spoke about the safety vests for students. The Minister for Community Services did purchase the safety vests for students in that area and he is working with the parent groups and Golden Horn administration to distribute those vests.

Also, to add to that, Standard Bus offered school bus safety orientation to students in the fall of 2019 — a really great and worthwhile initiative from Standard Bus.

Chair: Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*. Resuming general debate, Mr. Kent.

Mr. Kent: Just before the break, we were talking about some of the interim measures that were taking place along highways that are bus routes leading into Whitehorse. We mentioned the high-visibility vests. The Premier confirmed that those were provided or purchased by the Minister of Community Services — and also those mobile signs that the Premier said were along the route toward the end of March, but aren't there anymore.

I'm curious as to if there are any more permanent solutions that are being offered by the government to deal with this — to alert, not so much resident drivers — although some resident drivers need to be reminded as well — but especially tourists and commercial drivers — people from outside the Yukon — who aren't as used to seeing school buses and that they are on that piece of highway and that they do stop on the highway. The Premier mentioned some of the reasons — and good reasons — as to why they do some of the stopping on the highway. Nevertheless, that could catch some motorists or commercial drivers off-guard with that, so I'm just kind of curious.

As I said, I know that the digital signs have been moved out of there. I don't think the high-visibility vests are on some of the kids anymore — I haven't seen them — so I'm just curious if there are any more permanent solutions to the temporary measures that were introduced last year that were discussed or are going to be implemented.

Hon. Mr. Silver: The Department of Education has been working on its school bus safety action plan for awhile now. They have it broken down into three stages: short-term, mid-term, and long-term approach. We have gone through a lot of the items already, but I will go through some more of those initiatives and actions and also some of the status and the timing, as the member opposite is looking for more information.

One of the actions was the immediate public safety campaign in partnership with Highways and Public Works and the RCMP. That campaign, Mr. Chair, as you will recall, was completed in March 2019. That was a social media campaign. It had radio ads and householder mail as well as sent out. Highways and Public Works did a back-to-school safety campaign in August 2019. The action item on that was to plan for a bus safety awareness campaign in January 2020 after the school holidays, so that is ongoing.

There was another action item — an immediate RCMP enforcement activity, with an RCMP blitz that was completed in early February 2019. That did not result in any significant enforcement activities but was more of an exercise with the

RCMP which was completed in early 2019. That rolls into the public and parent feedback and bus safety committee. That was after the blitz.

In February 20, 2019, Education met with a Marsh Lake parent group and the MLA from beautiful Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes to look at a summary of incidents that we talked about already in the Legislative Assembly and proposed some follow-up actions. They discussed future follow-up and integration with school councils in terms of longer term feedback and participation. Resuming the school busing, as well — making sure that Education met with certain council members in different regions to discuss strategies to improve the bus registration process and the timing of posted routes as well.

Education will be continuing with this. They are going to reach out to councils again this fall and they are participating in regular meetings that are ongoing now and into the winter. Again, those participants were RCMP, Highways and Public Works, and Standard Bus. Also, there is a potential for additions from the City of Whitehorse if they so choose, but also Marsh Lake parent groups and educational operations as well.

Some of these action items we discussed already, including the dashboard cameras in the school buses and increased signage and visibility — we spoke about that initiative as well. Communication protocol for emergency incidents — we touched a bit on this, but I want to continue with that. This is working with the schools and the principals to confirm how processes worked and how it was communicated to parents. We spoke a bit about this already this afternoon. Again, an action on that is that letters are to be sent out to schools and to Standard Bus early in the school year confirming and clarifying the roles and responsibilities in addressing school bus emergencies and communications with parents. Also, we spoke a bit about the safety of the bus stops. This is part of our annual process for setting bus routes and stops. We are also working with Standard Bus if there are any safety concerns raised about a particular stop.

This is an interesting initiative as well: We spoke about the school safety vests for students, but also gathering of historical incident data. That is ongoing right now and includes going back two years. This is an ongoing conversation with Standard Bus. Three years of historical incident data was analyzed and there were no specific trends necessarily or locations that were flagged, but the incidents were noticed as being more varied and sporadic, so there is this continuing diligence of not only looking at current issues, but also gathering that historical data. So, it's this year, plus going back two other years.

Those were some of the initiatives on a short-term basis. In the medium term, we have a number of initiatives and actions as well, including ongoing public awareness activities. Building upon those short-term communication campaigns and working with Highways and Public Works to plan for bus safety awareness campaigns following breaks in school, whether that is August or September, January or March to April, that is a continued conversation with Education, Highways and Public Works, and with the RCMP as well.

Also, in the medium term — we spoke about this previously a bit — our participation in the national bus safety committee is looking into bus safety across the country including considerations of seat belts, obviously. We spoke about that earlier as well. As we said, these are initial meetings, but we're waiting to see where we continue that now that the federal government is considering their new Cabinet.

There will be adjustments to specific bus stops and to pullouts, if necessary, as well, in the medium term. The Department of Education has made some adjustments to some stops based on parents' concerns. I'm hearing from the member opposite that he's hearing some concerns as well in his meetings with school councils. Once we have finalized the 2019-20 school year, we will do a further review of stops. If the member opposite has some specific parents who have expressed some issues about not being informed, then please, by all means, if he could send the names or the contacts to the minister or to the Education department, that would be appreciated.

School bus safety in schools with school communities — this fall, Standard Bus is offering, as we spoke about, school bus safety orientation upon request, which is a great opportunity. One last action item in the medium term is research from other jurisdictions about best practices. It's always a good endeavour in whatever your initiative is to take a look at how other jurisdictions deal with things. This will be embedded into the national transportation review of school bus safety and an opportunity just to get feedback from other jurisdictions via this group. The lead on this, of course, is Highways and Public Works.

When it comes to long-term two- to five-year strategy, of course, this would obviously be reflected in the updates to the *Motor Vehicles Act*. I know the minister has spoken a lot on the floor of the Legislative Assembly as to that process, and as we all know, that initial work is currently underway.

Mr. Kent: I know I identified quite a few areas for questioning that I wanted to get into, but I wanted to give the Third Party a chance to ask some questions here this afternoon as well. I'm going to just ask about one more subject area with the Premier. I just want to thank him as well as the deputy minister for answering questions here today.

The last one I want to talk to him about is the after-school programs policy. This is again specific to a constituent of mine who raised a concern. She had her son registered for kindergarten out at Golden Horn Elementary School, and then, with the lack of after-school programming options and with her and her husband's work schedule, they weren't able to make that work. They applied for a transfer to a school in Whitehorse. That was denied, and I'm not sure of the reasoning behind it, but it was denied. So, they actually ended up in the Montessori school and they were able to accommodate the after-school needs of their son that way.

I know it has been a topic of discussion out in my riding for the last three years at least — I'm sure it probably goes back further than that — the lack of after-school programs at the school. I know that other schools have after-school programs, so I'm not sure if there's a consistent policy. If the Premier

doesn't have the answer today, he can get back to me or have the Minister of Education get back to me.

Is there a consistent policy as far as running after-school programs or potentially even accommodating students who can go to some — there are some areas out in my riding that do offer after-school programs, but the students aren't able to take a different bus in the afternoon to get to that programming.

It's causing some challenges for parents who live out in the Golden Horn attendance area — getting their kids into that school. I'm curious as to if there is a policy in place for after-school programming when it comes to Whitehorse-area schools.

Hon. Mr. Silver: As the member opposite would be well aware with his experience being the Minister of Education in the past Legislative Assembly, a lot of after-school programming relies upon volunteers and, again, collective bargaining as far as teachers' responsibilities and then how that then relays into the concept of teachers coaching and volunteering their time after their job is done. Every school is going to be blessed in certain areas with volunteerism, whether it be with coaches or with parents or with other community members. There is always going to be a real reliance on that component when it comes to after-school programming.

Again, just anecdotally from the perspective of Dawson City and Robert Service School — we rely so heavily on the recreation department of the municipality of Dawson City and to be able to have another stakeholder like that — that can take on the responsibilities of the gym after the programming — and also the collective bargaining agreements and job responsibilities of the janitorial staff — to make sure that their responsibility to keep the gyms in good condition — also have to be considered as well.

I don't have at my disposal right now a specific policy, but I do know that whatever type of policy there is, the bigger consideration again is: How do we actively invoke the leadership of parents and teachers to go that extra mile to volunteer their time and effort? Again, in a rural community, it is not just from 8:30 in the morning until 3:30 in the afternoon when the school is a vital part of the community. It is from the early, early hours right into the wee hours of the night when our schools and all of our dry spaces in our communities are bustling with activities and helping to make sure that our students have safe places to go and engage in activities — not just curriculum, but past that into different opportunities.

I don't have any specific policy to speak of right now, but again, I would say as well that a lot of the consideration has to do with the availability and willingness of the community to step up and help out in those volunteer roles.

Ms. Hanson: I just wanted to be able to spend a little bit of time looking at some of the financial matters. There are questions that arise and when one sort of gives a quick look — and I am just talking about a quick look in some of the areas in the Public Accounts. I want to ask the Minister of Finance — we look at page 38 — when we talk about inventories for resale and we are talking about land, there are three categories: undeveloped land, land under development, and development land.

I would be interested in the minister's explanation of how the designations are made, how much we are talking about in each of those categories, and whether or not the amounts that are indicated for developed land are costs of development or market-value prices.

Hon. Mr. Silver: When it comes to the inventory for resale, we can see on page 38 two different categories, one being developed land and the other one being land under development. The costs associated here aren't resale — that would be the cost taken on by the government. Land under development — that's the lion's share of the dollar-value figures. Once they become available for purchase or for resale, then it goes into the concept of developed land.

I believe the member's question was: Are those retail prices or costs, as opposed to the cost incurred by the government? I will just get her to reiterate her question if I didn't properly answer it for her. Again, these are the costs of developing land — mostly in the communities, as well, by the way, Mr. Chair — and that reflects the cost to government for the inventories of that resale.

Ms. Hanson: I appreciate the answer. What I was asking for was whether or not they were the cost to develop or the market value. I was asking where they were located.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Cost to develop, and mostly rural. There might be some that are from Whistle Bend, but most of this cost is in the rural communities.

Ms. Hanson: I appreciate the answer. On page 43, one of my favourite areas is the yearly increase in environmental liabilities accruing to the Yukon government. I don't say that in a positive way. I question each year and I question again this year that the government has recorded environmental liabilities of \$21,117,000, which is up from \$25,386,000 last year. These are environmental liabilities that occurred on the Yukon government's watch, not previous or historic liabilities.

The question I have is that I have been trying to ascertain — and hopefully the Minister of Finance will be able to shed some light on this — with these 99 sites that are now — and again, that's a number that has grown. So, the statement is that: "The amount of liabilities becomes determinable over a continuum of events and activities as information becomes available. As a result, the actual amount of liabilities to remediate these sites could vary significantly."

Well, anybody in the plain-language world would say that sounds like buzz. So, what I'm trying to get at is — rather than how, every year, we see a lineup of another amount — or in this case, a \$4-million increase — a little bit less than \$4 million — when does the government anticipate actually beginning to do any remediation on these works?

I am separating this out from any discussion of the Marwell tar pit. That is a historic liability that is separate and accounted for. I'm talking about the 99 under our watch, not historic ones like Marwell that are subject to a federal/territorial agreement, which we have talked about umpteen times in this Legislative Assembly.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, the member opposite did mention Marwell, for example — but again, a lot of the numbers that you will see and the increases therein is when we

do things like the nursing station in Old Crow — so we start doing work there to deal with the environmental situation — or the Upper Liard landfill is another example — also Wellgreen. This is what we're seeing for those particular increases. To the member opposite's point, it's not necessarily historic, but it is some of the work that is currently ongoing on some of this remediation.

Ms. Hanson: I am aware of that, Mr. Chair. What I'm looking for — the accounts will say over and over again that most of these are separated out from those contaminated sites. Highways and Public Works is a great contributor to this list. What are we doing in terms of practices that haven't changed if we are continually developing more highway work camps that have these liabilities?

Separating out landfills is dealt with in a separate section of these environmental liability notations here. There are three paragraphs on that, but the \$29 million that I'm referring to is not that.

While the minister is dealing with that one, there is a second one that I wanted to raise here. It has to do with the note that is made in the Public Accounts with respect to type 2 mine sites.

As we have talked about here before, type 2 is a historic liability of the federal government with the exception of the work that was done at Ketzta mine when Yukon government allowed Veris Gold to go ahead and do some work there and then they abandoned it. My question is: What is the current liability? It says that there has been an assessment. The financial obligation related to the assessment required under the DTA — and we have to determine what the government's responsibilities currently are. So, if there was an assessment done under the DTA that said that there was going to be a liability to the federal government of \$5 million, what is the Yukon government's liability? How is that being addressed? Is the assessment complete? Has the work begun on that remediation at Ketzta?

Hon. Mr. Silver: When it comes to the second question as far as our costs — again, this is all site-specific, and it is going to be based on the agreements with the federal government as far as what our cost-sharing is related to the project. Again, those numbers are based on the specific agreement in each of these particular cases.

The member opposite also asked about highways and how we are trying to make sure, as we move forward, that these environmental liabilities are being calculated and considered. Again, Mr. Chair, as we modernize as a government, it is extremely important for the Department of Highways and Public Works and other departments to be looking at this through a climate lens and through an ability to take a look at the most effective and efficient way to provide the programs and services. In this changing climate, it is always extremely important that, as they spend taxpayers' dollars, each department makes sure that they consider those initiatives.

I don't know if the member opposite needs a particular breakdown specifically to the dollars, but that is what I have for the member opposite at this point.

Ms. Hanson: In fact, what the audit says is that, because of Ketzta being a unique situation, the federal government is not on the hook for the whole amount. Because the Yukon government allowed work to be done there — reopened and reworked as a mine — as some people in this House will recall, there was quite a bit of discussion about proceeding with that — until the Yukon government had determined what Canada's liability was because then it would become somewhat muddy.

What I would ask then — it says that the government's cost, if any, may be offset by the security bonds that it holds. Can the minister tell us the amount of the security bond held by the Government of Yukon for the Ketzta mine?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, when it comes to this specific situation, that work is still ongoing. I don't have anything new to report to the member opposite right now. We continue to work bilaterally with the federal government, and we should have a better indication of the financial responsibility in 2020.

Ms. Hanson: Surely the Minister of Finance knows what the bond is that we hold — that we got from Veris Gold — as securities for the work that they were undertaking there — right?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, some of that has already been used. I don't have an update with me right now in general debate on that very specific question, but that's an ongoing process and an ongoing conversation with the federal government. That money is being spent, with more to report in the new year.

Ms. Hanson: We are talking about the Public Accounts as of March 2019, so that's actually not next year's money; it's this year's money, and the bond has been in place for some time.

On page 57, there's an intriguing paragraph. It sounds like an interesting real estate deal by the Yukon government, but it's all sort of anonymous, so I have asked the minister to clarify what it means. It says on page 57: "During the year, the Government received a contribution of land and buildings from a third party. The government determined that these assets had a fair value at the date of contribution of \$14,500,000 of which \$853,000 was allocated to land and \$13,647,000 to buildings. The government recorded revenue of \$13,300,000..." — because they only paid \$1,200,000. It says it's a contribution, so I'm not really sure how it's a contribution if they paid \$1,200,000 for it. I would be curious to know what the building is, where it is, on what land, and what the third party was.

Hon. Mr. Silver: This pertains to the Salvation Army building.

Ms. Hanson: So, we paid \$1,200,000 for \$15 million worth of liability — good.

Just a question. On page 61 — and this phrase is repeated numerous times throughout the notes to the consolidated statements. It says about land claims: "Between February 1995 and March 31, 2019, eleven Yukon First Nation Final and Self-government Agreements came into effect." It seems to me that March 31, 2019, is about 14 years past when the last one came into effect. As I recall, it was April 1, 2005, but maybe the minister has a different interpretation of this. Why would that

be showing as March 31, 2019, for the 11th of the First Nation agreements coming into effect?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Sorry, we didn't hear what page the member opposite was asking about. So, can I get her to get to her feet and ask the question again, please?

Ms. Hanson: Page 61, Mr. Chair.

Hon. Mr. Silver: So, we do have the page number. Again, if the member opposite can repeat the actual question. Thank you.

Ms. Hanson: The sentence says, "Between February 1995 and March 2019, eleven Yukon First Nation Final and Self-Government agreements came into effect." I just question as to why we would use the date March 31, 2019, when that's about 14 years after the fact.

Hon. Mr. Silver: By using a date that is current, we're talking about as of the publication. If we used a date that somehow was in the past, it might infer something that wasn't correct. But it's just basically saying — you could replace that to say, "Between February 1995 to present day..."

Ms. Hanson: There is a material difference because the effective date is actually when the transfer payments between Canada and the First Nations commenced. It's the effective date of all sorts of various calculations. So, it is quite different from talking about today and then. I'm not going to argue the point, but it is factually incorrect.

So, the notes — the consolidated statements again are as of March 31, 2019. On page 62, there is reference to — there are ongoing discussions between the parties — so this is the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon and the Yukon government with respect to the ongoing matter that was in the court starting in 2009. It sounds, the way that it is written — this discussion about how to address the \$1,954,000 — so has there been a successful conclusion to those discussions in the last number of months since — so six months since these — well, prior to this, it would have been done. But as of March 31, there were discussions ongoing. What is the status of these discussions, and does the Minister of Finance foresee a termination date to those discussions?

Hon. Mr. Silver: The CSFY and the Yukon government are working together to support the learning needs of the French first language students effectively and in accordance with section 23 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Significant progress, Mr. Chair, continues to be made toward resolving lots of outstanding issues. We are very pleased to have started building the new French first language school at CSFY's preferred location in Riverdale.

Our government is working with CSFY to resolve this matter in a very fair, constitutionally acceptable, and cost-effective manner without the need for future court proceedings.

Again, I don't need to go through the background of this particular situation. We know that there was a lawsuit in 2009 and that CSFY sued the territorial government alleging that the government was failing to meet its obligations under section 23 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The CSFY requested numerous court orders designated to increase its management and control of French first language education in Yukon and to expand French first language educational facilities, including

building the new secondary school for francophone students and increasing funding to the CSFY.

There have been ongoing settlement discussions. Rather than returning to court, the Government of Yukon and the CSFY have held settlement discussions to attempt to resolve all of the outstanding issues without further litigation. It has been a good partnership, including the construction of the school, as I noted. Also, we did sign a letter with CSFY — a letter of agreement regarding the process for resolving outstanding issues. It was a full gamut of issues — whether it be full and final release, francophone secondary school shared use and opportunities therein, school board governance, and a list of issues. I don't have anything new to report as far as any other timelines other than to say that there are ongoing settlement discussions.

Ms. Hanson: On page 80, there is a line that says, "Expenses are recorded on an accrual basis. Transfer payments are recorded as expenses when authorized and recipients have met eligibility criteria."

So, can the Minister of Finance confirm what that means vis-à-vis Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services Society? On page 183, that may —

Hon. Mr. Silver: For the Public Accounts, that amount was recorded as an expense.

Ms. Hanson: Okay. We will come back to that. On page 113, on resource revenue — mineral, oil and gas, and forestry — the actuals for that category are down \$292 million from 2018.

Could the Minister of Finance provide a breakdown as to where the big deviation was from the year previous?

Hon. Mr. Silver: If the member opposite would like to turn to page 221, those numbers are reflected more in-depth here with taxes and general revenues.

There is a whole list of items for the end of the year of March 31, 2019, including the mineral resources fees, permits, royalties, mapping, publication, and charting. There are a whole bunch of different items. To be able to speak to the trend or lack thereof or the reasons from year to year — I wouldn't necessarily have that information in front of me right now, but I will get back to the member opposite as to the comparison from year to year — as far as those Public Accounts.

Ms. Hanson: Actually, page 221 in the Public Accounts that I have is "Yukon College Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements", and it is Capital assets.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Ms. Hanson: I heard "221".

We will review those breakdowns and we will look forward to getting that information from the minister.

I just wanted to make sure that I have not missed any of the areas that we have been looking at.

There are a number of areas — a curiosity is where there is nothing in the main estimates, nothing in the supplementary estimates, and then suddenly there is an expenditure, and it does go through quite a few areas. The Minister of Finance and the MLA for Klondike was talking earlier about his riding, so I would just be curious as to the background for the City of Dawson — nothing in the main estimates, nothing in the

supplementary, and then there is \$88,085 for development, planning, and OCP. I have heard a lot about how the government does a lot to plan — and I just picked that one up because it was on that page, but I can pull out a number of other ones if the minister is interested, and I will. I am just curious — did these come up as a result of discussions or what? Page 175.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would say that these would all come based on emerging priorities, based on the communities.

Ms. Hanson: Can the minister explain — \$301,500 actual for the Yukon Gold Mining Alliance — the purpose of the contribution?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Can the member opposite confirm which page she's on?

Ms. Hanson: Page 176, Mr. Chair.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I'm not sure why that particular amount has tweaked the interest of the member opposite, other than to say that this is just a new contribution — this was part of the contribution agreement that would have been happening with this particular agency. If there is a specific reason why she is interested in the numbers — whether it's high, low, or if there is a particular part of that number. Again, this is just an ongoing contribution from an agency that does some very good work in working and promoting the Yukon mining industry.

Ms. Hanson: That is precisely why I would ask the question, because if it's an ongoing thing, it would be in the main estimates. If there was revision, it would be in the supplementary estimates. There's nothing indicating that it was in the main estimates; it is just in the actual expenditure. I am questioning this: If it wasn't in the main estimates, how was it budgeted for and why is it suddenly being reported?

I ask a lot of these questions — these are largely non-governmental organizations, and there has been much pressure placed on a certain sector of the non-governmental contributions. I want to ask questions about how and under what auspices some non-governmental organizations get more money than they initially asked for — or was not budgeted for at all — and others are under great constraints. It's a matter of getting a sense of how decisions are made with respect to contributions to non-governmental entities.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I could hazard a guess that sometimes we do change service providers for particular initiatives. Again, here in general debate, I don't have the very specific answer to that question other than that there are different reasons why these numbers would be appearing here in the schedule of other government transfers.

When we take a look at the actual mains, the Gold Mining Alliance on page 7-13 is listed as an estimate of \$397,000 for the 2019-20 year. The actuals from 2017-18 are less than that, but again, it is estimated at just under \$400,000 in the mains. Again, specifically why this item of \$270,000 is showing up in the schedule of other government transfers — I will get back to the member opposite.

Ms. Hanson: Well, it's good if he gets back to me about the \$270,000 for Western Canadian Music, because that is also not budgeted in — we are talking about the Public Accounts for the previous fiscal year. I am not asking about the mains because I'm presuming that, if you funded it last year, you have

some basis for funding it this year. For 2018-19, there is no mains or supplementary estimate for that entity, and it just suddenly shows that there was an actual amount of \$301,500.

If you don't have it in one — if you haven't put it in your main estimates — the question is vague. You beg the question: Where did you get that amount from? What's it for? You just don't pop money into the Public Accounts.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, if you take a look historically at the funding for the Yukon Gold Mining Alliance, the forecasts and estimates for 2018-19 were zero amounts, and the actuals for 2017-18 were around the \$300,000 mark. So, there hasn't been necessarily a consistent ask or an ongoing funding particularly. The estimates for 2018 and 2020 are at just under \$400,000. It could have been that certain initiatives were earmarked to stop or other ones were earmarked to begin.

Again, specifically why it's showing up as the \$270,000 in the schedule of other government transfers — not something I have in front of me as far as a specific answer, which is what the member opposite is looking for, but I will get that for her.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Chair, the point that I am attempting to make is that it doesn't show in his main estimates for the last fiscal year. I would expect that, if the government has made a contribution to an entity, they would have put it in the main estimates. That's simply my point and my question as to why it doesn't show there.

That is the Yukon Gold Mining Alliance at \$301,500, and you have Western Canadian Music at \$270,000, so maybe somebody made a decision at the end of the year that they are going to contribute to that, but they didn't put it in the main estimates. Either there is a planning framework for the Government of Yukon and they have a way of accounting for the money, or it just sort of shows up at the end of the year. That's what I'm trying to get at. I had some confidence that the Minister of Finance was setting in place a mechanism and a regime for planning how expenditures are made. One of the reasons why we go back to look at the Public Accounts is to say, "Against what was planned, what were the actual expenditures?" This doesn't give me any confidence in those two areas.

The reason why I'm asking the questions, as I said earlier, about non-governmental entities receiving funding — I note that the Yukon Chamber of Commerce had the main estimates of \$75,000 and then, in the supplementary, they got another \$75,000, so in total, they got less at the end — it had \$136,000.

But my question still is about why an entity would be receiving close to 40 percent more over what the main estimates were when other non-governmental entities have not been receiving that — particularly when the chamber of commerce had made a public statement at their annual general meeting that I attended for about four years, which was to move off government operational support. I'm curious as to why — this reversal in the trend by both the government and the non-governmental entity, the Yukon chamber.

Hon. Mr. Silver: We do the best that we can with the information we have when developing the budget for the mains. I believe that we have been doing a much better job in doing that and making sure that we have less money going into

supplementaries. Do we get it completely right? No. For public accounting reasons, that's why these numbers are being shown here. Extra funds that — specifically when it comes to the chamber — I believe have to do with the low carbon committee on climate change policy.

Again, we will prepare as much as we possibly can with the information that we have as we go into the budgetary session, but we do experience certain pressures and certain issues during the time, and we have to make sure that those numbers are accounted for. That's why we're seeing certain numbers in the government transfer schedule.

I concur with the member opposite when it comes to the chamber — yes, they did make that commitment, but again, we are adding certain money because of advice that we were looking for, for the low carbon committee on climate change.

Ms. Hanson: Fundamentally, you can't have a number at the end of the year if you didn't budget for it. Otherwise, it speaks very poorly of how decisions are made. I will leave it there, but we will be coming back as we see other ones.

A non-governmental entity, the Yukon Chamber of Mines from the Economic Development department, gets \$25,000 in one place, and then we flip over, and they get other contribution dollars — whereas I look at other non-governmental entities — they get static, static, static if you go back year over year. How is it determined that some are more deserving than others?

Can the Minister of Finance — all of this budget — since we're not talking to the departments in this process — in Yukon College transfer payments, there's an education assistant certificate program that was intended to be delivered, but I don't know and can't tell from this whether or not this program was delivered — on page 177.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Sorry, we didn't know what page the member opposite was talking about — so again, it's under Education. I believe she's talking about the funding programs. Can she be more specific? Which one?

Ms. Hanson: I was referring to the education assistant certificate program at Yukon College on page 177.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I'm going to have to push back a bit on the member opposite talking about poor accounting. Again, we do make the best decisions we can with the information that we do know at the particular times — whether it comes to the low carbon committee on climate change policy and our ability to engage with stakeholders, including the chamber, on extremely important initiatives. I don't know if the member opposite would have us say to them, "Well, we didn't know about this at the time, so we're not going to budget appropriately" or if we could figure out a way of moving forward. Again, there are a lot of moving parts when it comes to budgeting. It's a massive department and sometimes we do see the Public Accounts having to make the discrepancies — the differences — and show the actuals and to do that proper accounting — again, part of that process.

We are moving with the information that we have. When it comes to the Yukon Gold Mining Alliance now getting funds — they are getting funds in one agreement versus the past. There were multiple projects that happened at different times. I would say that this is probably a better way of doing it. But

again, with new agreements that are now in place — in the first part of our mandate — to deal with the agreements and signing under past governments — we don't get things perfect. Sometimes we do have to transition, and we do our best to make sure that the accounting is done as appropriately as possible.

The Department of Finance, working with all the other departments — again, we don't get it perfect all the time — but we put as much financial scrutiny as possible into these decisions. To suggest that we are not doing our job — I will take a little bit of pushback with the member opposite when it comes to that, but I will continue to answer her very specific questions here.

When it comes to specific funding on Yukon College — Yukon College is not offering that program anymore. The department is looking for other opportunities to support the training of EAs. Again, we very much appreciate the efforts of Yukon College to train more EAs.

Coursework often wasn't available to the students and very few people graduated from the program. Again, we are always looking for initiatives to work in partnership with Yukon College when it comes to very important work — especially when it comes to training more EAs. I can attest, Mr. Chair, that the work that the EAs do in the classroom is an extremely important endeavour.

Ms. Hanson: I don't question the importance of the work. I am questioning the fact that, in Public Accounts — what we are supposed to be able to see is that the government budgeted for something and that they revisit it when they do the supplementary estimates. Where the flag goes up is when there is no main estimate, there is no supplementary estimate, and then there is an actual amount at the end. Where did that come from?

That is what I am asking the questions about. When I look again on page 177, there is nothing, nothing, and then \$25,000 for the Yukon Chamber of Mines. Then I look at page 180, and there is nothing, nothing — it is standard operational funding, which makes sense for the organization, but there is just blank, blank, and then there is a project for \$30,000. So there is nothing that indicated that there was any planning for that in either the main estimates or the supplementary estimates. So we have two blanks on page 177 and another two blanks on page 180, for a total of \$55,000 — and those are material when you start adding it up.

I look again, you know — curious when nothing was estimated in the main estimates or the supplementary estimates for something called "Nickel Creek Platinum Corporation". Now, it's not a huge amount of money. It's \$14,000, but one would think that if the government was going to put money into Nickel Creek Platinum Corporation they would have put it in the mains or the supplementary estimates, because they have at least two opportunities to update this Legislative Assembly. That's what this is about: providing the information to both the public and all Members of the Legislative Assembly. That's our job. That's our job, to hold government to account for the expenditures made on our behalf and on all citizens' behalf. So, this is not vexatious. These are solidly based questions based on what the Public Accounts process is and the main estimates.

The more I see blanks and then see a number, then that's a problem. I'm raising the question to try to get a sense of how the government is planning or budgeting with the resources that we have.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, if we have opportunity to have the information for the mains, it would be in the mains and it would be discussed in line-by-line debate of those departments. If not, and if it is in time for the supplementaries, then again, those would be the practices that we would use. We maintain an AA rating with our accounting processes, and we get that from the review with the Office of the Auditor General because we do the most due diligence that we possibly can. If we can't put things in those budgets, then obviously they have to show up in the Public Accounts.

Again, we have an excellent rapport with the Office of the Auditor General when it comes to how we do our accounting. We are making sure that our main budgeting exercises are happening in the spring as much as we possibly can, with smaller endeavours for supplementary estimates.

The member opposite is seeing that there are some dollar values that don't get reflected in either and do show up in the actuals. We're endeavouring to get back to her the information that she desires on that. But again, I wouldn't chalk this up to some kind of financial mistake or non-due diligence. This is exactly what happens and we do need some flexibility. Sometimes it's not just us who are responsible for why — when you're working in partnership with other governments or working in partnership with other NGOs or organizations, there is absolutely reasoning. To say that there is a trend — I wouldn't necessarily say that there is a trend. I would say that the trend is that we're seeing more dollars being accounted for in the mains, less in the supplementary budget — therefore, allowing our public servants to be freed up to work on other important initiatives and programs and services for Yukoners.

Yes, over time — and this isn't something new with this government — over time, you will see in the actuals that there are other dollar values that haven't been accounted for, and it is absolutely important that those numbers show up in those.

To say that there's a trend, I disagree; to say that there's not enough financial scrutiny, I would say that there's more financial scrutiny. Again, we catch what we can in a timely fashion. I would say that we do need a little bit of flexibility, and you will see some actual dollars that come out in the schedule of other government transfers from time to time.

Ms. Hanson: On page 182, there's just a curiosity. There are other transfer payments from the Department of Finance. This one is to the Toronto-Dominion Bank for rural community banking. Can the Minister of Finance give the House the information as to how many of these rural banking arrangements are in place? Is the arrangement with the TD bank a multi-year contract or what are the arrangements there? If it's a multi-year contract, does it come up for review or renewal? How is it assessed?

Hon. Mr. Silver: There's another reason why you would see something in transfer services. In the past, the practice was to put this in contract services as a value, but as it turns out, it's not a service for us as a government; it's a service

for the communities. So, to correctly account for this, it should be in transfer services. That's why you'll see the discrepancy and that's why you'll see a change in accounting processes.

We just added Carcross, so I believe now it's in every community.

Ms. Hanson: So, the question I had, since we're spending \$436,695 — \$437,000 on this — the question was: Is it done by contract? How often is that contract reviewed or let?

Hon. Mr. Silver: The answer is yes, it's by contract, and I believe that it is a 10-year contract.

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

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Silver that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

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

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Gallina that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Hutton: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

Mr. Gallina: I move that the House do now adjourn.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Member for Porter Creek Centre 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 5:26 p.m.

The following document was filed November 4, 2019:

34-3-18

Canada Remembers — Commemorative School Project, letter re (dated November 1, 2019) from Joseph R. Mewett, President, Whitehorse Legion, to Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee, Minister of Education (White)



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 18

3rd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Tuesday, November 5, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
Don Hutton	Mayo-Tatchun

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King
Liz Hanson	Whitehorse Centre

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Dan Cable
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Tuesday, November 5, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: I will now call the House to order. At this time, we will proceed with prayers.

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I would like my colleagues to join me in welcoming to the House this afternoon: Corporal Natasha Dunmall, the RCMP's NCOIC of traffic; Constable Louis Allain; and Constable Mike Hartwig. I would also like to welcome, from MADD, Carlos Sanchez, Cory McEachern, and Jacquelyn Van Marck. Thank you very much.

Applause

Ms. White: I ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming today three advocates and champions for type 1 diabetes in the territory. We have Jill Nash, Marney Paradis, and Kevin Jack. Thank you for joining us today.

Applause

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I would like my colleagues to help me welcome some guests to the Legislative Assembly today: Samantha Hand, executive director of Skills Canada Yukon; Sarah Tomlin, program coordinator for Skills Canada Yukon; and Gerry Quarton, president of Skills Canada Yukon. Thank you so much for coming.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Today I have the pleasure of getting to table the Yukon Lottery Commission's annual report, and there are three guests in the Legislature. Please welcome Frank Curlew, who is the chair of the Yukon Lottery Commission; Bunne Palamar, who is the vice-chair of the Yukon Lottery Commission; and Colleen Parker, the general manager of the Yukon Lottery Commission.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors? Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of MADD Canada's Project Red Ribbon campaign

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am pleased to rise in the House today to acknowledge an organization that works tirelessly to eliminate impaired driving. Mothers Against Drunk Driving is a household name that Canadians recognize as leading the way to bring public awareness and education programs to stop

impaired driving, with its stated purpose: to stop impaired driving and to support victims of this violent crime.

Since 2014, the rates of impaired driving in the territory have risen to more than five times the national rate. In 2016, there were 328 *Criminal Code* violations for impaired driving in the Yukon. In 2017, that number shot up to 484. Last year, that number increased again to 540.

These statistics should stop us cold. In fact, they are a call to action. We have a lot of work to do. People must remember that impaired driving is a fully preventable crime and every life that is lost or changed by impaired driving affects all of us. Highways and Public Works continues to work with MADD, the RCMP, the Yukon Liquor Corporation, and other stakeholders within the territory and across the country to reduce the number of impaired drivers on our roads. Road safety is everyone's business and everyone's responsibility.

We continue to work to decrease the number of impaired drivers on our roads through enforcement, technology, education, and awareness. It is an important reason why this government has undertaken to rewrite our outdated and convoluted *Motor Vehicles Act*. That work will clarify the law, improve prosecutions, and raise fines.

On behalf of Highways and Public Works and all of Yukon government, I would like to extend our gratitude toward our local MADD chapter and the RCMP M Division. We are honoured by your presence here today in the Legislature. Your dedication and hard work are helping to save lives and we are grateful for your efforts. We look forward to continuing our collective efforts to prevent impaired driving and to remind Yukoners to make smart choices.

It is also important to acknowledge the thousands of volunteers who have worked for MADD over the years for their dedication and commitment to making every one of us realize that driving while impaired kills and injures people and is a criminal offence.

We have to remember that this senseless crime is 100 percent preventable. The key to road safety is planning ahead — take a cab, be a designated driver, or call a safe ride. We all have the choice and responsibility to be smart.

November 7 marks the start of the Project Red Ribbon campaign, an initiative by MADD to remind us of the role we all play in the prevention of drinking and driving while impaired. According to MADD, this campaign helps to keep the sober driving message top of mind during the busy holiday season. With parties and celebrations plentiful, the risk for impaired driving is especially high. Impaired driving includes those who are impaired by drugs, distraction, and fatigue.

We all play a part in preventing drinking and driving, and I encourage everyone to wear a red ribbon or to place a red decal on their vehicle to demonstrate their support for sober driving.

Applause

Mr. Hassard: I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party opposition to pay tribute to Mothers Against Drunk Driving and our local Whitehorse chapter. Project Red Ribbon takes place across Canada annually, spanning the holiday season in an

effort to reduce impaired driving by promoting awareness and encouraging safe and sober driving practices. Each year, MADD volunteers and organizers team up with the RCMP to hand out red ribbons to tie to their vehicles in order to display their pledge to drive sober. Every time we get behind a wheel, we have a duty to drive safely and responsibly, and I encourage all Yukoners to make the pledge for safety and to tie on a ribbon.

Winter has arrived, and we are nearing the holiday season. As festivities and events kick off throughout the territory, it is important to remind Yukoners to think before they drive and to make responsible decisions around getting home safely. Let's keep our highways and roadways safe and help to ensure that everyone on the road makes it home.

Thank you to the Whitehorse chapter of MADD Canada, to the RCMP, and to all Yukoners who are willing to pledge their role in highway safety this year.

Applause

Ms. White: I stand on behalf of the Yukon NDP caucus to recognize and celebrate the important work done by Mothers Against Drunk Driving and the Red Ribbon campaign.

For more than 30 years, MADD chapters across the country have been raising awareness about the risks and the consequences of impaired driving through community initiatives and government lobbying. Our own Yukon chapter joined the national ranks in 2003 for the promotion of safe, sober, and responsible holiday driving.

While improvements have been made in the last three decades to reduce drinking and driving, it continues to be a deadly problem on Canadian roads. Up to four Canadians are killed daily in alcohol- and/or drug-related motor vehicle crashes, and hundreds more are injured. Approximately 65,000 Canadians are impacted by impaired drivers annually. We in Yukon are deeply affected by these numbers, as each of us has felt the sting of loss due to alcohol- or drug-related motor vehicle accidents in our communities. The hard truth is that any death or injury that occurs from one of these incidents of impaired driving is preventable; it is not an accident.

If you have concerns about a driver on the road or a driver about to be on the road, please call the RCMP to report it. The RCMP can't be everywhere at all times, but with help from the public, they can get more impaired drivers off the roads.

The efforts of MADD are vital to keeping the message of sober driving top of mind during the holiday season, but that responsibility can't rest solely on them. I have said it before and I will say it again: MADD alone cannot be solely responsible for reducing the numbers of impaired drivers. It is governments that make the laws and penalties that can help to reduce the numbers of accidents and deaths due to impaired driving. MADD reviews legislation about impaired driving and produces a report card on each jurisdiction.

Historically, the Yukon hasn't fared well in these assessments; as a matter of fact, we've done so poorly and have made such little progress in our battle against drinking and driving that since 2009 we haven't been included in these cross-country reports. My hope is that, with renewed effort to address

the harms of drinking and driving as a government, we will once again be relevant enough to be included in these report cards in a positive fashion as we continue to work with MADD to eliminate impaired driving altogether.

Mr. Speaker, this holiday season and each and every day, we ask people to please plan a sober ride home.

Applause

In recognition of Skilled Trades and Technology Week

Hon. Ms. Dendys: It is absolutely my pleasure to rise today on behalf of our Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute in recognition of National Skilled Trades and Technology Week for 2019 which takes place this year from November 3 to 9.

This event is organized by Skills Canada, but it comes to life through the work and dedication of many Yukon people and organizations. This week's activities and events take place with the goal of raising awareness for parents, youth, and the public around a range of skills, trades, and technology careers and the critical role they play in Canadian economy and society.

This year's theme is "Document Use". The essential skill includes the ability to create and understand documents, including charts, graphs, pay stubs, gauges, blueprints, and schematic drawings. During this week, Yukon youth will engage in projects and experiences involving skilled trades and technology and fostering conversations between industries, teachers, and students. They will learn about the many benefits of a career in a skilled trade and how personally and financially rewarding this career can be. I can certainly attest to this; I have many tradespeople within my very own family, from carpenters, to mechanics, to chefs — and my oldest son, Colin, who is a red seal electrician. These are some of the hardest working people in our society.

To celebrate this week, Skills Canada Yukon is participating in several events in partnership with local organizations, including a fashion technology workshop with Yukon Women in Trades and Technology, an experiential booth at the Education Career and Volunteer Expo, a technology-focused workshop at the Young Women Exploring Trades Conference, helping to host the youth category at the Yukon Film Society and Klondike Institute of Art and Culture 48-hour film challenge, and wrapping up their flag design competition for Yukon school-age students. The winning flag design will represent Team Yukon at the 2020 National Skills Competition.

This week highlights the importance of encouraging uptake in skilled trades and technology careers to ensure that Canada remains on the forefront of competitive advantage in global economies. More than 400 trades are designated by provinces and territories, and approximately one in five employed Canadians work in the skilled trades.

In Yukon and across Canada, tradespeople are in very high demand. The Government of Yukon strives to meet the current and future needs of our labour market by offering significant support for apprenticeship training. I would like to thank everyone who helps to support our high school students to

explore careers in skilled trades. And I would like to thank Skills Canada Yukon who, along with their partners, opens doors to youth across the territory with exciting workshops and skills clubs, as well as coordinating and promoting events for National Skilled Trades and Technology Week.

Together, we are building stronger communities.

Applause

Mr. Kent: I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to National Skilled Trades and Technology Week in Canada. This week promotes career opportunities in skilled trades and technology and highlights the importance of these sectors across the Yukon.

The opening of the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining, or CNIM, facility at Yukon College in 2016 was a tremendous leap forward for those in the territory interested in trades training. The innovative programming and technology offered to local students creates a dynamic environment for trades training. For those outside of Whitehorse, the mobile trades training trailers are available for deployment to the communities to offer rural courses and training.

We are proud of the direction the Yukon has gone in delivering world-class opportunities to students in skilled trades and technology. We also would like to thank Skills Canada Yukon for its continuing dedication to trades and technology and providing support and mentorship for those looking to step into different industries. The organization has been instrumental in the promotion of trades training in the territory.

This week, Skills Canada Yukon is offering a number of workshops and presentations for those looking to get involved. Anyone interested in the trades can take part and learn how to get their start in a rewarding career. It is wonderful to be able to explore your opportunities right here at home. Choosing a career path in trades and technology is not only a benefit to those individuals and their families, but to Yukon's economy and success.

So, thank you again to Skills Canada Yukon, to the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining, to Yukon College, and to all those who continue to strive for excellence in their trades and beyond.

Applause

Ms. White: On behalf of the Yukon NDP caucus, I stand to acknowledge National Skilled Trades and Technology Week 2019. The goal of this week-long event is to promote and host awareness-raising events around the many career opportunities in skilled trades and technology in Canada. It is to get Canada's youth thinking about skilled trade and technology careers as a viable, interesting career option.

Skilled trade and technology careers are important for our economy, and I can attest that they are an excellent career path for young people to choose. Skills Compétences Canada Yukon says it well. It's a "Hands-on future" — "train today, trade tomorrow". Choosing a trade or a job in tech is like printing yourself out a golden ticket that will allow you to work and live anywhere in the world. It is crazy to realize that a disconnect

still exists on how our lives are affected by skilled trades and technology each and every day. Every aspect of our modern life touches at least one of these things. Did you wake up to an alarm clock or use a cellphone or a computer today? Thank a programmer. Flushed a toilet? Thank a plumber. Turned on the lights? Thank an electrician. Is your house warm? Thank an oil-burner mechanic or a sheet metalworker — and the list goes on and on.

Across Canada, there is a need for a skilled labour force. This week is an opportunity for Canadians to learn about the career options that exist in trades and tech.

We are lucky in the Yukon to have the Yukon Women in Trades and Technology and Skills Compétences Canada Yukon, two NGOs that promote skilled trades and technology job opportunities. This week, grade 8 girls from across the territory will descend on the capital as they explore different trade and tech careers through different workshops in a hands-on way. Yukon Women in Trades and Technology is hosting their yearly conference tomorrow and on Thursday. Businesses around town will open their doors to these young women as they explore and experience mechanics, carpentry, technology, welding and sheet metal, esthetics, aviation, hair styling, the culinary arts, mining and construction, and electrical — all in a hands-on way. I love this organization. I love both of these organizations.

I was initially asked to emcee at the YWITT conference way back in the 2000s, and then I became a board member until I was elected. I love participating in this conference. The energy and enthusiasm grow with the confidence of the participants, and there is a visible change between the first morning and the second afternoon. YWITT and Skills Compétences Canada Yukon are examples of industry leaders forging partnerships with local businesses and tradespeople to expose young people to the possibilities of a career in the trades and technology sectors.

We acknowledge National Skilled Trades and Technology Week and express appreciation for the teachers, the tradespeople, parents, educators, workers, employers, and volunteers who are part of the skilled trades and of course for the students who take part in National Skilled Trades and Technology Week. We wish every success to the youth of today in building tomorrow's future.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I have for tabling today the Yukon Lottery Commission 2018-19 annual report, entitled "What's Your Recreation?"

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I have for tabling two legislative returns responding to questions from the Member for Copperbelt South on October 22 regarding radon testing and on November 4 regarding the Canada Remembers commemorative school project.

Hon. Ms. Frost: I have for tabling the Yukon community flu vaccine schedule for fall 2019.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House congratulates the Government of Yukon on the launch of an open data repository to put more government information into citizens' hands in order to support openness, transparency, and economic diversification in the innovation, knowledge, and IT sectors.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to establish and publish a firm target date for the completion and bringing into force of regulations necessary to give effect to the amendments to the *Corrections Act, 2009* set out in Bill No. 6.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to adopt the British Columbia Corrections *Trauma-Informed Practice Guide* in order to enhance Whitehorse Correctional Centre staff and management awareness of trauma-informed practice and to ensure that trauma-informed principles are utilized to minimize triggers, reduce critical incidents, and de-escalate situations for individuals with a history of violence and trauma.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges that, pending the finalization of regulations intended to give effect to the amendments to the *Corrections Act, 2009* set out in Bill No. 6, this House urges the Minister of Justice to direct the Whitehorse Correctional Centre to adhere on an interim basis to the recommendation made by David Loukidelis, QC, in his May 2018 inspection report on the Whitehorse Correctional Centre that — and I quote: "... in recognition of the mental wellness risks that can appear as early as 48 hours, non-disciplinary separate confinement should be limited to no more than 48 hours in the first instance. Non-disciplinary... periods, up to a maximum of 132 further hours, but only in the most exigent circumstances, such as continuing real and imminent threats to the safety of the individual in separate confinement or the safety of others."

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

THAT this House urges the Liberal government to live up to their campaign promises about being open and accountable by telling Yukoners:

(1) how much money they are spending on operating the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter; and

(2) how much those costs have increased since the government took it over from the Salvation Army.

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

THAT this House urges the Minister of Health and Social Services to adequately staff all community hospitals and health centres with health care professionals as soon as possible to ensure that there is no disruption to flu clinics across the territory.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?
Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Mayo aerodrome becoming an airport

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Mr. Speaker, our Liberal government is committed to making strategic investments to build healthy, vibrant, sustainable communities across the territory. We are making great progress toward a diverse, growing economy that provides good jobs for Yukoners in an environmentally sustainable way. An important aspect of our work is upgrading Yukon's aging infrastructure to prepare for a prosperous future.

Today, I am pleased to announce that Yukon has a new airport. On November 1, 2019, Transport Canada certified Mayo. This certification will allow the Mayo airport to support scheduled service on a long-term basis in anticipation of continued resource development in the region.

Under the Canadian aviation regulations, an aerodrome must be certified as an airport to permit air carriers to provide scheduled service. The Mayo airport is currently certified for day use only because the lighting does not meet current standards. The plan is to upgrade the lighting in 2020 so that Mayo can be certified for both day and night use. Certification requires that the airport meets and continues to meet current standards: (1) physical facilities — for example, runways, taxiways, or aprons; (2) manuals — for example, airport operations manuals and emergency response plans; and (3) programs — for example, safety management systems and airside inspections.

In 2017, there were no scheduled flights into the Mayo aerodrome. That same year, Air North requested that the Mayo aerodrome be certified as an airport to permit scheduled flights due to increased aviation activity in the region. Also in 2017, the Yukon government applied to Transport Canada for an aerodrome authorization to allow Air North to test scheduled service in that market.

In 2018, the Transportation and Aviation branches sought and obtained a one-year aerodrome authorization from Transport Canada. The one-year authorization was granted, allowing Air North to trial scheduled service into the Mayo aerodrome for one year from May 31, 2018, to May 31, 2019.

In 2018, Mr. Speaker, there were six to seven scheduled flights per week into the Mayo aerodrome. In 2019, Transport

Canada expanded the aerodrome authorization to October 31, 2019. This year, we hired staff and developed manuals and programs to meet certification requirements. This fall, contractors and subcontractors substantially completed the physical upgrades to Mayo to meet certification requirements. On November 1, Transport Canada certified Mayo as an airport — Yukon's fifth, Mr. Speaker.

I am happy to provide an update on how much money was expended on this project this year. A total of approximately \$3 million will be spent, as follows: a runway rehabilitation project has been completed at a cost of \$1.1 million; the design of runway lighting was \$100,000; the purchase of runway lighting was \$1.3 million; and additional capital expenditures will happen in the neighbourhood of about \$700,000.

Mr. Speaker, we are proud to be working with our partners to invest in aviation infrastructure that keeps our communities connected and helps grow our economy. I would like to thank Air North, the Village of Mayo, and Victoria Gold for making this improvement possible.

Mr. Hassard: Mr. Speaker, I wish I could say that the ministerial statements from this minister could be trusted, but as we have already established, the statements he makes don't always hold up to fact-checking. In March of this year, this same minister got up to tell us in a ministerial statement that \$5 million would be spent on the Mayo aerodrome this summer; however, as we've discussed, only \$1.15 million of that has actually been spent this summer.

This means that \$3.85 million that the minister committed would be spent this summer on the project has gone unspent, so you can forgive me for wondering whether the minister's statement in today's statement will prove to be inaccurate as well.

We've asked several times for the minister to explain where that extra money that was supposed to be spent this summer — where it actually went. If the money was simply lapsing, then it should show up in the supplementary estimates, but it doesn't. Was the money re-profiled to another project that went overbudget due to this minister's mismanagement? We don't know because the minister has refused to answer.

We're hoping that the minister has now had enough time to get briefed on this so he can answer the question. To be clear, we've asked this several times already and it really should not take the minister a week to come back with an answer on what happened to taxpayers' money.

In his statement today, the minister appears to have come up with some revisions to his initial estimates. Although he originally said \$5 million will be spent this summer, now he says, "Well, actually, \$3 million will be spent", and instead of spending it this summer, it will be spent sometime this year.

To quote the minister from October 31 — just five days ago — on this very same project, he said — and I quote: "We are spending \$1.1 million in upgrades this year..." We asked the question two days in a row and both days he gave us the \$1.1-million number.

The Premier also gave us that same number on October 22. The government has now given us three different sets of

numbers on what is actually being spent on this project: \$5 million, \$3 million, \$1.1 million. How much is it really? Who knows? Maybe we'll get a different number tomorrow, Mr. Speaker.

When you increase government spending as much as these Liberals have, it's tough to keep track. But with today's new set of numbers, there is almost a \$2-million difference between that and the numbers the Premier and the minister originally gave us. I would like the minister to explain that discrepancy. If in fact the actual number is what he provided today, how did the Liberals forget about the \$2 million in spending?

Let's assume that today's numbers are accurate and that the minister won't have to get up in this House and deliver a third ministerial statement on the Mayo aerodrome to clarify how much the Liberals are spending on this project. Even with today's numbers, our question still remains: Where is the leftover money going? If it doesn't show up in the supplementary estimates, it has to have been re-profiled.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, this minister in particular has often bragged about how his new capital planning process would ensure that project estimates would be accurate, projects wouldn't go overbudget, and project money wouldn't go unspent. Well, having 40 percent of the project budget lapse is pretty significant. I'm left wondering how the minister dropped the ball on this project so badly.

It would be interesting if things have actually changed — or has he had a deathbed conversion on this topic?

Ms. Hanson: I would like to thank the minister for his ministerial update. We are happy that his officials have found a way to keep this minister apprised of the activities for which he is both accountable and responsible to the people of Yukon. Repetition is one sure way of helping the Minister of Highways and Public Works to get some of the facts straight. To assist with the minister's recall, I wish to also reiterate that — as the NDP did last on March 13 of this year after the minister used a ministerial statement to re-announce this matter which was set out in the Budget Address a week prior — the Yukon NDP is happy to have an update on the investment to bring the Mayo aerodrome runway and ancillary services into compliance with Transport Canada regulations to allow regular daily scheduled flights.

According to Stantec's May 2017 Yukon aviation system review provided to the Government of Yukon, the Mayo aerodrome runway replacement and grading was the number one priority for the Yukon when assessing the state of infrastructure at the airport, coupled with expected growth in traffic. In addition to this information, the report also expects Mayo airport traffic to dramatically increase during the construction phase we went through at the Eagle Gold property and then — I quote: "... slowly decline as the project enters its operational phase."

The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has indicated that the projected life of the Eagle Gold mine is 10 years. Therefore, the information identified in the Stantec report would be indeed helpful for other government departments as they develop their long-range planning.

In particular, we hope that the Minister of Tourism and Culture, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, and the Minister of Highways and Public Works have been in discussions already about the potential that the investment in upgrading the Mayo aerodrome can have to grow and diversify the tourism market in this beautiful region of Yukon.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I thank the Member for Whitehorse Centre for her remarks this afternoon. I guess I will thank the Leader of the Official Opposition for his reply, as disjointed and sort of fractured as that was. Once again, I don't really see a clear line on values from the Official Opposition these days. It's a little bit mixed up in direction, but that is the way that it has been for the last three years.

Mr. Speaker, aviation is a critical transportation industry in the territory. It is critical to our economy, and aviation is a priority for our Liberal government. Since taking office, we have invested millions of dollars in our territory's aviation infrastructure. Today, we were talking about the certification of a new airport. I didn't hear much about that, except from the Member for Whitehorse Centre.

As I mentioned, we plan to spend more than \$3 million this year on upgrading the Mayo aerodrome, which has now been certified as an airport to support scheduled flights into the community. We have repaired the tarmac at Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport at a cost of —

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order. One moment, please. The minister can sit down for a second. Stop the clock.

I think we have two things. First of all, the Minister of Highways and Public Works can speak up a little bit, and if the control can please ensure that the volume is at the appropriate level.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: As I mentioned, we plan to spend more than \$3 million this year on upgrading the Mayo aerodrome, which has now been certified as an airport to support scheduled flights into the community. We have repaired the tarmac at Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport at a cost of \$4.4 million. As we promised, we paved the Dawson City Airport at a cost of approximately \$10 million. We also invested more than \$8 million for a heated garage and maintenance equipment in Dawson City. We have invested more than \$3.5 million in modern snow-clearing equipment in Whitehorse, replacing dilapidated relics that were better used as museum displays. That sizable investment has allowed us to clear the runway more dependably and three times faster than in the past, improving efficiency at the airport.

We replaced the battered boarding bridge at a cost of \$1.2 million. We are modernizing the Whitehorse airport restaurant facilities. We are spending more than \$200,000 on lease lots in Whitehorse — an issue that has been ongoing for many, many years now, Mr. Speaker. We are buying new snow-clearing equipment and lights for Faro at an estimated cost of \$1 million. We plan to spend \$300,000 on the Old Crow Airport. We plan to map out needs to support night operations

in Pelly Crossing, and we are spending to improve equipment, lighting, and the runway at Watson Lake.

Mr. Speaker, there is currently scheduled service to Mayo. We just heard last week that Air North has expanded its routes, once again, to include service to Watson Lake, Prince George, and Nanaimo. That expansion included new jobs in Watson Lake. We are working with our partners to invest in aviation infrastructure that keeps our communities connected and helps grow our economy.

Speaker: Thank you. This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Budget estimates and spending

Mr. Hassard: As we have highlighted over the last several days, the 2018-19 Public Accounts tell a story of a Liberal government that is spending money at an alarming rate, and to quote directly from page 3 of the Public Accounts — quote: "... expenses increased by \$123 million..." — or 10 percent — "... from the previous year".

Mr. Speaker, they're spending money so fast that, in some cases — such as with the failed ice bridge attempts in Dawson City — they're spraying taxpayers' money into the air. This casual treatment of taxpayers' money is shown by Liberal priorities such as giving the Premier a raise, increasing the budget of the Liberal Cabinet office, or mismanagement of projects causing them to go overbudget. For example, the Nares River bridge project came in \$2.4 million overbudget — and this is just one example of many.

Can the Minister of Highways and Public Works tell us why so many Liberal projects are going overbudget?

Hon. Mr. Silver: It's always a great opportunity to clear the record when it comes to the Yukon Party's attempt to compare oranges to apples.

Again, when it comes to an increase in spending, what the members opposite fail to tell Yukoners is that, with an increase in federal dollars at 25-cent dollars to 75-cent dollars, what also are increasing are the recoveries.

Again, the members opposite will needle into one particular part of the Public Accounts to have an "a-ha" moment, but what they're not doing is responsible accounting reporting to Yukoners about the complete facts. Right now, Mr. Speaker, because of the initiatives that we've done — working with First Nation governments and chiefs and councils, going to Ottawa for Yukon Days — we've increased the flexibility of federal dollars. We have many, many different pockets of federal dollars, and with an increase in spending to make sure that we keep up with this booming economy, we also have an increase in recoveries.

Mr. Hassard: We seem to have touched a nerve with the Premier. We didn't get much of an answer, so we'll try this again.

The lack of attention to detail by these Liberals is eroding Yukon's financial future. The Public Accounts state that the Liberal's spending spree amounted to \$123 million, or a 10-percent increase, compared to the previous year.

A major part of this is because the Liberals are spending money on things such as new logos, websites that no one wanted, giving the Premier a raise, and increasing the budget to the Cabinet offices, as I said. But another key part of this is the Liberals' inability to properly plan, manage, and keep projects on budget — let's look at the Ross River bridge that came in at least \$1 million overbudget.

Going forward, what are the plans that the Liberals have to ensure that projects do not go overbudget?

Hon. Mr. Silver: One of our plans we will continue to do is most of our budgeting up front with our main estimates as opposed to having two budgetary processes like the past government.

It is interesting that the member opposite keeps mentioning the raise of my salary. The member opposite had a raise in his salary this year as well. The member opposite also takes an extra \$20,000 a year for a leader's position in the government, yet takes on a summer job all summer long. Is that his way of spending his money and his salary when he has an obligation to this Legislative Assembly to be a leader?

When it comes to infrastructure spending, we will continue on plan. We will make sure that we budget up front the amount of money that we believe that the private sector can actually spend, and we will compare our narrative of how much money we say in the budget is going to go out to infrastructure and how much actually gets accomplished, compared to the previous government that had huge swings in those pursuits.

Mr. Hassard: So, as I was saying, the Liberals have increased spending by \$123 million over the previous year while racking up new debt. That has Yukoners concerned. The Liberals said many times in this House that their improved planning for projects meant that they would not go overbudget. The minister has even said that his new capital budgeting process means that they will spend what they said they would spend and the results would be his report card. Well, Mr. Speaker, the report card is in, and it looks like the minister is not meeting expectations.

The Liberals have massively increased spending — as I said, \$123 million last year — and it's partly due to them spending frivolously on things such as increasing the budgets for their office, the Premier's raise, new logos, water-spraying experiments, and of course their inability to keep projects on budget.

Can the minister tell us how this new procurement and capital planning process contributed to the Nares bridge going overbudget?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Highways and Public Works has been on his feet ad nauseum explaining exactly that concept — but let's talk about the non-consolidated numbers of the Public Accounts for the record, Mr. Speaker, so that Yukoners can have the complete story. The non-consolidated deficit of \$5.8 million differs by \$1.3 million from the budgeted deficit of \$4.5 million. When we are talking about increases, there is a \$32-million increase in revenue over the main estimates, which was driven by taxes and general revenues — \$19 million overbudget and

\$13.5 million of contributed capital asset recovery from the Salvation Army.

These revised estimates, approved through the years, accounted for \$7.6 million in overall increases. The \$33.6-million increase in expenses was driven by \$81.5 million in variances — accounted for by adjustments offset by \$34.1 million in the last O&M and \$13.98 million in lapsed capital.

Mr. Speaker, these numbers, again — as people are paying attention — it's hard to follow the bouncing ball. The members opposite will have you focus in on increased spending but not the increased recoveries. They won't want you to know that we have been very successful in lobbying and advocating for Yukon on a national scale to make sure that we have increased the amount of pockets of money that are coming to us from Ottawa at 25-cent dollars — but they won't tell you that part, Mr. Speaker.

Question re: Diabetes treatment

Mr. Kent: All MLAs in this House have taken a number of positive steps in dealing with Yukon families who are living with type 1 diabetes, or T1D. We have unanimously passed a motion for a pilot project to provide continuous glucose monitors to children and young adults. However, with one action, the Minister of Health and Social Services has jeopardized the relationship with the Yukon T1D Support Network by breaking the agreement they have on evaluating the pilot project.

In a letter to the deputy minister, the organization wrote — and I quote: "Deliverable A1.0 requires we 'Conduct evaluation with participating clients (including surveys and interviews, to be developed in partnership with YG)'. It has been brought to our attention that YG is intending to (or has already done so) hire an external evaluator. This appears to be a unilateral decision as we were not requested to amend the agreement or to provide input into the development of guidelines for an external evaluator."

So, Mr. Speaker, why did the minister break this agreement?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am proud of the work that we are doing with our colleagues and the advocacy groups that we work with. I know that, when I started here, I met first with youth and the parents who are affected by type 1 diabetes. We effectively put into place, at that time, a project that will support young people with type 1 diabetes. That has gone really well.

I am aware of the letter that the member opposite refers to, which was received this very morning. I appreciate all the advocacy work, of course, and Health and Social Services will continue to work with the Hospital Corporation, but we will also continue to work with the advocacy groups in supporting the pilot project for constant glucose monitoring.

The one focus that we initiated early on was for zero to 18 years of age, and the second phase of that was to ensure that we provided supports to those who were 19 to 25. The second pilot project was supported through the Yukon type 1 diabetes support network.

Mr. Kent: The organization's criticism of the minister and her department is directed at the breaking of a partnership agreement that was put in place. That letter that the minister referred to this morning goes on to say that the government has excluded the Yukon T1D Support Network from the review. To quote from the letter — and I quote again: "It is difficult to understand how Yukon Government is not fully engaging our organization in this process. We have strongly advocated for Yukon Government to meet the needs of persons with Type 1 Diabetes through the inclusion of..." — continuous glucose monitors — "... across all age groups, and these efforts are not self-serving."

Why does the government not want this expert voice at the table when developing the criteria for the evaluation of the pilot project?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Just to clarify, the department has always worked with the advocacy group, and we will continue to work to ensure that we provide the type 1 diabetes support network with the resources that they need. In effect, that will happen in time. Where we are right now is that a letter was received today, and I am not going to respond to that, because it will certainly take some time for the department to respond appropriately.

We have reached out to the Yukon type 1 diabetes support network to notify them of the development of a draft RFP for an external evaluator to start a discussion, including the 19 to 25 age group. We have to realize that the complete evaluation of the trial has to take effect so that we can look at stabilizing this for the long term, recognizing that the department is scheduled to meet with the network group to discuss and provide input regarding the external evaluation. That has been set in place. As I understand it from the department, they have initiated the meeting. Once that happens, I will be happy to report back on the results of that.

Mr. Kent: Hopefully the Yukon type 1 diabetes support network doesn't have to wait as long as members of the opposition have to wait for responses to letters from this minister.

The Liberals campaigned on the slogan of "Be Heard". Unfortunately, they have broken this commitment time and time again as they tend to decide first and then consult later. The Minister of Health and Social Services has apparently ruined the relationship with another NGO with their decision-based evidence-making.

In their letter, the Yukon T1D Support Network has made the following request — and I will quote again: "... that our organization is consulted fully in not only the development of an external evaluator contract, but that we are provided ample opportunity to provide fulsome data in the evaluation process."

Will the minister direct her department to pause this process, honour the agreement that is in place, and engage meaningfully with this organization before proceeding any further?

Hon. Ms. Frost: It's a very interesting dialogue. I want to talk about the history and the support that wasn't there. What we have done is we met with the group, we are proceeding, and we will continue to have an open and transparent discussion.

We will make a decision based on the results of the trial that will involve and will include the type 1 diabetes network, and I really appreciate their input into the RFP process in hiring an evaluator. We are looking to include them in that process. We're not looking at excluding them — and I think we've always said that from the beginning to the parents of the children who participated in the initial project. Yes, we listened. Yes, we initiated. Yes, we supported them. We will continue to do that in good faith, with their input.

I'm very proud of the work of the department to meet the parents and meet the demand of the pressures that we were seeing. Historically, they were not supported and now I'm happy to say that they are and we will continue to do that into the future.

Question re: Beaver River watershed land use plan

Ms. Hanson: Last week, we debated a motion congratulating everyone involved with the success of the Peel River watershed land use plan. During the debate, I highlighted some questions that have arisen about the sub-regional land use plan that is being developed in the Beaver River watershed.

The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources seemed to be under the impression that the Yukon NDP is opposed to sub-regional land use planning and the certainty that it can bring to Yukon First Nation governments and Yukoners alike. To be clear: The Yukon NDP is supportive of sub-regional land use planning and we are supportive of Yukon government working with Yukon First Nation governments to pursue them. However, the minister has been unwilling to explain why the Beaver River land use planning process is not going ahead under chapter 11 of the First Nation final agreements.

Can the minister explain why the chapter 11 sub-regional land use planning process was not used to guide the Beaver River plan?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Just to clarify, the comments that I made last week were — just bringing to the table today that there was unanimous support put behind a motion at the Yukon Forum. The previous Leader of the Third Party might not be aware. I just wanted to bring it to the forefront that there are a number of types of land planning that are underway right now, and those particular planning processes have all been endorsed by the Yukon Forum. I thought that was appropriate to table.

The Government of Yukon of course is still working with the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and ATAC Resources Ltd. to develop a land use plan and road access management plan for the Beaver River. The land use plan and the road access management plan must be finalized before road construction. I have lots to add here, but I think it's important — going back to that point is the fact that there is local area planning that's taking place in the Southern Lakes right now. There's indigenous planning that's happening between three First Nations. There's the sub-regional planning in chapter 11. There is the opportunity — if both parties agree — to do other styles of planning. We have spoken to the land planning council on this.

It really seems that the person who has the biggest problem with this is the Member for Whitehorse Centre. I look forward to question number 2.

Ms. Hanson: I guess I'll take that as the Liberal government is now likely inviting backbenchers and others to the Yukon Forum — they're extending the invitation to the opposition. We're very happy to hear that.

Mr. Speaker, land use planning is intended to manage land use conflicts and to provide certainty. The agreement setting out the Beaver River land use plan says — and I quote: “Unless agreed to by the Parties, the provisions of the Plan will prevail over any other local area district or regional land use plan to the extent of any consistency.”

Chapter 11 of the final agreement says — and I quote: “... the provisions of an approved regional land use plan shall prevail over any existing sub-regional or district land use plan to the extent of any inconsistency.”

As it stands, chapter 11 and the Beaver River land use plan will explicitly contradict each other. This contradiction would not exist had the parties used chapter 11. Why not avoid the confusion and simply use the existing sub-regional land use planning process set out in the constitutionally protected provisions of the first final agreement?

Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I would like to commend the individuals who are working on behalf of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun as well as Energy, Mines and Resources and the Department of Environment. There is critical data that will inevitably make up chapter 11 work — regional land use planning. This is very important data. This is work that was not happening. We think that any forward motion on this type of planning should be supported.

What I find intriguing though is that the member opposite will wave the flag about her experience around the negotiation of self-government agreements and will also —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Member for Whitehorse Centre, on a point of order.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, I cannot cite the particular provision, but it has to do with personalizing debate. When the minister opposite is talking about the member opposite “waving her flag” about her past experience — I have had previous ministers try to do that to me in this House. I will not accept it.

Speaker: Order. The Minister of Community Services, on the point of order.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I heard the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources doing was referencing the experience of the member opposite and not —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

What I think he was talking about was the experience that she was using in this Question Period question.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: Two things: (1) I will review Hansard and return to the House as required with respect to the member's point of order; and (2) the Member for Whitehorse Centre — the off-mic comments were pretty close to unparliamentary language, in my view, so I will have to review those comments as well. I will return to the House as required with respect to that.

The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, please.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The point that I was trying to make is the fact that what has happened was that two governments — both the government of the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and the Yukon government — have sat down, defined the terms of reference on an agreement, and signed that agreement together. I am in no way trying to personalize. The point I'm making is that I have heard the member opposite on multiple occasions talk about the strength of these agreements. The agreements are about self-determination, so you can't at one point herald the agreements for self-determination and then come in and say that the two governments need direction from the member opposite. It's hypocritical. That is the point I was making and I look forward to question 3.

Ms. Hanson: Neither Yukon NDP nor I personally are attacking the agreement between this government and the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun. We are merely echoing questions raised by the community.

The Mayo Renewable Resources Council, a product of the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun final agreement, in its submission to the planning commission, said — and I quote: “The Plan, simply put, does not adhere to the UFA and the NNDF and the process of the Yukon Land Use Planning Council and Commissions (Sec-11.8.4) has been disregarded.”

These concerns are legitimate and deserve an open and honest answer. The minister has stated that he has worked with the Minister of Environment to include components of chapter 11 in the Beaver River land use plan, and perhaps government lawyers have given an opinion that there is no reason to be concerned.

Can the minister say with confidence that the Beaver River land use plan will not conflict with the Northern Tutchone regional land use plan contemplated under chapter 11?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I think what we have seen in some of the communication that exists is that there is probably some important work to do to ensure that particular stakeholders — as one of the stakeholders who was just mentioned — have the proper information. I think that working with Na-Cho Nyäk Dun on this particular agreement and seeing the expertise that was at the table — former leadership and senior negotiators who have been part of the self-government agreement for Na-Cho Nyäk Dun from very far back, sitting there and guiding this process and of course then working with government officials.

I am very comfortable with the work that is happening. We are being respectful of the fact that there needs to be further work under chapter 11, that this can be congruent with that, and

that the data and information that is gathered is very relevant and part of that building process. We will continue to respect the other processes that are happening. When First Nation governments or local communities reach out to us for local area planning, we will continue to have respectful conversations with them and engage — whether it be in Lake Laberge, in Mayo, or in the Southern Lakes.

Question re: Housing First project

Ms. Van Bibber: On November 22, 2017, the Minister of Yukon Housing Corporation announced a Housing First project with no consultation with local residents. When the minister was asked at her press conference what the budget was, she claimed that they hadn't determined a budget yet. Reporters confirmed shortly afterward that the budget for the project was actually stated in the tender documents. According to those documents, the budget was \$2.7 million. At the time, we said that was quite low for such a project, and it turns out that we were right.

If you go to the contract registry, you can see that the actual amount spent was over \$4.1 million. That means that the project is 52 percent overbudget. How did the Minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation mismanage this project so badly that it went this far overbudget?

Hon. Ms. Frost: We are committed to a Housing First project. What we are committed to is ensuring that we provide supports to our most vulnerable populations.

What we have done is that we did go ahead and proceeded with consultation. We spoke to the neighbours. We looked at our planning committee. We worked with the Safe at Home committee, and we did that in collaboration with the Housing Corporation and Health and Social Services — a joint effort. We understand that construction of the Housing First project on 5th Avenue and Wood Street is completed, and we will look at moving in the clients very shortly — in the next couple of weeks. We are looking at an operational model.

With respect to the cost and where we are with the cost — as noted by the member opposite, the project construction was awarded for \$3.9 million, and the budget — as we budgeted it — was \$2.7 million. Looking at the fact that we included federal funding — and we utilized \$1.2 million, which is the difference. That's where we are, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Van Bibber: As I have highlighted, the project was announced without consulting local residents. We raised concerns about this approach, and the Minister of Community Services claimed that consultation letters had gone out to the community. It later turned out that the letter wasn't sent out until four days after the minister's comment, and when CBC called him out for this, he had to correct the record in the Legislature.

This project has been mismanaged by the Liberals from the beginning, and these aren't the only issues with it. We are now almost \$1.4 million overbudget, and the facility was supposed to have been completed by June 30, 2019. Can the minister confirm the date and why it is going on so late?

Hon. Ms. Frost: We are proud of the efforts, the work, the consultation, and the engagement and of putting forward

initiatives in housing that are much needed within our city. That is what we are doing. We are doing it with integrity. We are doing it as transparently as we possibly can. We are engaging. We are utilizing federal resources, and we are cost-matching that.

We are working in partnership with the Yukon Housing Corporation. We are looking at the philosophy of Housing First. I recollect that, when this came forward, there were a lot of questions around — “Well, what does that mean specifically?” Well, Mr. Speaker, we look at providing resources and housing. Perhaps — housing is defined as a human right. Every person requires shelter and we want to ensure that this happens.

We are looking at opening the Housing First on November 12. We are very pleased about that. Why is that? It is because it provides necessary shelter and provides support for the vulnerable population. We will continue to do that, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the members opposite aren't supportive of that, but we certainly are on this side of the House.

Question re: Budget estimates and spending

Mr. Cathers: We have learned from the 2018-19 Public Accounts that the Premier and his colleagues added \$14.9 million in new long-term debt last fiscal year. They bypassed the Legislature and added on millions in debt. In that same fiscal year, I asked the Premier if the government was planning to take on any new debt. He told me — and I quote: “... we're not contemplating taking on any extra debt for our five-year capital plan...” He then went on to assure us — and I quote: “... we are not contemplating borrowing.” By the end of that year, he added on millions in new debt, increasing the total long-term debt by \$14.9 million.

Why did the Premier promise not to take on extra debt and then do the exact opposite?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This is a great opportunity to talk about debt and how we got into it. Of the \$400-million borrowing limit that is being set by Yukon borrowing limit regulations, \$190.5 million is still available. I wonder who borrowed that other \$200-some million. Oh, yes — it was the Yukon Party — that's right — and they left that debt on the books for Yukoners for future governments to deal with. Absolutely.

Mr. Speaker, Yukon's current borrowing limit, as I said, is \$400 million, allocated between the Government of Yukon and the corporations as well — Yukon Development Corporation, Yukon Energy Corporation, Yukon Housing Corporation, Yukon Hospital Corporation — and the limit is set by two regulations under the *Yukon Act*. These regulations specify that borrowing of any entities are included in the Public Accounts, and we are continuing to maintain that so that taxpayers know exactly who borrowed what money and when.

Mr. Cathers: Well, Mr. Speaker, aside from the fact that the Premier is forgetting that much of that debt predates the previous government, we are talking about what the Premier himself said.

Last fiscal year, the Premier repeatedly told us his government was not going to borrow more money and increase

the long-term debt. Instead, they added \$14.9 million to the Yukon's total long-term debt.

Here is another quote from the Premier when I pressed him about whether he was considering adding more long-term debt — quote: "... I have said this a few times, but I don't think the member opposite is paying attention to it — that we are not contemplating borrowing. We have a five-year capital plan and we have no contemplation to be borrowing..."

Can the Premier explain why he broke the promise he made in this House and added \$14.9 million in new debt last year?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite can confuse two different issues — absolutely. When the member opposite is asking about increasing the debt limits, that's one thing — going to Ottawa and talking about the increased debt limits. There's another thing about actually using the \$190 million that the members opposite left us out of \$400 million that they and their predecessors — the Yukon Party government — borrowed without any plan to repay.

Mr. Speaker, these requests to increase the debt — they have happened historically. In 2009, the Yukon Party increased the debt limit to \$300 million from \$138 million. In 2012, they again raised it another \$100 million. Now the member opposite is criticizing this government for adding to that — under \$15 million in debt — and also using words about whether we go to Ottawa to increase the debt limits — or are we going to use a mechanism that we need to use to allow corporations to continue to do the good work to serve Yukoners?

That's pretty rich from the member opposite who knows very, very well that his government has raised the borrowing limit twice — starting at \$138 million and onward to \$400 million.

Again: Is this a criticism on my behalf? No; no, it isn't. I'm sure the members opposite had good reason for what they did. But I will say that it's pretty rich that they keep on talking about us increasing the debt limit when it was them who increased the debt limit.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, the Premier seems outraged that I dared remember the fact that he told us that he was not going to add new long-term debt. I quoted his exact words, but the Premier doesn't like them.

Yukoners expect us to hold them accountable for the wasteful spending of taxpayers' money under this Liberal government that has increased spending by a whopping 10 percent in a single year according to their own Public Accounts.

They hiked spending by \$122 million in one year and of course gave the Premier a raise. The Premier repeatedly assured us in this House that he wasn't planning on borrowing money. In that same fiscal year, he borrowed millions of dollars without the scrutiny of the Legislature. The Liberals' new long-term debt will still be here for future governments and generations of Yukoners to pay.

Does the Premier believe that it's reasonable for his Cabinet to decide to plunge the Yukon further into debt without even giving the Legislative Assembly a chance to debate the spending first? Why did he add \$14.9 million in long-term debt

after telling this House that he was not contemplating borrowing money?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, using money for Yukon Energy Corporation or Yukon Development Corporation or any of the corporations is always something that we consider whole-of-government on this side of the House. Of course, it's interesting that the member opposite will confuse things and take things out of context and try to make it seem like we're doing something that the previous government already did. They're criticizing us for a \$15-million increase in the borrowing where they have used up \$210 million of that debt limit already, only leaving less than half of that. It is so interesting — the narrative of the member opposite. I don't know who he thinks he's speaking to as far as a narrative when he's telling Yukoners half parts of the full narrative — whether it's —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Member for Lake Laberge, on a point of order.

Mr. Cathers: The member seems to be in contravention of Standing Order 19(h), and as he knows, I'm not speaking of a narrative. I'm quoting him the facts.

Speaker: The Hon. Premier, on the point of order.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I'm merely pointing out that the member opposite is cherry-picking certain facts and certain narratives and just pointing out that there is more to the truth. So, this is a dispute among members.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: This appears to be pretty solidly a matter of debate and a dispute between members.

The Hon. Premier, you have 40 seconds.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know who the member opposite is speaking to when only talking about increases in expenses but not talking about recoveries which make up 75 percent of a lot of the money that we spend when we get 25-cent dollars or the fact that we were maximizing the federal dollars when we do attempt to get projects out the door that are community-led. It's a herculean effort not only to work whole-of-government but also with the community interests in mind.

The members opposite again spend a lot of our debt and now they're blaming us for it.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

Notice of opposition private members' business

Ms. White: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(3), I would like to identify the item standing in the name of the Third Party be called on Wednesday, November 6, 2019. It is Motion No. 66, standing in the name of the Member for Takhini-Kopper King.

Mr. Kent: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(3), I would like to identify the item standing in the name of the Official Opposition to be called on Wednesday, November 6, 2019. It

is Motion No. 77, standing in the name of the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Mr. Hassard: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, and notwithstanding Standing Order 27(1), I request the unanimous consent of the House to move, without notice, a motion for the House to pay tribute to Dennis Fentie, former Premier of Yukon, on Thursday, November 7, 2019, outside of the rubric for tributes during the Daily Routine.

Unanimous consent re moving Motion No. 100

Speaker: The Leader of the Official Opposition, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, and notwithstanding Standing Order 27(1), has requested the unanimous consent of the House to move, without notice, a motion for the House to pay tribute to Dennis Fentie, former Premier of Yukon, on Thursday, November 7, 2019, outside of the rubric for tributes during the Daily Routine.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: Unanimous consent has been granted.

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 100 — Tribute to former Premier Dennis Fentie

Mr. Hassard: I move:

THAT on Thursday, November 7, 2019, at 3:00 p.m., the House pay tribute to Dennis Fentie, former Premier of Yukon.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Leader of the Official Opposition:

THAT on Thursday, November 7, 2019, at 3:00 p.m., the House pay tribute to Dennis Fentie, former Premier of Yukon.

Speaker: Is there any debate on this motion?

Are you prepared for the question?

Motion No. 100 agreed to

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 4: *Act to Amend the Elections Act* — Second Reading

Clerk: Second reading, Bill No. 4, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Silver.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I move that Bill No. 4, entitled *Act to Amend the Elections Act*, be now read a second time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 4, entitled *Act to Amend the Elections Act*, be now read a second time.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to speak to these amendments to the *Elections Act* for the Legislative Assembly's consideration.

I want to first acknowledge the work of Maxwell Harvey, Chief Electoral Officer of Elections Yukon, who recommended these specific amendments to Members' Services Board as part

of the ongoing work of Elections Yukon to review our elections system and administer the elections process.

Part of the Chief Electoral Officer's work has been to review and identify what is needed to fully implement the permanent register that was established in 2015. This is the foundation of the amendments here today.

I also want to acknowledge the work of the individuals on the Members' Services Board to review the recommendations of the Chief Electoral Officer and to develop the amendments that we are discussing here today.

While these amendments are administrative in nature, they are designed to strengthen our democracy and ensure the integrity of the elections process by fully operationalizing the Yukon permanent voter register and making voter registration and voting processes clearer and more accessible for Yukon voters. Most importantly, the amendments will support the permanent register by allowing for information sharing between Elections Yukon and Yukon government departments for the purposes of populating the register and increasing access to special ballots as a voting option for all Yukon voters.

To give a bit of context: As many of us will recall, the transition from enumeration to a permanent register was provided for in 2015 when the act was last amended. The whole point of the permanent register, as we know, was to move from an in-person, door-to-door enumeration process — which is inefficient, labour-intensive, and time-consuming — to a modern, up-to-date system.

Putting a register in place was a long time coming and it represented a major shift in our approach to voter registration. A modern electronic register will provide for greater coverage, currency, and accuracy of the registered voters in Yukon — and there are some very telling numbers to demonstrate this point. For example, if you compare Elections Yukon's list with the Elections Canada list, you will see that Elections Canada currently includes over 30,000 Yukoners on their list, which is said to be about 94-percent coverage of the voting population. On the other hand, Elections Yukon has less than 25,000 voters on their list in the last election, which could represent a 25-percent difference in the number of electors compared to Canada's list. That's a big difference when you consider all the variables. It could be a difference of 5,000 electors or so.

The old enumeration process missed a number of people. The voter lists were incomplete and contained errors. Many voter information cards were returned to Elections Yukon. Some may simply have gone to the wrong address or were tossed out. In terms of voter turnout in the last election, there were almost 6,000 Yukoners registered to vote with Elections Yukon who did not. At least some of this can likely be attributed to people not receiving their voter information card. When you look at some of the numbers and relate them to a jurisdiction like ours with small districts, it is really clear how important every vote is and the weight of every vote. For example, in the last election, 15 of our 19 ridings were decided with a margin of less than 100 votes, and 12 of those were decided by less than 50 votes.

If you look at the weight of each vote in Yukon and the volume of votes, you can see how small changes might have

had big impacts. This is why it is so important to support these amendments to help fully operationalize the 2015 changes to voter registration. Doing so will improve Yukoners' access to the vote in a way that enhances convenience and the integrity of the institutions that preside over our processes. Essentially, the register is an electronic database of Yukon voters. As an electronic database, it can receive data from multiple sources, it can be continually updated as new information becomes available, and it can cross-check and verify the accuracy of that information.

While the register was authorized in legislation in 2015, the Chief Electoral Officer identified some remaining barriers in the act that prevented the register from functioning as effectively as it could, making it more difficult to bring the register to life and realize its various benefits. The Chief Electoral Officer also identified additional process improvements that complement the permanent register. These improvements will increase convenience and accessibility for Yukoners both when they register to vote and when they exercise their right to vote.

I would like to take a few minutes to speak in greater detail about the key amendments that we are discussing here today. These priority areas include: eliminating barriers that limit data sharing needed by Elections Yukon to fully implement that register; addressing inconsistent timelines and processes for registration and voting; and increasing access to special ballots for all Yukoners.

First, I want to speak to barriers that limit Elections Yukon from accessing information to fully implement the register. Currently, Yukon is the only jurisdiction in Canada that requires an individual to specifically approve or opt in to allow their personal information to be collected by Elections Yukon from a public body or electoral authority, yet this same information can readily be accessed by other electoral authorities such as Elections Canada to verify the information on their register.

The requirement for individual consent limits Elections Yukon from establishing the register to provide for timely access to accurate information. These proposed changes will allow Elections Yukon the same access provided to Elections Canada. The proposed amendment will authorize the Chief Electoral Officer to collect personal information from Yukon public bodies and government departments and allow these departmental bodies to provide that information without an individual being required to opt in — note that Elections Yukon will follow established best practices for the collection, use, and storage of personal information and the protection of privacy.

The proposed amendments will also add Yukon First Nation governments as electoral authorities similar to municipal governments and Elections Canada. This will allow the Chief Electoral Officer to enter into agreements with Yukon First Nation governments — if they wish — to share information for electoral purposes, thereby providing another potential tool to establish a more inclusive and complete register of Yukon voters.

The second key area of the amendment is designed to improve voter registration processes and align timelines to

produce more accurate voter lists. The permanent register needs to operate in tandem with voter registration and voter processes, including special ballots — all of which can change the information needed for the final voter list used on election day.

At the end of the day, the goal is to have accurate voter lists used throughout the election period and especially on polling day. This will ensure the integrity of the electoral system.

Right now, the timelines are inconsistent and varied, essentially requiring updates and changes throughout the election period, including on voting day. This makes it very difficult and cumbersome for elections officials to produce and use accurate lists. It also can result in errors at polling stations and confusion for voters. The proposed amendments will improve inconsistencies and help ensure accurate voting lists.

The third key area of the amendment is expanding access to special ballots. With these changes, all Yukoners have the option to vote using special ballots — all Yukoners. Any elector who cannot or does not wish to vote at a polling station during an election can apply to vote using a special ballot. This significantly expands options to Yukoners.

Currently, a special ballot is only open to some voters, and there are various timelines and conditions around their use, making the process confusing and cumbersome. The proposed amendments will also standardize the timelines for special ballot applications. All special ballots will now be available from the time that the writ is issued — that is, the day that the election is called — until the Friday before the election day or day 28 of the election period. However, to be clear, special ballots can be applied for before the writ is issued. They will be provided to voters after the writ is issued, and they can still be received up to the close of the polls on election day.

Standardizing the timelines for special ballot applications will provide Elections Yukon with the time needed to adjust the final voting lists to be used at the polls and accurately account for voters who have been issued special ballots and are deemed to have already voted.

Taken together, this modest but important package of amendments that we have before us will bring the permanent register to life and will improve registration and voting processes for Yukoners. The integrity of the electoral system and services to Yukoners in the voting process is what this package of amendments is focused on.

I would like to take this opportunity once again to thank the Chief Electoral Officer for the experienced advice and the Members' Services Board for its diligence in reviewing and endorsing the recommendations of the Chief Electoral Officer. It is my intent in tabling these amendments today to have something that all members support, since they were developed through Members' Services Board in the spirit of cross-party collaboration and based on the expert advice of the Chief Electoral Officer.

It has been an absolute privilege speaking today to this bill. I look forward to hearing from other members.

Mr. Cathers: In rising to speak to this legislation as the Official Opposition critic for democratic institutions, I would point out to the Premier that, if he wants to start making

reference to Members' Services Board discussions — especially misleading references — then perhaps we should make the minutes of those meetings public so that Yukoners can understand what discussions actually occurred at those meetings.

Mr. Speaker, in speaking to this legislation, I want to begin by noting the fact that it is very disturbing to see this Premier and this Liberal government talk a very good line on collaboration and then do the opposite. I have to point out the connection on this to the Liberals' approach to electoral reform. We know that, despite input from the opposition — and despite that, in fact, during a previous debate on a motion in the Legislative Assembly where the Premier claimed at the time to be open to an all-party approach to electoral reform — the Premier and his colleagues, earlier this year, set up what has been quite accurately characterized as a one-party-decides-all approach to electoral reform. In fact, their approach was, as the member knows, criticized by the former Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, who served this Chamber for —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Hon. Premier, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Silver: The member opposite is clearly speaking to items other than the bill on the floor. I would ask him to make it quick and get back to the actual bill.

Speaker: The Member for Lake Laberge, on the point of order.

Mr. Cathers: On the point of order, I am referencing something very directly related to the legislation at hand. If the Premier will allow me to continue speaking, Mr. Speaker, you will see how these two are very directly connected.

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Well, the matter for consideration this afternoon is Bill No. 4, *Act to Amend the Elections Act*, so I will listen to the Member for Lake Laberge and his focus on this bill. I will certainly listen to how he will try to link it with electoral reform, writ large. I will listen, but I would certainly ask the member to focus his attention on Bill No. 4.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, I will connect the dots right away. Yesterday, the Leader of the Official Opposition sent the Premier a letter regarding electoral reform. In that letter, the Leader of the Official Opposition made a request, and I will quote from it and table a copy of the letter as well for members. The Leader of the Official Opposition wrote, "For this reason, I am requesting that as a gesture of good faith, you commit to not calling the Elections Act for debate until after we meet so that we can discuss a proposed amendment to the Act..."

Mr. Speaker, the relevance of the two processes is that, following the debate which has occurred regarding electoral reform, the Leader of the Official Opposition wrote a letter yesterday and sent it to the Premier regarding both the current amendments to the *Elections Act* that we are discussing and electoral reform. The response to that letter, unfortunately, from the Premier was perhaps the most arrogant response that

we could see from this government — very dismissive to the request made by the Leader of the Official Opposition. The direct connection between the two, I would point out, is that both in the bill itself and the fact that the Leader of the Official Opposition wrote the Premier a letter regarding this bill and its connection to the electoral reform process, and he specifically proposed a meeting to discuss the two — just for the record, I will table a copy of the November 4 letter that the Leader of the Official Opposition sent to the Premier regarding this act that we are discussing now and electoral reform.

I will just quote from that letter. The letter from my colleague, the Leader of the Official Opposition, to the Premier said, "Dear Premier..." — and, of course, I can't use his name — "RE: Electoral Reform".

"You still have not responded to many questions the Official Opposition posed in previous correspondence regarding electoral reform. We are of the firm view that in order for you to demonstrate you are working with all parties in good faith that you should answer these questions.

"Refusing to answer simple and reasonable questions in writing only contributes to the perception that you are needlessly being secretive or purposely keeping information from opposition parties. You have now received the questions through multiple letters; I encourage you to please answer them."

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Hon. Premier, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Now we are reading unnecessarily from documents that are tabled, Mr. Speaker. We are debating a specific bill about amendments to a specific electoral act.

The member opposite can quote about a strategy that they have to continue to postpone electoral reform as much as he wants and paint it whatever colour he wants, but it still is speaking outside of the rules of the Legislative Assembly as far as what we are here today to be debating.

Speaker: The Member for Lake Laberge, on the point of order.

Mr. Cathers: The Premier is taking a very narrow view of the Standing Orders and is trying to stifle the type of debate which has occurred for decades on legislation of this type. The letter at hand that I am quoting from was addressed to the Premier regarding both this act and its connection to electoral reform.

So, I believe that it is a dispute between members. Clearly, the Premier doesn't want me to have the opportunity to tell the public the facts.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: Obviously, the Speaker doesn't have the benefit of the review of documents now that are being referenced on the fly, which makes it difficult for the Chair — the Speaker — to make any sort of coherent determination with respect to the nexus.

Standing Order No. 19 says, “The member shall be called to order by the Speaker if that member (b) speaks to matters other than (i) the question under discussion...”

So, I understand what the Member for Lake Laberge is saying with respect to some latitude, but clearly the matter under discussion is Bill No. 4, and notwithstanding that there might be some connection to another topic, the focus of the member’s comments this afternoon at second reading with respect to this bill should be with respect to this bill.

In relation to what the Member for Lake Laberge would like to bring to the House’s attention, there is certainly — in my view, there will be opportunity to do so at other times — whether that is in Question Period or other motions. Although I might provide some additional latitude, in my respectful submission, pursuant to Standing Order 19(b)(i), the preponderance of the focus of your submissions should be with respect to Bill No. 4.

The Member for Lake Laberge, please.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, the letter that I’m quoting from that the Premier didn’t want me to — spends about half its time talking about this *Elections Act* amendment we are discussing here today. The rest of the letter — because the two matters are directly connected — relates to the Liberal government’s electoral reform process.

Though the Premier doesn’t want me to talk about the discussions that have occurred and the correspondence, I believe these matters are very directly related. Of course, any —

Speaker’s statement

Speaker: The Member for Lake Laberge, I think I’ve made a decision here. No one is stopping you from bringing up this issue as soon as tomorrow, I suppose. There’s nothing stopping you from bringing this issue up.

I would like you to wrap up your comments and focus on Bill No. 4, please.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Chair, I will of course respect your ruling, although I am quite surprised by it.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, it is — while I hear the Premier kibitzing off-mic — but we’re talking about changes to the *Elections Act*. We are talking about a specific request the Leader of the Official Opposition made regarding the *Elections Act* to the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, the reference in the letter that I would note regarding this legislation — I will repeat that again — regarding this legislation — the Leader of the Official Opposition wrote to the Premier and proposed meeting to discuss this legislation and the electoral reform process and suggested a time later this week — that time being November 8 at 12:30 p.m. — to discuss — let me say it again — this legislation and electoral reform.

Mr. Speaker, the response from the Premier and the government is clear. Despite the request — and I’ll again quote from the relevant part of the letter. The Leader of the Official

Opposition, in direct reference to this legislation said — and I quote: “The topic of electoral reform, as you know can be quite broad, but we interpret major electoral reform to mean any changes in law that would affect how and when Yukoners can vote or how their ballot is counted. As such, the current amendments to the Elections Act that reduce the opportunities for Yukoners to cast special ballots, we consider to be major changes. We are concerned that they are being proposed without any consultation with Yukoners. As you know this particular legislative change, if implemented prior to the last election, could have resulted in 206 ballots not being cast.”

So, Mr. Speaker, as the Premier knows, this is not the first time that we have raised concerns with this part of the act, but a direct request made by the Leader of the Official Opposition to the Premier yesterday was — and again, I will briefly quote from the letter because it is directly relevant to these changes. The Leader of the Official Opposition said — and I quote: “For this reason, I am requesting that as a gesture of good faith, you commit to not calling the Elections Act for debate until after we meet so that we can discuss a proposed amendment to the Act which would allow this proposal to be considered through the electoral reform process.”

Of course, the Premier could, if he wished, have agreed to that request and had the meeting, discussed it, and chosen not to agree, but the Premier wouldn’t even meet to discuss this legislation and the connection to the Liberals’ one-party-decides-all electoral reform process.

Again, I’m going to quote briefly from the letter. In proposing a meeting to discuss both this specific legislative change that we are discussing here this afternoon and electoral reform, the Leader of the Official Opposition said — and I quote: “That said, and despite the fact that you have so far not been forthcoming or transparent throughout this process, the Official Opposition believes that it is in the interests of Yukoners to try and get this back on track. For that reason, I’m suggesting that all three parties meet on November 8th at 12:30 PM to discuss a path forward.”

Now, if that time wasn’t convenient for the Premier, he could have replied to the letter sent by the Leader of the Official Opposition and proposed a different time. Instead, in what appears to be a direct response to what I believe any Yukoner would see as a very reasonable request from the Leader of the Official Opposition to meet to discuss the *Elections Act* and the Liberals’ proposed electoral reform process — again, the Leader of the Official Opposition asked that, as a gesture of good faith, the Premier commit to “... not calling the Elections Act for —”

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Hon. Premier, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, I am trying. I really am trying here, but the member opposite keeps talking about a meeting on Friday that I heard about — well, it was a letter delivered yesterday. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, he is asking me if we could meet outside of the Chamber to speak

about what we're supposed to be speaking about right now in the Chamber, which is this particular bill.

Again, the member opposite speaks over and over again about the same thing, but he is refusing to speak about Bill No. 4. I would ask the member opposite — we could speak about this in Committee of the Whole. We could speak about this many other times, but right now, it is our responsibility to discuss the amendments in Bill No. 4. The member opposite is asking us to have a closed-door meeting and to have that conversation as opposed to doing our job here in the Legislative Assembly. I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, to recommend that the member opposite get back to the topic at hand today.

Speaker: The Member for Lake Laberge, on the point of order.

Mr. Cathers: I am referencing a letter that the Leader of the Official Opposition wrote the Premier about this very bill. I think that this is directly germane to this legislation. If the leader had concerns with the bill as he did and suggested a meeting to discuss it, I think that is quite relevant to the legislation itself, since it's about that legislation.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: We have heard about the chronology and you have had your opportunity to provide debate on the chronology. If you want to wrap that up in the next, I would say, minute or so — after that, I am looking for the Member for Lake Laberge to focus on the second reading of Bill No. 4, *Act to Amend the Elections Act*, and the substance therein.

Mr. Cathers: Thank you, I think, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Cathers: Again, the Premier is arguing off-mic. The Premier has a tendency, as he did in speaking to the *Elections Act*, to argue that black is white and red is black. If he doesn't like the criticism that comes from other members about the matter under discussion, he is quick to call a point of order.

I would actually point out to the Premier that the numbers that he cited in introducing this bill — he might want to check his math. I know that it is not his strong suit, but he got some of those numbers wrong, Mr. Speaker.

In fact, when talking about the margin of victory in ridings in the last territorial election, we have seen the situation — sorry, I am just looking for that part in my notes — in fact, the actual facts, contrary to the Premier's numbers, are that, in the last territorial election, 10 ridings were won by less than 60 votes. A change of less than 200 votes could significantly change the balance of seats in the Legislative Assembly.

I have to remind the Premier that, although he is choosing to ram through changes that do not have the support of all parties, in 2015, the Yukon Party of the day — with me as the lead minister, as Minister of Justice — worked on changes to the *Elections Act* and were able to receive the unanimous support of the Assembly, including the Premier himself as then-Liberal leader. The Assembly then unanimously voted in favour of legislation that expanded the ability for people to vote by special ballot. Now we are seeing some of those changes that were unanimously passed by this Legislative Assembly rolled

back through the bill that the Premier has tabled here in this House. The Premier claimed that they are actually expanding special ballots. In fact, we know, from both the former Chief Electoral Officer and the results that happened in the last election with an unprecedentedly high use of special ballots, that the list of specified reasons that are currently allowed effectively allow anyone to vote by special ballot anyway. That particular part of the legislation — we don't have a problem with removing the requirement for a specified reason and just simply allowing someone to vote by special ballot for any reason, but, in fact, it is not having a significant effect on the number of people who voted.

What does have a significant effect is the change that the Premier has insisted on proposing here in this bill, which, if it had been in effect at the last election, might have resulted in the 206 people who voted during the early voting opportunity by special ballot potentially not having the opportunity to cast a ballot. We don't know how many of those 206 people would have been unable to vote, but neither does the Premier.

I have to ask: Where is the compelling reason to cut off the opportunity for someone to cast a ballot before the writ was dropped? It was popular last time. Again, 206 people, according to the numbers from Elections Yukon — 206 Yukoners cast a ballot in the early voting opportunity afforded by the changes to the *Elections Act*.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Cathers: For the members talking off-mic, you may want to take a look at the numbers in the report provided by Elections Yukon to all parties.

It is very interesting here that this government seems to think that it has a mandate to choose to change the *Elections Act* in a way that could have potentially disenfranchised 206 voters in the last election. For the Premier to describe these changes as “administrative in nature” — that was his exact quote earlier today — that is pretty shocking, Mr. Speaker.

Again, the Premier in his opening remarks made reference to changes to the act and that this legislation allows for the move away from enumeration, but the legislative changes to move away from enumeration were contained in the *Elections Act* changes passed unanimously in this House in 2015. We understand that some changes to make it smoother have been proposed by Elections Yukon, and those changes we do not have a problem with, Mr. Speaker. But, again, we do not believe that it is appropriate to cut off any significant period of voting without even asking Yukoners first. We believe that those sections of the act should go out for public consultation at the very least, if the government is insistent on making those changes.

Again, I would ask all members of this Assembly: Where is the compelling need to change this to deny that early voting opportunity that was popular in the last election with students, people who were planning to travel, and people who are working in remote locations? As we have stated, we believe in a principle. The Yukon Party believes in the principle of increasing opportunity and removing barriers for people to vote. The Premier claims that their planned changes the *Elections Act* would not prevent people from voting, but what

we know is that, in the last election, 206 people voted by special ballot during the early voting time period, which this legislation before the House seeks to eliminate. The ability to vote by special ballot before the writ was officially dropped made it easier for students going to university, people planning to travel, and people who work in remote locations. As I noted, those changes were passed with the unanimous support of this House in 2015.

We do have to ask the Liberal government: How they can support shortening the time period to case a ballot without actually consulting Yukon citizens to see if they support this change which could have easily made the difference of what party formed the government in the last election and could make a difference of who forms the government in the next election? Especially for a party that campaigned on the slogan “Be Heard” — how can they justify not asking Yukoners whether they support this change before passing it through into law?

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Cathers: Well, I know that the Premier is kibitzing off-mic about Members’ Services Board, but the Premier knows very well what I said at Members’ Services Board about the proposed changes. Without compromising the confidentiality of that Committee, what I will say — as I have said before — is that the positions the Yukon Party takes in confidential committees and in public are exactly the same.

I know that the Premier thinks this is a laughing matter. He is chuckling off-mic about this, but this is a serious matter, Mr. Speaker. We are talking about the way by which people cast a ballot and the fact that — as I mentioned, which the Premier took great offence to — the Premier wouldn’t even agree to meet with the Leader of the Official Opposition to discuss these changes and our proposal that this section of the act be taken out for public consultation, at the very least, before they proceeded with it.

Again, I will just briefly quote from the specific reference of the letter that the Leader of the Official Opposition said — and I quote —

Speaker’s statement

Speaker: Order, please. Have we heard this already? Member for Lake Laberge — are you quoting a different section?

Mr. Cathers: Yes, I am quoting a different section, sir.

Speaker: Thank you. The Member for Lake Laberge, please.

Mr. Cathers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To quote from the letter — the Leader of the Official Opposition said — and I quote: “... however we believe that Yukoners should be consulted on it and that the consideration of such a major change to the way we vote should be within the mandate of whatever electoral process is ultimately established.” That was in direct reference to this legislation.

We know that the Liberals are very testy on this topic, but the Liberal government does not own the Yukon’s democracy — it belongs to Yukoners. This Liberal government was elected

with about 39 percent of the vote from Yukoners. That does not give them a mandate to unilaterally ram through changes — especially changes which might affect how hundreds of people vote and especially without consulting them first.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is very concerning. I know that I am being somewhat limited in what I am allowed to speak about the connection to the electoral reform process, but again, we have seen a situation where the statement on both matters that the Premier makes behind closed doors and in public are different things — that he chooses to mischaracterize discussions that occurred after the fact and then refuses to agree to waive confidentiality on matters that are in writing regarding this.

Again, regarding this legislation, we have stated — and the same principle applies to the electoral reform process — that the Yukon’s democracy belongs to all Yukoners, not just the Liberal Party. We have stated that, on this change as well as on the electoral reform process, there should be an all-party process aimed at reaching consensus on an approach to electoral reform and to any and all amendments to the *Elections Act*. Unfortunately, in this case, as the Premier knows very well, these changes do not have the support of all members because we are fundamentally opposed to this change being made without public consultation first.

Mr. Speaker, what happened to “Be Heard”? If this government will take away a voting opportunity used by 206 Yukoners in the last election without consulting with them, what else are they prepared to ram through without even hearing from Yukon citizens? It is quite unfortunate, and I know that, based on their behaviour so far, the Premier not only won’t meet to discuss our concerns with this legislation, but they will undoubtedly ram these changes through with their majority at the end of the day. That, Mr. Speaker, is a sad day for democracy.

Ms. Hanson: I am pleased to finally have an opportunity to speak to Bill No. 4, *Act to Amend the Elections Act*.

It has been a long time coming. I want to commend the Chief Electoral Officer and his small staff for their diligence in trying to impress upon all of the members of this Legislative Assembly the importance of keeping the *Elections Act* for Yukon current.

I acknowledge that there was significant work done by the previous government in modernizing the *Elections Act*, but the fact of the matter is that, in the time intervening, there has been a significant review, and there have been a number of fundamental issues found that are operationally challenging and, with respect to the Member for Lake Laberge, fundamentally archaic in the context of a modern democracy.

It is ironic — I wish I had Alanis Morissette here this afternoon, because she would be singing a chorus non-stop this afternoon.

I fail to understand how the recommended provision with respect to changing the special ballots — yes, in fact, the Chief Electoral Officer did point out that the pre-writ number was 206. But you know what, Mr. Speaker? That 206 included a number of people — I don’t know if it was all 206 — who could

have voted as of November 2015. The election occurred in November 2016. How, in any reasonable mind, would you think that was democratic? You could vote for a dog just because it happened to bear the name of the party. Is that the kind of effective representation that we're seeking to reflect in our *Elections Act*? I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, but I do not see merit in that argument.

I saw and I heard the thoughtful presentation made by the Chief Electoral Officer about taking down the barriers to being able to use a special ballot, to cast a ballot, but in the writ period — not a year before. We don't have a clue, should the government decide to pass the four-year mark and go into the fifth year — nobody in this Chamber — maybe a few do, but certainly not on this side. We have no idea when that election will be called. It would be irresponsible for me to seek to have somebody cast a ballot for my party without looking in the context of the merits of what that candidate may bring to this Chamber on behalf of Yukoners — let alone a riding. So, Mr. Speaker, I'm really taken aback by that argument.

One of the concerns that I have — when I said at the outset that we were finally getting to this — is that the Chief Electoral Officer has made it abundantly clear to those of us privileged enough to be part of those conversations that there is significant work to be done in terms of putting together that permanent register of electors. The working with other levels of government and the working with other data sources has to commence now in order for us to have an electoral list that has integrity. All of us in this Legislative Assembly have worked with results of the enumeration process — the last, thank goodness, enumeration process that was provided in order to conduct the 2016 election. That enumeration, as we heard, can place in every single riding — about people who were missed for lots of different reasons. Our list was not complete.

Mr. Speaker, the Chief Electoral Officer, as I said, in my view, has made a number of recommendations. These are the key recommendations that we see reflected in the amendments to the *Elections Act*. There are other process changes that need to be considered to bring us into the 21st century in a full way, and we should not be assuming that there is not work to be done. I expect and anticipate that this government will be bringing forward, at the behest of the Chief Electoral Officer, additional amendments — suggestions that have been made and are being done elsewhere, such as the pre-registration of 16- and 17-year-olds happening in British Columbia, recommended by our Chief Electoral Officer. But seeing the reaction to some of these things today, that might be a bit too much for folks.

I think what we want to be doing is broadening the participation rate of all Yukoners in our democracy and in our electoral processes, but I fervently do not agree with the representation made by the Member for Lake Laberge this afternoon with respect to him, I would suggest, selectively interpreting the implications of the 206 votes that were cast perhaps up to a year prior to the last election. Yes, we know that the election results in Yukon are close — 14 votes or 7 votes. That is subject matter for another debate, a debate yet to

be held in an open forum. We are talking today about changes to the *Elections Act*.

I fully endorse the recommendations put forward through the government from the Chief Electoral Officer. They are a start. There is — as anyone who has had the opportunity to review the recommendations — the review of all of the sections of the *Elections Act* done by the Chief Electoral Officer. There is more work to come, and we should brace ourselves for it and be prepared to do it on behalf of Yukon citizens.

Speaker: If the member now speaks, he will close debate on second reading of Bill No. 4.

Does any other member wish to be heard?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I do want to thank the members opposite for their comments with regards to the *Elections Act*. I will respond to some of the comments from the members opposite. I want to thank the Member for Whitehorse Centre for her comments. Again, they are pertinent to the amendments that are being recommended and are a recognition of the herculean effort from the electoral office — but also that we are not done.

Any modern government should always be interpreting other jurisdictions, taking a look at best practices, and making sure that our ultimate goal is that Yukoners have more opportunity to vote as opposed to less. I am very encouraged by her remarks.

With the Member for Lake Laberge, it is disheartening to see the ongoing narrative. It does make you wonder where true north is with the Yukon Party these days. The compass seems to be spinning around and around.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Member for Lake Laberge, on a point of order.

Mr. Cathers: I am returning the favour for the Premier. He is not speaking about the *Elections Act*.

Speaker: The Hon. Premier, on the point of order.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I will admit that it is going to be hard for me to keep my remarks to the member opposite's remarks that were pertinent to the *Elections Act*, but I will do my best to make sure that my comments are based on his requests when it comes to the *Elections Act* and the double standard therein.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: As there is in all debate in the Legislature, there is criticism of each other's positions. That is the very nature of this Assembly and the Westminster system. I certainly heard criticism from the Member for Lake Laberge, and I'm hearing something from the Leader of the Official Opposition. Of course, there is some latitude in the vigorous debate that occurs in the Assembly. There will, of course, be the alternate narrative and perhaps even at some points pointed criticism of members — hopefully on a principle basis, but in any event, pointed criticism of members opposite.

I will certainly allow the Premier some latitude, but I trust that he will generally focus on closing debate on second reading of Bill No. 4.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, it is very interesting to hear the narrative from the member opposite. On the one hand, we are being criticized for having what he is considering to be closed-door meetings when it comes to Members' Services Board, which is exactly where an all-party committee got together to discuss the recommendations from the Chief Electoral Officer. Big criticisms of that being somehow a closed-door conversation among the members — but yet as opposed to wanting to debate the *Elections Act* here on the floor of the Legislative Assembly today, we heard the member opposite saying that he wants to have a closed-door meeting about this conversation on a Friday coming. It's interesting how that's kind of a double standard.

It also is interesting to note that the changes that we're debating today — they are a result of a recommendation from Members' Services Board. The Yukon Party has spoken at length this Sitting about the importance of taking direction from Members' Services Board. Today, the Yukon Party is arguing exactly the opposite — ignore the recommendations from Members' Services Board or ignore the ones that we want you to ignore — but the other ones — and saying it in a way to make it seem that Members' Services Board has a long history or — no, actually, even further than that — a policy — a policy, Mr. Speaker — of having all-party support before they're allowed to do anything.

I've been a member of Members' Services Board for eight years now. I recall many a time where that was absolutely not true — when the Yukon Party had the majority on Members' Services Board. So, it's pretty rich again that the members opposite have a very selective memory of the rules and procedures of these boards and committees from the Legislative Assembly.

It's proving to be a pattern from the Yukon Party. They're asking us to follow the recommendations when they align with their priorities and ignore the recommendations when they don't. I think that Yukoners can see through this inconsistency in the position of the Yukon Party.

I will also add the narrative that somehow the amendments today that we are discussing — that they somehow limit people's ability to vote by special ballot — that just does not wash at all. For one, compared to the federal election — you cannot vote by a special ballot in the federal election at all. No Yukoners can vote by special ballot in the federal election.

In the Yukon, now what we've done — as opposed to having parsed off individuals' special circumstances with different rules and procedures for different groups of Yukoners who may or may not be able to vote by a special ballot — which was the system in the past that the member opposite so treasures — now every Yukoner — every single Yukoner of voting age can vote by special ballot.

Again, when we mentioned the number of individuals who last time used a special ballot and that somehow they have less of an opportunity — it just doesn't wash, Mr. Speaker; it just

doesn't wash. There are more opportunities for all Yukoners to be able to register and to vote using special ballots.

So, again, this very specific narrative from the Member for Lake Laberge — I hope that his whole party doesn't agree with this narrative because, really, the one particular frayed piece that the Member for Lake Laberge keeps on talking about — about this concept of being able to register for special ballots in the last few days of an election — the reason why that is no longer an option is to prevent things like double voting — double voting, Mr. Speaker. If we can have a registration as opposed to enumeration, if we can have a system that allows more opportunities for special ballot, but yet help the electoral office and the returning officers across Yukon — I can only imagine the stress on the returning officers who know the importance of their jobs. I know these returning officers — they take these jobs very seriously. It is about their ability to maintain the credibility of elections, and the Chief Electoral Officer has identified a system that really does not help — a system that, in the past, could promote double voting in certain jurisdictions. The member opposite wants us to keep that. The member opposite wants us to keep that piece, as opposed to maintaining the sanctity of the list, as opposed to having a registered voting system that works to increase the ability for special ballots. Again, I don't agree with the tack from the members opposite — sorry, the Yukon Party opposite.

So, again, I think that this is a very progressive bill. It identifies where we are, where we need to move forward. Is it perfect? No. Do we have places to go? We do — we absolutely do — and I am extremely encouraged by Mr. Harvey — the Chief Electoral Officer — and his team in providing substantive changes to the Legislative Assembly that help protect the sanctity of the voting process and that helps add thousands of people to a list so that we are more consistent with the federal lists — again, more opportunities to seek out people who have the opportunity to vote, who may not be registered — not less, as the member opposite would have you believe — that increases the ability of Yukoners to vote by special ballot — not less, like the member opposite would have you believe. Again, I believe, on this side of the House, that these changes are progressive and they add opportunities for Yukoners.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Disagree.

Mr. Kent: Disagree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Disagree.

Mr. Cathers: Disagree.

Ms. McLeod: Disagree.

Mr. Istchenko: Disagree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 11 yeas, 6 nays.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion for second reading of Bill No. 4 agreed to

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

Speaker: It has been moved by the Acting 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 (Mr. Hutton): I will now call Committee of the Whole to order.

The matter now before the Committee is clause-by-clause debate on Bill No. 5, entitled *Liquor Act*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 5: *Liquor Act* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is clause-by-clause debate on Bill No. 5, entitled *Liquor Act*. Resuming debate on clause 57, Ms. White has 19 minutes, 50 seconds.

On Clause 57 — continued

Ms. White: In conversation with both my colleague for Whitehorse Centre and my colleague for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes, there are a number of topics that we want to discuss today. As we get closer to those things, one of my roles of support will be to help us get to those specific topics of conversation.

Mr. Chair, if the minister just wants to tell us a bit about clause 57, that would be fantastic.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Again, I'm sure all of us in the Legislature welcome back colleagues — from the Legislative Counsel office, Ms. Markman, and from the Yukon Liquor Corporation, Ms. Groenewegen.

Under clause 57, the things that I was pointing out earlier were that: (1) we should always remember that, under the act, RCMP are also inspectors — so when we read the word

“inspector”, we have to think of it more broadly than just the Yukon Liquor Corporation inspectors; and (2) we wanted to make sure that it isn't just on the licensed premises, because sometimes it depends on where liquor is stored, et cetera — so we have broadened where those inspectors can go to carry out their duties. Those were things I wanted to draw people's attention to under clause 57.

Clause 57 agreed to

On Clause 58

Clause 58 agreed to

On Clause 59

Ms. Hanson: I have a question with respect to 59(1) and (2), so clarity in terms of the language — it's kind of ambiguous when we say that the “... licensee is likely to remedy the matter...” I am curious as to how that is ascertained. Then in (2)(a), it says “... the board may, by order, extend the initial period of suspension for any period...” How many times may the board extend for any period the period of suspension?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: There are certain issues which may arise which may be dealt with in a timely fashion. They might be things like the capacity of an establishment — not meaning what the capacity is, but rather that the establishment is over-capacity. There are some things that can be remedied quickly and so this is why it is up to the discretion of the inspector. The period is not to exceed 14 days, but if there is something, for example, which, under section 59(1)(b), is able to be remedied, then it is possible that the inspector could say, “Okay, you're suspended until this time,” and then the inspector can come back and check to make sure that the issue has been resolved and that therefore the suspension can be lifted — so I think that is the anticipation.

Clause 59 agreed to

On Clause 60

Ms. Hanson: So, it says in clause 60(1), “A judge of the Territorial Court or justice who convicts a licensee of an offence under this Act may, in addition to any other penalty, recommend to the board a suspension or cancellation of, or a variation of the conditions of, a licence held by the licensee.” Then I look down to 60(3): “After hearing the matter, the board must

“(a) if satisfied that there is good reason to suspend or cancel the licence... do so; or

“(b) otherwise, inform the licensee that the recommendation of the judge or justice will not be followed.”

I guess I am seeking clarification as to what authority a liquor board has to say to a territorial court judge, “Too bad, so sad. I don't like your ruling.” Does this set up a conflict between the board and a judge of the territorial court? What is the purpose of the court process in the first place if the board can simply say no?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I think, Mr. Chair, to be fair — the judge, when he hears the case, has the ability to charge the licensee with an offense, and there can be a fine, there could be imprisonment, and there could be things like that. But when it comes to the licensing of the premises, what the judge will be doing is making a recommendation to the board in recognition of the expertise of the board around licensing.

My interpretation is that the board will consider those recommendations very seriously from the judge, but that what we are doing is putting the final authority in the correct place when it comes to the licence, and the decisions around the licence go to the board with a recommendation from the judge. When it comes to other offences that the judge deems, those are the decision of the judge.

Ms. Hanson: My question is: Why would we involve the territorial court? Why wouldn't we have an arbitration process or some other dispute resolution process? It makes no sense to occupy the court's time and then say that we are not going to follow it.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Chair, let's imagine that there is an issue that has come before the court and the court decides that there is wrongdoing or something incorrect. The judge makes a decision — for example, a conviction under that ruling. That might include fines and it might include time served. In addition to whatever the judge has ruled under that, the judge may also make a recommendation for additional sanctions by the board on the licensee regarding their licence. Again, the jurisdiction of the licences is with the board, but the board will hear the recommendation that comes from the judge.

Ms. Hanson: I understand that. Perhaps the minister didn't hear my question. I asked: Why was the decision taken in this legislation to use the territorial court as opposed to other dispute resolutions processes such as arbitration?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: We might be talking about two different things. I will just try to check to make sure that we have a common understanding about what we're discussing.

In this section here — there has been a potential criminal offence, and that has gone to a court — all right. Now, if there is a different situation where there has been a suspension of a licence and the board has heard from a licensee and this goes on to a judicial review — that is not what's being discussed here in this section. Let's say that there is an example where there has been a suspension of a licence, and the licensee decides to go and talk to the board and say that they wish to appeal that suspension. The board considers it, and the board takes a decision. Let's say that the board upholds that suspension.

If the board erred in some way, then there is the ability — not under this act, but under general law — for them to take that decision of the board for a judicial review. That is not what is being discussed under clause 60. What is being discussed is that, if there was already a licensee who was under some sort of criminal charge and the judge held them responsible, fined them, and/or imposed a prison term, the judge could also, in addition, pass a recommendation to the licensing board.

Ms. Hanson: Then, in that case, the board is required to — with that decision or the notice — put it in writing. How long is it maintained on the website, and is it subject to appeal?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Chair, if I could just ask for clarification. I gave two examples — if the member opposite could just clarify for me which one we are discussing.

Ms. Hanson: I am speaking to clause 4.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I don't have this information with me today. It is an excellent question. I will endeavour to get a response for the member opposite.

Clause 60 agreed to

On Clause 61

Clause 61 agreed to

On Clause 62

Ms. Hanson: We have spoken about this matter a number of times, but I would like to have it on the record. I am looking at clause 62(4)(a).

It says here, "... liquor may not be sold or served between the hours of 2:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. on a day within the permit period..." I guess I am seeking clarity as to how it was determined that liquor should be available between those hours — other than 2:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 a.m., you can sell. How did we go to that extent in this jurisdiction, which is not the same as other jurisdictions?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I hesitated in responding to the question, because I think that this really goes back — probably pre-dates me and even this engagement. The notion of the hours of the permit as listed here — they are listing the range of possibilities — certainly not the requirement that they go to those hours.

If I understood the question from the Member for Whitehorse Centre, it was: How did we arrive at those hours? First of all, to begin with, they have previously been the hours in the previous act, as I understand it. When we entered into dialogue with, for example, the liquor advisory group and talked about certain things such as hours — pertaining not just to permits, but also to licenses and particularly to offsales — there was a discussion that you could, in this case with permits, seek a different set of hours, because the president will consider the situation and consider again, for example, all of the social responsibility as we outlined previously.

This is the range of hours.

Finally, it is also possible that, under regulation, it could be restricted to less hours than this. I'm not sure that I have a good response to the member opposite about exactly how this came about originally. I think that, having been where it was, the conversation didn't go to restricting the range of possible hours but rather came down to how we would ensure that public safety was also considered on those cases as they come in front of the president.

Ms. White: Just in going back to the exact same question about that — so, my question is: What are the hours that cannabis is allowed to be sold? I would just like to use that as a foil. The question to the minister is: What are the hours that cannabis is allowed to be sold?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, we don't have any permits under cannabis as of yet. Someday, they will come. So, let's differentiate between licences and permits. Here, we're talking about permits.

I will also say, Mr. Chair — and I'll have to check that legislation. I will look it up to be sure. I think what we said was 9:00 to 2:00, but I will check. The other thing that I will say under cannabis — we also allowed for, for example, if a

municipality wished to reduce those numbers of hours, we would respect that.

Ms. White: I mean, I appreciate the response from the minister and I apologize that I do not have any electronic device, or I would have checked for the answer before I asked the question.

The reason why I'm bringing that up is that this is new — this is new, revised legislation. So, when we talk about social responsibility and we talk about our roles as legislators and our roles of setting these established times, it seems to me that this was an opportunity to say that, actually, selling liquor at 9:00 in the morning in the Yukon is not an acceptable or socially responsible act.

I just want to know if there was conversation about shortening those hours — that it wasn't from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m. Was there a discussion on shortening those hours, as far as Yukon's responsibility to social responsibility in the territory?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Permits have quite a wide range of possibilities, but let me take an example: a wedding. That wedding often — not always, but sometimes — goes late. So, there are some permits that go to 2:00 a.m. now under the existing act, and I anticipate that there would be some in the future.

When we were talking about social responsibility in the engagement and with the advisory group, the conversation flowed more over to licensees and to offsales in particular. That's really where that conversation went. I respect that there may well be times when permits should fall under that conversation as well. I think that the legislation here, as drafted, has that ability for the president who is issuing those permits to take into consideration social responsibility and the conditions that we're talking about, although it also allows, for example, for those permits to go to 2:00 a.m. when there might not be those same concerns being raised.

Those are very subjective calls — I understand that — from the questions from the member opposite — but what I'm saying here is that we had a very healthy discussion around hours and social responsibility; however, my recollection was that, in engaging with the public and engaging with the advisory group, I didn't hear that same focus on permits.

Ms. White: What I realize is that I have missed the opportunity to have that conversation where it existed in the legislation for licensees and offsales. If the minister could just tell me what number that was — just so I can take a look.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: So this is under clause 30, "Conditions of off-premises licence", and if we look under subsection (g): "... liquor may be sold at the licensed premises only during the prescribed hours of operation".

Again, what we discussed here on the floor of the Legislature on debate of this topic was that this is one of those areas where we have had significant conversation with the advisory group, and I began to have that conversation with licensees as well about what those hours could look like through regulation.

Ms. White: I thank the minister for that. Again, it was a missed opportunity, but I think this is one — you know, even

though I missed it the first time — I am still going to highlight that I think it is worth having a conversation as we move forward and that, when we are talking offsales establishments, it is essentially longer than the Yukon Liquor Corporation's ability to sell liquor. I will just leave that on the floor and I hope, in future, that we have this broader conversation about offsales and social responsibility.

Chair: Is there any further debate on clause 62?
Clause 62 agreed to

Ms. White: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request unanimous consent in Committee of the Whole to deem clauses 63 through 79 read and agreed to.

Unanimous consent re deeming of clauses 63 through 79 read and agreed to

Chair: Ms. White has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem clauses 63 through 79 read and agreed to.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.
Clauses 63 through 79 deemed read and agreed to
On Clause 80

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will just talk about this general section from clauses 80 through 86 or 89 or so. This is where we're talking about control of alcohol in the territory, ranging from production to consumption to alcohol in vehicles to possession to minors purchasing. In all of these is the suite of how we maintain control of this as an intoxicating substance. I will try to talk about a couple of these as we move through them, but I'm just pointing out for us that this is the place where we discuss that control.

Clause 80 agreed to
On Clause 81

Ms. Hanson: I have a question with respect to clause 81(4)(b). It says that the holder can sell or serve liquor if they comply with the following: "the individual to whom the liquor is sold or served is not an individual whom the liquor corporation, the licensee or the permit holder believes on reasonable grounds is intoxicated". We spent a fair amount of time talking about 26(1)(ii) that said that, despite all that, if the licensee believes on reasonable grounds that the individual is intoxicated and the intoxication has created or contributed to a risk to the individual's health or safety that can be mitigated if they are permitted to stay, they can remain in the premises. It seems to me that you have two contrary sets of rules — so, what plays?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The difference here is between selling to a person who is intoxicated — in other words, serving alcohol to a person who is intoxicated — and allowing that person who is intoxicated to be able to stay and sober up, especially if, for example, it is cold outside or something like that.

What we're saying here is that you cannot serve a person who you believe to be intoxicated, but if there is a person who is intoxicated, we are also saying that you do not have to ask them to leave the premises if what they are doing is reasonably

trying to sober up and it would be not a good thing for them to leave at that point for their health or wellness. That is the difference, and I look forward to further discussion.

Ms. Hanson: Thank you to the minister for that clarification.

We look to 81(5)(a), and it says, “take adequate measures to reduce the risk of liquor that they possess for commercial purposes...” — being acquired by someone else or diverted. My question is the use of the term “adequate”. We are trying to be clear and not ambiguous. The term “adequate” has a long history of causing debate and issues, so why would we use the word “adequate” here?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Chair, we don’t want alcohol being diverted to the black market; neither do we want the black market to be diverting into our licensed establishments. It can happen both ways, and we want neither.

I hear the member opposite’s concern with the word “adequate”. However, it is a results-based question. Conditions may be different in different situations. For example, do we say that you must have this many locks or that it is in this way out of sight? The challenge will be that every situation is slightly different. What we want is that the licensee is working to ensure that the liquor in their possession is not entering into or exchanging with the black market.

It is possible for us to set regulations that are prescriptive here if we see them, but we also want it to state very clearly that it is the job of the licensee to ensure that there is no exchange with the black market. The term here is meant to be sufficient, satisfactory, or suitable.

I will reference us back to 26(i) as well. Mr. Chair, it is under the conditions of the licences that they have to take these adequate measures to reduce the risk that they possess. It’s reflecting back to that earlier clause saying that the licensee has this obligation to make sure that the black market is not coming or going in their establishment.

Clause 81 agreed to

On Clause 82

Ms. White: Can we just give the minister a second? Maybe we can go back to clause 81 — he has highlighted that he has questions —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Ms. White: 83. Never mind, Mr. Chair. We are on track.

Clause 82 agreed to

On Clause 83

Hon. Mr. Streicker: This clause is about protecting minors — it is an important clause. Throughout the act, you will see language — and I will today try to use plain language — just saying that parents or guardians have a responsibility. Now, I know that, under the act, we don’t use that language anymore, just like we don’t use the word “offsales” — but just for clarity’s sake, that is what we are discussing here.

Again, because we have moved to a prohibitive act, we generally say that it is prohibited and then you list off exceptions where you are going to allow some exception — for example, if there are medical reasons or if there were religious reasons. These are exceptions to the protection of minors, but generally, throughout the act — and in particular, here — we

have explicitly stated that minors shouldn’t have access to alcohol.

Clause 83 agreed to

On Clause 84

Clause 84 agreed to

On Clause 85

Clause 85 agreed to

On Clause 86

Clause 86 agreed to

On Clause 87

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Chair, I am quite frankly kind of surprised at the clauses that follow here. I just want to raise a couple of questions with the minister with respect to how — because there are slight nuances in the language used — but, quite frankly, what we are seeing is the tracking of the old language into the new act.

I’m sure that the minister is mindful of the circumstances that led to the previous government establishing a task force on acutely intoxicated persons at risk after Raymond Silverfox, who was acutely intoxicated, died in police custody. So, the task force, which was led by Dr. Bruce Beaton and Chief James Allen, was charged with addressing the issues that arose from Raymond Silverfox’s detention and death.

I will say at the outset that the key recommendations were rejected by the previous government. One of the key recommendations was that an acutely intoxicated person not be brought into the criminal justice system and that they not be put into an arrest processing unit as part of the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. The very same day that the arrest processing unit was announced, which was contrary to what was recommended, the Task Force on Acutely Intoxicated Persons at Risk also gave their report. It was a stark contrast.

I just point out that they recommended “... that we should rewrite...” — I’m quoting here — “... the aged legislation that authorizes non-criminal detention for intoxication to bring it more in concordance with current social mores and accepted human rights. The new legislation should be more precise with respect to reasons for detention and the parameters under which that detention ceases.”

They talked about models other than using detention — as in jail — or an arrest processing unit, which is the jail. So, I am unclear as to — and I’ll just make a couple of quotes here, and then you can see the differences in nuance between what’s being proposed under this legislation and what the current legislation says.

I’m quoting here — this is from page 7 of that report: “The current model used to manage an acutely intoxicated person at risk functions entirely within the domain of law enforcement. This model has changed little, if at all, since the first days of Western societal incursion into the Yukon wilderness near the time of the Klondike gold rush. It is no longer acceptable simply to detain the intoxicated person. Today we expect that any and all agencies, once they accept responsibility for a person, will provide appropriate care, including a modicum of medical care, in an environment of respect and compassion.”

“Our current *Yukon Liquor Act*...” — this is the act that we’re supposedly replacing — “... states in Section 92(1) the following:

“If a peace officer has reasonable and probable grounds to believe and does believe that a...” — person — “... is in an intoxicated condition in a public place, the peace officer may... take the person into custody...’ until ‘...the person in custody has recovered sufficient capacity that, if released, they are unlikely to cause injury to themselves or be a danger, nuisance or disturbance to others...”

They went on to say, Mr. Chair, that: “While we fully acknowledge that we are not lawyers...” — this is former Chief James Allen and Dr. Bruce Beaton — “... and do not...” — pretend — “... to be able to give a legal opinion, the *Yukon Liquor Act* appears to say that the sole reason for which a person can be detained is being intoxicated in a public place. Furthermore the endpoint of...” — a — “... person’s detention can include decisions about no longer being a nuisance or a disturbance to others. These parameters reflect neither the social norms nor the human rights standards of today.”

Mr. Chair, I read the provisions that are set out under the section here that deals with an intoxicated individual in a public place, et cetera — that’s what the heading says — and I’m not sure how this complies with what we would expect in 2019, nine years later. It’s actually almost nine years to the day later since that report was tabled publicly by Dr. Beaton and Chief Allen. They had recommended: “New legislation should be written to supersede sections 91 and 92...” — so we have different numbering — “... of the current *Yukon Liquor Act* to define more precisely under what circumstances an acutely intoxicated person can be detained, what services will be provided to the detained person and what conditions must be met to cease the detention. This legislation should be consistent with current human rights standards and should allow for necessary and appropriate basic medical care while under detention.”

I’ll be looking to hear from the minister on how this section — “Acutely intoxicated individual in public place, etc.” — responds to this report — which was hotly debated at the time, and it lingers with us to this day — because of going around and subverting the issues that they identified. They were not easy issues. They weren’t easy nine years ago; they’re certainly not easy today.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thank the member opposite for the question. It is an important question.

We, of course, worked through the Beaton report and considered it. It came up in conversation as well, so let me start with that. The first thing I want to say is that we’re not talking here — if someone is intoxicated and likely to cause injury or is a danger to themselves, in those situations, it is not a charge. In other words, what is here under this proposed bill is a diversion, not an arrest. That is the first thing. We are not trying to invoke the full justice system here.

The second thing is that there is discretion that is given to the RCMP — for example, to take the person home, turn them over to a responsible sober person, or take them for medical care. There is that discretion. Another difference with the bill

in front of us versus the existing act is that we are saying that it is as long as needed, meaning that, as soon as the person is sober, they are allowed to go, because they are no longer under that — for example, 88(2)(a) says, “... the individual has recovered sufficient capacity that, if released, the individual is unlikely to cause injury to themselves or others, or to be a danger or disturbance to others...” We have dropped the notion of “nuisance”. It is that there is a risk and that risk is resolved. As soon as that risk is resolved, they are free to go.

The other question that I think is important here — and we continue to work with the departments of Justice and Health and Social Services on how the systems will work to catch people when they are in this situation. It’s not through the *Liquor Act* where we talk about support services for people who are intoxicated.

Again, I will just read the important differences here — at risk of causing injury, a danger, or disturbance — whereas the fuller definition of “intoxication” includes, for example, a broader definition.

Finally, my understanding is that the RCMP and correctional staff use a chart — a national standard — to determine these things. That is not here in the act itself, but that is how things have changed within the system when dealing with people who have a potential to be harmful to themselves or others.

Ms. Hanson: With respect, though, the minister just quoted back the current *Liquor Act* when he talked about the person — when they are “...likely to cause injury to themselves or be a... nuisance...” He used that language. That’s not a difference in the reality of what we’re talking about here.

The reality about taking somebody into the arrest processing unit or into police custody — basically we said, “You’re a criminal.”

Dr. Beaton was kind of interesting, and Chief Allen — I’m just going to put this on the record because it really brings into stark reality the challenge that we’re facing. They had a number of key sections in their report. On page 5, he talks about attitude.

I’m quoting here: “Many, if not most, members of society generally seem to have a bipolar attitude towards intoxicant use. It is generally condoned and frequently even encouraged. It, especially alcohol, is an almost necessary component of all social interaction. It can be a marker of social position, as exemplified by the presentation of expensive single malt Scotch whiskies and boutique wines. In some circles sharing of cocaine and other drugs is a sign of financial achievement and success. But let a person become dependent on or under the control of intoxicants and the attitude begins to change. It changes even further if an individual’s dependency becomes blatantly obvious to others. This attitude grows into one of contempt if the dependency crosses into addiction with loss of personal self-respect and social appropriateness and becomes even more disrespectful as the affected individual descends toward the bottom of the scale of social status.”

Mr. Chair, the task force, in their findings — and this is what they said in their report in 2010: “Many, and most

probably most, of the individuals who are detained under the *Yukon Liquor Act...* — and I would be interested to get the stats in 2019 — “are chronic alcoholics and drug addicted persons who access their intoxicant of choice where it is most easily accessible, which is generally within the confines of the downtown area of Whitehorse.”

What they are saying is that we are criminalizing people who are at their lowest ebb without offering an alternative. Simply letting somebody go from the APU and saying, “Find your way back downtown if you’re lucky” — it wasn’t determined in 2010 to be best practice. Other than the “or”, which is — 2(b) — if you can find somebody else who is going to come and pick you up, which is great, but that’s not addressing the fundamental issues that Dr. Beaton and James Allen did with respect to providing — and also in determining who is making the assessment if somebody is medically fit to be released at 20 below in the middle of the night with no other alternative than to take a taxi downtown.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I just want to acknowledge the report, which, in my time, I have referred to as the “Beaton report”. I also see this as a difficult issue to resolve. I don’t think of it as a simple question — how we try to help people. I think we are trying to think of many people at this moment — those people who might have an addiction and all of society at the same time. How do we help them in these moments? How do we try to ensure safety in these moments?

First of all, the bill presented here mirrors the cannabis act. We say “intoxication” under the cannabis act — it doesn’t matter how you are intoxicated — whether it is with cannabis or alcohol or some illicit drug — it is intoxication. That is true here as well. What I will point out is that we had the same debate when we went through the *Cannabis Control and Regulation Act*, and we are having it again today. I will say, on my side of the table, that I have had this conversation then and now. I am not sure whether we had it here in the Legislature or not — apologies.

The second thing that I want to say is that I appreciate that, for people who are being taken by the RCMP because they are intoxicated and because they represent a risk to themselves or others in terms of injury, there is no criminal charge here. There are no prints.

The purpose is to ensure safety, and I don’t want to say that doesn’t mean — or how those individuals perceive it I’m sure is quite different from what we’re discussing here today — but I am stating very plainly that is not the intent of the act.

There have been all sorts of things which are different today since the Beaton report was conducted. For example, today we have an emergency shelter downtown. The Beaton report was describing downtown Whitehorse, and yet here in downtown Whitehorse we also have a facility that will provide care for those people. That is at the discretion of the RCMP or those who are dealing with folks who are intoxicated. There are differences. My understanding is that correctional staff do receive medical training relative to handling people.

I want to be careful. My role here as the Minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation is not where the focus of this programming lies. It will be the Minister of Health

and Social Services in her work around care and harm reduction, as well as the Minister of Justice. I think that here in the act we have made changes to it where we’re trying to work from the perspective of safety and social responsibility, and social responsibility always will be a balancing act.

I look forward to further back and forth on this topic.

Clause 87 agreed to

On Clause 88

Ms. White: Mr. Chair, I do appreciate that we veered a bit and 87 and 88 kind of got mashed together.

One of the things that the minister has just said when he talked about intoxicated individuals — he has used the terminology “risk to themselves or others in terms of injury”. He has mentioned that a couple times. The reason why I want to highlight it is because this is what clause 88(1) says: “A peace officer who believes on reasonable grounds that an individual is intoxicated in a public place may, instead of charging that individual with an offence under section 91...” — so it doesn’t say anything here about that intoxicated person being a risk to themselves or others in terms of injury.

I think one of the things that my colleague for Whitehorse Centre was trying to expand on is that there isn’t a definition of the reasons for picking up someone who is intoxicated. The minister has said, “risk to themselves or others in terms of injury”, like that was part of the clause, but what the clause says is: “... an individual is intoxicated in a public place may...” It doesn’t talk about that description of what that intoxication is — or that risk to themselves or others.

I would just like to highlight that and maybe ask, if that is the understanding by the minister, why that kind of language or those descriptors weren’t used in the act.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: If we could just read just below that, under 88(2)(a), what it says is that if that person “... is unlikely to cause injury to himself or others, or to be a danger or disturbance to others...” — they need to be released. I think the inference there is that — or it might have — when they are intoxicated, yes, the definition says “nuisance”, and I suppose I am splitting hairs, but as soon as they are no longer any of those things that I have just read out: “... unlikely to cause injury to himself or others, or... a danger or disturbance...” — then they can’t be held.

If I can just beg your indulgence, Mr. Chair, I will just respond to an earlier question about who assesses what the reasonable grounds are for whether someone is intoxicated. Who does the assessment in the first instance? It is the RCMP officer who detains. Then, if they are going to the arrest processing unit, it would be Corrections. It is whichever professional organization where they are at. So, if it is the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter, it is there. If it is the arrest processing unit, it is the folks at Corrections. If it is the RCMP, it would be them — on detention or observation about whether they had — as under 88(2)(a) — recovered sufficiently.

Ms. White: I thank the minister for that answer.

I am the MLA for Takhini-Kopper King. The Whitehorse Correctional Centre is in my riding. I also have lots of folks around me who do lots of different things and we have lots of conversations. Clause 88(2) says, “The individual must be

released from police custody as soon as the individual who is responsible for their being in police custody believes on reasonable grounds...” — and then it goes through it.

I can say anecdotally that releasing people in the wintertime at 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning when there is no access to public transportation is punitive. So, yes, they may have reached a level of sobriety where they meet the other requirements under the act, but when we look at releasing people from a facility where there is no public transportation, where there’s no proximity to any building, shelter, emergency shelter, or anything like that, it would strike me that we need to take that into consideration. I realize that this is not the minister under this act and that this would fall under Justice and probably the *Corrections Act, 2009*, but it is important to note that there should not be a punitive factor in being released from custody when there is no public transportation. There is not an opportunity to get on a bus. The only way you could get out of the area is if you have the funds for a taxi or someone could pick you up.

I just want to highlight that I appreciate the language that we need to let someone go when we can, but I believe fundamentally that we should not punish them when we let them go. We need to make sure that they have access to those things. I am just going to highlight that, because I have had lots of stories told about being released at 4:00 in the morning and having no options.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Chair, I thank the member opposite for her suggestions. I will say that I will have that conversation with the Minister of Justice directly about this question and follow up. Again, it’s out of my sphere directly, but I am happy to have that conversation.

What I note is that, similarly, under the act, when we were talking about if someone was at a licensed establishment and they were intoxicated but doing no harm to anyone, we wouldn’t require the licensee to evict them, because we thought we should try to make sure that we are being reasonable and dealing with common sense and considering their safety.

So, I appreciate the question, or the comment, made by the Member for Takhini-Kopper King.

What I will do is try to follow up with the Minister of Justice to see how this is dealt with, and to try to get some information back for members of the Legislature — but I appreciate the comments.

Clause 88 agreed to

On Clause 89

Ms. Hanson: I have questions with respect to section 89(4). I question the use of the language in section 89(4)(a)(i) — to contrast that language with section 89(4)(b). On one hand, you’re referring to a municipality bylaw, and then in the first instance, you’re referring to a resolution of the general assembly of a Yukon First Nation. I question that in the context of the self-government agreement.

For example, if I look at the Carcross/Tagish First Nation agreement — “... shall have the power to enact laws of a local or private nature on Settlement Land in relation to the following matters:

“... control or prohibition of the transport, sale, exchange, manufacture, supply, possession or consumption of intoxicants...”

I’m just curious as to why we would use a resolution, as opposed to a law, in terms of replacing — if you’re replacing — you know, you’re respecting the bylaw-making power of a municipality, a law-making power of a government. I’m wondering how that fits — so, first of all, the jurisdiction it’s held by — I understand that, unless and to the extent that a First Nation law replaces a territorial law — but that’s not what I see here.

It has to do with the consistency of language. We have seen this in past legislative amendments where we have had the use of language and we had thought that there would be a tracking of language that would be more consistent with the self-government agreements so that we weren’t making — when I read that, my first reaction is that it sounds like a band council resolution. I’m sure that’s not what was intended, but I’m open to having that clarified.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, we were trying to be parallel or to mirror. Where it is the traditional territory of the First Nation, but it is not their — where it is their direct jurisdiction, they have all the authority to pass laws and bylaws as they wish and deem — where it was broader and it was in places where we, as a government, have jurisdiction, but we respect that there is a perspective and an interest of the First Nation and wanting to listen to the local government for their concerns and issues.

The thing we were trying to balance out was that, under the *Municipal Act*, there is a requirement for engaging with the public broadly. That engagement with the public is under the *Municipal Act*, and it’s required, whereas, in the case that I was discussing — where it is the traditional territory of the First Nation, but not their direct jurisdiction, but they’re asking — for example — me, as a minister, to put in place a prohibition or to remove a prohibition or some other choice here — that we’re just trying, in all cases, to make sure that there would be an engagement with the community broadly.

That’s the difference that we were seeking here.

My colleagues are setting me correct. It’s not about traditional territory; it is about settlement land, but it is also, in the instance where I’m being asked, as the minister — or the Minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation is being asked to bring in, for example, some difference from the act as it stands — the choices are that the First Nation could draw down those powers and enact them through their own laws, as I was saying. But if they’re asking me to do it, we just want to make sure that there is an engagement with the public.

Previously, under the existing act, for example, there was a plebiscite. We just didn’t want to lose that opportunity for there being some engagement of the public. When we looked at the *Municipal Act*, we said, “Okay, there it is. It’s already there.”

Ms. Hanson: So, to be clear, then, the minister is not speaking about the provisions under section 13.5.4. He’s talking about simply where you’re looking to get — so a

municipality has to pass a bylaw to have any changes to a ministerial order, but a First Nation passes a resolution.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will acknowledge that, when we were trying to draft this, we had a lot of conversation about it. It was complicated. I will try to talk from a high level and then try to talk about the specifics to make sure that everyone here in the Legislature understands what we're intending with this and what we think it says.

We wanted the ability to allow for prohibitions if the community decided it wanted a prohibition. But the concept of community is complex in the territory. For example, we have municipalities, we have First Nations — self-governing First Nations and others — and we have other lands that are, I guess, our responsibility broadly. But we wanted in all instances to try to make sure that we were allowing for the community to engage around that decision around that prohibition.

So that's why we got there with this. For example, the *Municipal Act* says that, if they're going to pass a bylaw, they're required to have this public consultation. It was why we asked for the two-step process with First Nations — that it would be a resolution from the First Nation themselves — the council — and then going from a general assembly. That's the part where we're trying to seek the engagement of the citizens broadly.

Of course, we also recognize that it is their ability to draw down this legislation — the legislative power and then to pass their rules how they see to pass them. If we look under 89(4)(c), that's where the last group is where it's neither a municipality nor a First Nation settlement land — in which case, there still is a possibility to do this but that we would require the minister to engage with the citizens of that area wherever that prohibition would be proposed.

Ms. Hanson: I do apologize. We rarely do this, but I just have an appointment I have to go to — but I wanted to make a comment that I would prefer to say that we're recognizing that the First Nations have the law-making authority to prohibit under the recognized law-making authorities. They don't have to draw anything down. They do have to if they are going to do it in our jurisdiction. That's why I asked the question about 13.5.4.

When we look at the — when I said 13.3.14 — the First Nation "... shall have the power to enact laws of a local or private nature on Settlement Land in relation to the following matters... control or prohibition of... intoxicants". So that's their law-making authority. If they do try to do that, then we would expect them to consult to the extent that it may have an impact on Yukon — the exercise of that authority.

I think that everyone would like to see some general conversation, but I struggle at times when we try to capture this in language that is so broad that it may negate recognition that there was a heck of a lot of time and energy put into that whole section 13 part. First Nations struggled hard to make sure that it was not just a reflection of the *Indian Act*, but that they are provincial-like powers. They have those powers — how they exercise them will be up to them. To the extent that they interfere or interact — that is why we have those sections and the laws of general application.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will just add one more comment, Mr. Chair. I also want to note that this isn't just about establishing prohibitions. It is also about removing prohibitions. We did make the attempt to think about these issues. I respect the question because I think it was part of our conversation. We were also trying to see how to respect the final agreement and how to work within it. We did request our aboriginal law group to have a look at it and make recommendations to us. There was some very healthy discussion about it. I appreciate the questions from the member opposite.

Clause 89 agreed to

On Clause 90

Clause 90 agreed to

On Clause 91

Clause 91 agreed to

On Clause 92

Ms. White: Recently, I was at a public presentation. It was actually talking about highways and traffic infractions. The thing that the RCMP said that I thought was really important is that the uppermost penalty for a certain "no real consequence" crime was a year in prison. He said that it was not that anyone would ever get the year in prison, but it was important that you made sure that it would count and that it would stick. He was using the comparison under the *Motor Vehicles Act* that the traffic infringements — the costs were so minor that there wasn't the ability to actually make it count. What I appreciate in section 92, which is "Penalty", is that we have amounts of \$250,000; \$100,000; \$50,000; and \$10,000. Well, Mr. Chair, that would stick.

Well, Mr. Chair, that would stick. That would count a bit. So, what I do appreciate under section 92, which is "Penalty", is that we have broadened out the ability to issue a financial penalty that will then really count for the person who has to pay it. I just want to highlight that I totally understand that the likelihood of us charging someone \$250,000 for an infraction is slim, but we could, and therefore, hopefully people will not make infractions. I just wanted to say that I appreciated that we were going to do what the RCMP officer suggested, which was expanding it to make sure that it was really impactful.

Clause 92 agreed to

Ms. White: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem clauses 93 through 100 read and agreed to.

Unanimous consent re deeming clauses 93 through 100 read and agreed to

Chair: Ms. White has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem clauses 93 through 100 read and agreed to.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

Clauses 93 to 100 deemed read and agreed to

On Clause 101

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Chair, if you could just give me a minute, please, to consult with my colleagues.

Mr. Chair, there were questions previously from the Member for Kluane. He was asking about — say, for example, the RCMP had seized some alcohol, some liquor — what they would do with it. I just want to emphasize here that we want to set the act up so that it defaults to reporting and that information is exchanged, but that we are going to, by regulation, try to make this reasonable. If, for example, it is a modest amount of alcohol and you are just confiscating that small amount of alcohol, we are not expecting that it gets returned. Even the report is not critical.

What we are trying to do, though, is make sure that, if the amount is significant and if, for example, this is leading to some sort of charge, we will make sure that the alcohol is kept as evidence, working with the Yukon Liquor Corporation so that we can track this information. I just wanted to emphasize that point, because I think that the Member for Kluane had made some comments that we didn't want to burden our RCMP and liquor inspectors.

Clause 101 agreed to

On Clause 102

Clause 102 agreed to

On Clause 103

Clause 103 agreed to

On Clause 104

Clause 104 agreed to

On Clause 105

Clause 105 agreed to

On Clause 106

Ms. White: Clause 106 talks about a review of the act. In all of my time in this Legislative Assembly, I have learned that language that says, “Within seven years...”, but then uses the word “must” is really critical. I appreciate that what we are talking about is that this act must be reviewed within seven years of the day when it becomes enacted. I think that's important, because if things change in the Yukon context, it's important to know that there is that ability to trigger that review which will then have the act changed. I just want to highlight that I appreciate that we use the language “must”, which is not optional. It says it “must” happen, so I do appreciate the word “must”, because it has been removed in other legislation. I also appreciate the timeline.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will just add a small comment: When we debated this on our side, we were talking also about trying to reflect the cannabis act. It's brand new, so there will be a review, and we wanted to give enough space to allow for that review to happen and then this one to sequence after it. That is why we came up with the notion — I think it has typically been five years, but we were just careful to try to make sure that we could sequence these things well and build on them.

Ms. White: Just as possibly my last opportunity, I would like to thank the officials from the Liquor Corporation for working through this with members of the opposition, because it turns out that, when they bring legislation forward, it's never minor and it's never short. I do appreciate the briefings and do appreciate the patience as we work our way through, as non-lawyers. It's always great to have their support here.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would like to thank all members of the Legislature for a really constructive debate and discussion on the act. I thank them for thanking the officials.

There is one small point that I was asked about. I think the Member for Whitehorse Centre asked about what the practice is regarding the list of suspensions and how long it is kept. I believe that it is on the web. It doesn't necessarily come off at all, and so there is an archive. That is the current practice.

Clause 106 agreed to

Ms. White: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all remaining clauses and the title of Bill No. 5, entitled *Liquor Act*, read and agreed to.

Unanimous consent re deeming all remaining clauses and title of Bill No. 5 read and agreed to

Chair: Ms. White has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all remaining clauses and the title of Bill No. 5, entitled *Liquor Act*, read and agreed to.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

Clauses 107 to 116 deemed read and agreed to

On Title

Title agreed to

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I move that you report Bill No. 5, entitled *Liquor Act*, without amendment.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Streicker that the Chair report Bill No. 5, entitled *Liquor Act*, without amendment.

Motion agreed to

Chair: The matter now before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

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

Bill No. 200: Second Appropriation Act 2019-20 — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*. Resuming general debate, Mr. Silver.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I know that we're at the end of the day here, but I would like to get as many answers on the record from questions that were asked in Committee of the Whole from yesterday that were answered either in part — or just an opportunity to complete some of the answers or to answer some

of the questions that we said that we were going to get back to the members opposite about.

I'll start with some questions asked specifically to the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. The first question was based on the Ketzka River site, and the question was: What is the current liability of the government for this site?

Mr. Chair, the Government of Yukon is financially responsible for the remediation of impacts attributable to activities it permitted at the Ketzka River site after devolution. The costs to remediate these environmental liabilities, if remediation is required, will be determined through an independent assessment process, as defined in the devolution transfer agreement. The Government of Yukon has agreed to fund the independent assessment process estimated at approximately \$5 million to \$6 million. The Government of Yukon is currently funding care and maintenance of the site, which is approximately \$2 million to \$3 million per year. However, it is anticipated that these costs will be recovered from the Government of Canada following the conclusion of the independent assessment process.

Under the devolution transfer agreement, the Government of Canada accepted financial responsibility for the remediation of impacts attributable to activities that were permitted by the Government of Canada — again, money being expended, but also money being recovered — two parts of one story.

The other question was: Has work begun on the remediation at Ketzka? Mr. Chair, active remediation has not yet begun. Work has begun on the independent assessment process to advance the remedial design. We are currently working with First Nations to develop terms of reference for the independent assessment process. Once the terms of reference are finalized, the Yukon government will procure an independent assessor to conduct a site assessment, delineate liabilities and costs, and prepare a remedial design.

Mr. Chair, once the independent assessment is complete, the Yukon government will enter the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* process, followed by water licensing in preparation for active remediation.

Another question about the same issue, about the Ketzka mine — and I'll quote from the question — according to the audit, Canada's liability may not be comprehensive, as Yukon government allowed the mine to reopen. If costs may be offset by the security bonds that are held, how much is in those bonds?

The Government of Yukon permitted activities at the Ketzka mine site following devolution. New liabilities following devolution were primarily related to exploration, including drilling. In 2014, Ketzka River Holdings furnished various amounts of \$797,421; \$3,087,600; and \$25,000 in the form of a security to the Government of Yukon, pursuant to the *Waters Act*. Following abandonment of the mine site in 2015, Yukon government withdrew those amounts of security to implement care and maintenance at the site. Approximately \$797,421 in security remains and will be used to offset remediation costs following completion of the independent assessment process.

I do know that there were more questions that were asked by the members opposite. I will use my time another day. At this point, I move that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Silver that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

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

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Streicker that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Hutton: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 5, entitled *Liquor Act*, and directed me to report the bill without amendment.

Committee of the Whole has also considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

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

Speaker: It has been moved by the Acting 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 5:28 p.m.

The following legislative returns were tabled November 5, 2019:

34-3-4

Response to oral question from Mr. Kent re: radon testing (Dendys)

34-3-5

Response to oral question from Mr. Kent re: Canada Remembers Commemorative School Project (Dendys)

The following documents were filed November 5, 2019:

34-3-19

Yukon Lottery Commission Annual Report 2018/19 — What's Your Recreation? (Streicker)

34-3-20

Electoral Reform, letter re (dated November 4, 2019) from
Stacey Hassard, Leader of the Official Opposition, to Hon.
Sandy Silver, Premier (Cathers)



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 19

3rd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Wednesday, November 6, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
Don Hutton	Mayo-Tatchun

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King
Liz Hanson	Whitehorse Centre

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Dan Cable
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, November 6, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I wonder if we could all please welcome several guests to the Legislature today, including: Dawn Underhill, Shawn and Michelle Underhill, Ashton, Zander, and Zoe, Kelly Underhill, Tash-Lee and Brandon, John Maissan, Tim and Mark Koepke, Carl and Robyn Friesen, Cathy Hines, Ellen Johnson, Brian Macdonald — the Assistant Deputy Minister of Aboriginal Relations — and Mr. Stephen Mills — the Deputy Minister responsible for the Executive Council Office — here today to hear a tribute.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: I ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming to this Legislative Assembly a former Member of the Legislative Assembly, elected in 1974, I think, and served as Minister of Education, Recreation, Manpower and Housing — I think it was called then — Eleanor Millard, also a writer and founding member of Grandparents' Rights.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I would like members to join me in welcoming YEU president Steve Geick and vice-president Paul Johnston, who have joined us in the House this afternoon.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors? Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In remembrance of Bruce Underhill

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I rise on behalf of all members and all visitors in the Legislative Assembly today to pay tribute to Bruce Underhill. I had the pleasure and the privilege to know Frederic Bruce Underhill — Bruce — through his work as a land surveyor and with Engineers Yukon. But for all of us who worked alongside Bruce professionally, we knew that he was first and foremost dedicated to his family.

So, to begin, let me acknowledge and thank Bruce's family — Dawn, his wife, Shawn and Kelly, Bruce's children, and their children — for sharing Bruce with all of us here in the Yukon. We know how much he loved you.

Bruce was born in 1947 at the start of the babyboomers in post-war Vancouver. He was born into a family of land

surveyors. Underhill and Underhill is a company well-known to Yukoners, established in 1913 — over a century ago.

In the 1970s, Bruce became a Dominion Land Surveyor, registration number 964. This is back when calculators were people, chain was used to measure distances, and star shots were common practice. Like so many surveyors, Bruce loved to work out on the land measuring lot boundaries of legal claims, mineral claims, and land claims.

His love of being out on the land is, I think, what led him to the Yukon. I can just imagine that when Bruce first came to the territory 40-plus years ago, the local surveyors and chainmen would not give him a pass — silver spoons don't go over well with that crew.

All of Bruce's colleagues will attest today, though, that he tackled his work with integrity, dedication, and good humour. Bruce was expected to toil and succeed on the toughest, remotest, and most difficult projects the firm had to offer. No matter the job, Bruce's performance was exceptional. So, it is no surprise that he became a leader at Underhill and in his field in general. He managed and grew Underhill's Whitehorse office to the largest land survey company north of 60, guiding surveys across the Yukon while also contributing significantly to the firm's many land claim surveys across all three territories.

In the words of his long-time colleague, Tim Koepke — and I quote: "One would be hard-pressed to find a Canada Lands Surveyor who has made such an extensive and valuable contribution to the profession and to the improvement of our practices in the ever-changing modernization, designed to better serve our clients, government and the public interest."

Bruce went beyond the technical aspect of surveying to help develop the profession. He sat on the Association of Canada Land Surveyors starting in 1984. In the 1990s, he went on to become the national president of the association, ushering it in as a self-governing profession.

On a more personal level, one of Bruce's lasting legacies was his mentorship of many prominent northern Canada land surveyors during his career — including Carl Friesen, Bob Gray, Brian Thompson, Joe Iles, Elden Pfeiffer, Michael Kearney, Katie Munroe, Sandy Cooke, Dan Boyle, and Robin Cunningham. This list includes the majority of the currently practising Canada land surveyors in the Yukon. As an engineer who worked alongside surveyors, I count myself as one of those lucky people to have been mentored by Bruce. Bruce was a surveyor who worked alongside engineers.

After Bruce retired from Underhill, he stepped up to serve as executive director of Engineers Yukon. He and his very good friend and partner, Carl Friesen, helped Engineers Yukon locate to a permanent office located next door to Underhill so that they could take advantage of shared services and supports. It was a win-win.

For many years before and after his term as executive director, Bruce volunteered in support of Engineers Yukon. In particular, he helped with chronicling the history of Yukon engineering and fostering youth engagement in the profession through the ever so exciting annual bridge-building and -busting competition.

Beyond Engineers Yukon, Bruce volunteered a lot — the Whitehorse Board of Variance, Boy Scouts, the science fair, Jack Hulland and Porter Creek school councils — the list is long, Mr. Speaker. As Ken Taylor noted at the celebration of life earlier this week, Bruce put up and took down a lot of tables.

For close to a decade, Bruce also sat on the Yukon Surface Rights Board. He was a strong supporter of the Yukon land claims process and of First Nations. As Deputy Minister Stephen Mills put it — and I quote: “Many things became clear very quickly, he knew the Yukon very very well and has likely set foot on more of the Yukon than most... Bruce also had an inquisitive mind and always made the time to talk with myself and I am certain, with all of you too. Bruce also had a great sense of humour which made working with him a real pleasure.” Bruce did have a great sense of humour.

He loved life — especially Christmas parties, Mr. Speaker. I am wearing one of his great ties that he gave to me a few Christmases ago. I never thought I would have the occasion, but here I am.

Bruce was a thoughtful, caring, and gentle man. So, in the end, the real legacy that he gave to all Yukoners who met him was a life well-lived. In the words of Alan Jackson — and I quote:

Remember when
We vowed the vows and walked the walk
Gave our hearts, made the start, and it was hard
We lived and learned life threw curves
There was joy, there was hurt
Remember when

Mr. Speaker, today all members of the Legislature remember Frederic Bruce Underhill.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I have for tabling a legislative return responding to a question during Committee of the Whole two days ago.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I have for tabling two documents. First of all, I am tabling the national cannabis survey second quarter 2019 report from Statistics Canada.

I also have for tabling a legislative return for questions asked by the Member for Whitehorse Centre in my role as Acting Minister of Justice.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

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

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House congratulates the Victoria Gold Corporation on achieving their first gold pour in September 2019.

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

THAT this House urges the Minister of Community Services to explain to Yukoners how shutting down glass recycling and then charging people tipping fees for dumping the glass they are no longer able to recycle is a good environmental policy.

Ms. Hanson: I rise to give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of any documentation, including analysis, that demonstrates that the Beaver River land use plan, the road access management plan, and the regional land use plan called for under chapter 11 of the *First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Final Agreement* can be reconciled with the objectives of chapter 11 regional land use planning of the *First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Final Agreement*.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?
Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Cannabis Yukon retail store accounting

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, I rise to provide an update on our Liberal government’s work to introduce a legal cannabis regime in the Yukon. I know how important this issue is to the members opposite. On October 17, when I rose in this House to discuss the closure and plan to sell the Cannabis Yukon retail store and/or its assets, the Member for Klwane asked — and I quote: “When you include all the start-up costs, all the renovation costs, and all the overhead, how much money has the government lost in its venture into cannabis retail?” Mr. Speaker, I am happy to report that the answer to this question is none.

A few weeks ago, we announced the release of a tender for the Cannabis Yukon retail store assets. The tender is now closed, and I am happy to announce that the Yukon Liquor Corporation has accepted a proposal and deposit for the store assets. The sale, once completed, will recoup \$200,000, which will be returned to the Government of Yukon general revenue. The purchaser of the store assets is currently negotiating a new lease with the landlord, and once in place, the transfer of assets will be completed.

With the sale, we are now able to update this Legislative Assembly with overall financial results of the Cannabis Yukon retail store’s year of operation. The Cannabis Yukon retail store staff, working in conjunction with the Yukon Liquor Corporation, achieved their financial objectives of breaking

even while ensuring that cannabis prices were kept as low as possible in order to displace the illicit market.

The unaudited results indicate that the Cannabis Yukon store's sales from October 17, 2018, to October 17, 2019, were \$3,276,866, while the total costs were \$3,084,261, with a net gain of \$192,605. Mr. Speaker, let me repeat that: In the one year of operation, the Government of Yukon's temporary retail cannabis store paid off the roughly \$750,000 in store start-up costs and, beyond that, returned a net profit of \$192,000. Compare this to the Province of Ontario, which lost \$42 million. Just yesterday, the CEO of Cannabis New Brunswick couldn't say when the Crown corporation might expect to see a profit. He blamed that, in part, on the illicit market in that province.

Last month, the Member for Whitehorse Centre asked if we had more hard numbers in our efforts to displace the illicit market. We do. As I have said previously, the illicit market is difficult to measure; however, the best information we have from Statistics Canada indicates that usage in the Yukon and in Canada has not changed since before legalization. I quote from the National Cannabis Survey second quarter 2019 report: "Cannabis consumption in the second quarter of 2019 was essentially unchanged from the same quarter in 2018, prior to legalization."

The report goes on to state — quote: "From mid-May to mid-June 2019, about 4.9 million or 16% of Canadians aged 15 and older reported using cannabis in the previous three months. This was unchanged from what was reported one year earlier (before legalization) for the provinces and from the last time estimates for the territorial capitals were collected."

Mr. Speaker, this is the best information that we have, and if cannabis usage has remained unchanged since legalization, then all legal sales in the territory are displacing illicit sales. In the first year of legalization, the government store and private retail combined to sell just over 370 kilograms of cannabis. As stated previously, the estimate for overall consumption in the Yukon is between 900 and 1,100 kilograms per year. This means that, one year in, legal sales are displacing somewhere between 35 and 40 percent of the illicit market.

This is significant. Thank you again to the government retail team and the private sector for successfully introducing legal cannabis sales in the Yukon and assisting to displace the illicit market.

Mr. Istchenko: Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to rise today. This is an interesting ministerial statement. It's kind of a bit of a redo for the minister who was a little embarrassed that he was not able to answer simple questions about his file during the last ministerial statement.

As the minister referenced on October 17, he got up and delivered a statement on the cannabis corporation. At the time, we asked the minister what the total profits or losses of the cannabis corporation were and he refused to answer. We were surprised he was unable to answer these questions. This was especially odd because, two days prior to that, we asked the Premier the same question and he didn't answer it either. This

backfired on the minister, as he ended up not getting positive media coverage.

I would also like to go on to quote from the ministerial statement — and it does say, "Just yesterday, the CEO of Cannabis New Brunswick couldn't say when the Crown corporation might expect to see a profit." I would just remind the minister of the old saying that "those who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones", because it was only 21 days ago when the minister himself was unable to answer basic questions about his own portfolio. In fact, that's the reason we're standing here in this House again — so that the minister can do a mulligan on his first statement. Adding to this, while the minister was not able to answer questions about the corporation he was responsible for, he for some reason was already good to go to answer questions on Ontario. Maybe the minister should pay more attention to his own responsibility and let the other provinces worry about themselves.

Another question that remains outstanding for the minister — on October 24, 2018, I asked the minister about packaging for shipping containers. This was in relation to a CKRW story where they spoke about one single, tiny joint being shipped in a massive shipping box. At the time, I asked the minister why their government would be using such a large shipping container to mail small products. At the time, he explicitly stated that the use of large shipping containers to mail the products was due to federal regulations. But, in discussion with the corporation after the minister made those comments, it turns out that he was incorrect. In fact, according to representatives of the corporation, there was no federal regulation for what it had to be shipped in — only for the retail packaging — so a bit of a trend here from the minister not providing accurate information about this file.

In the e-mail I sent to the minister on October 22, I asked the minister: (1) Do Canadian regulations, in fact, require Cannabis Yukon to ship one joint in a large box, or did he misspeak? (2) Would he also be able to provide me a list of all of the shipping packaging purchased by Cannabis Yukon since start-up broken down by product and price with a cross-reference of what was actually shipped in each box? I think it would be interesting to see how many times larger-than-necessary boxes and wasteful packaging were used to ship products.

So, I am hoping that when the minister gets back up to respond, he can answer those questions today.

Ms. White: Today, in response to the ministerial update on cannabis sales numbers in Yukon, the first thing I thought when I heard the one-year sale results of \$3.2 million was, "Dang, I am in the wrong business." When I heard that Yukon consumes between 900 and 1,100 kilograms of cannabis a year, I thought that we must be the highest consumer per capita, but then I did a quick search and that revealed: no — indeed, it is Nova Scotia. It is no wonder those Maritimers always seem so chill.

So, I do appreciate that the minister was able to provide some analysis and insight into the displacement of the illicit market. I do understand his reasoning and concede that it is

difficult to estimate Yukon's illicit market. The minister mentioned the National Cannabis Survey which surveyed cannabis users to get a sense of usage metrics and the size and scope of the illicit market. Perhaps, instead of relying on a national survey, a similar Yukon-specific survey could provide the Yukon government with insights on what steps they could take to further displace the illicit market here in Yukon.

There is a Canada-wide assumption that the illicit market will continue to fall in relation to legal sales. While the downward trend may continue, there is a very real possibility that it may hit a plateau under our current structure. I will say this anecdotally, but many Yukoners will tell you that the stuff they got before legalization was both better and cheaper than what is offered legally in Yukon.

So, maybe this is an opportunity to draw lessons from the most successful evil mega-corporations in the world — and I don't mean ExxonMobil or Nestlé. I am talking about Walmart. Walmart has been known to enter a new market and sell goods below cost to drive out the local mom and pop stores. This model is called "predatory pricing", and while it is awful when Walmart does it, it may be a model for Yukon government to look at when we are talking about cannabis. We don't want an illicit market, so let's figure out how we can create the market conditions to price that illicit market out. My colleague from Whitehorse Centre referenced efforts in Québec to create a product that was both affordable and of high quality with the explicit aim of displacing the illicit market.

Overall, I believe that this government has done a good job on cannabis legalization. We will be following things closely in the coming months and years with an eye toward edibles, legal Yukon production, and continued efforts to eliminate the illicit market.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to close by thanking the minister for the statement that had new information and that was delivered quickly and concisely without much window dressing. I hope that the minister's colleagues are taking notes.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will begin with the Member for Takhini-Kopper King. I thank her for her suggestion about working with the Bureau of Statistics. I will look into that.

I think that where we have been thinking about working on how to make sure that there is continued pressure on the illicit market and continued reduction of the illicit market is by working with the private retail market right now, because they are in the ideal place. We want to work with them to help increase their share of the market.

By the way, I wouldn't agree that the product that is sold legally here in the territory is not better. I think that it is better. Every Yukoner can rest assured that they know the origin of that cannabis and that they can feel safe in that. The people in the private sector right now are extremely knowledgeable in the retail market.

I will agree, though, that it is about price, and we do have to work to get the price down — again, happy to work with the private sector to do that.

For the Member for Kluane, suggesting that this is a redo — I actually went this time and underlined everything that was

new in the ministerial statement so that I could actually help to emphasize those points of information that are new.

By the way, I did not not answer the question about where we were with the revenue for the Cannabis Yukon retail store. What I said was that we were still getting the last numbers in but that overall we were heading toward breaking even. We sought to break even. It was the opposition that somehow speculated rather randomly that we had lost \$1 million. I'm happy to stand up and emphasize that it was not the situation.

If my biggest issue is with boxes with Canada Post, I'm pretty happy with the work that the corporation, the retail store, and the private sector have done. It is an issue, and we will continue to work on it.

Overall, cannabis legalization in the Yukon has been profitable. We are displacing the illicit market, and the rollout has been safe and well-executed by both the private sector and the public sector. I thank them for their work and will continue to do so.

Speaker: This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Mining project oversight

Mr. Hassard: On March 16, 2017, the Liberal government promised the mining industry that they would establish a collaborative framework to address industry concerns over timelines and reassessments for mining projects. That was over two and a half years ago, and unfortunately, the Liberals have taken no action to live up to this promise.

When we asked about this in the past, the Premier and the minister have suggested that these changes will be accomplished through work on the YESAA Reset MOU. Yesterday, there was a YESAA Reset MOU meeting, and the government refused to even put these issues on the agenda. Timelines and reassessments are the primary issues for the mining industry, and the reason that they agreed to support Bill C-17 was because the Liberals promised that they would address these issues.

The government's refusal to even put these topics on an agenda is a slap in the face to the industry. Can the Premier tell us when he will live up to his promise to address timelines and reassessments of projects?

Hon. Mr. Silver: As the member opposite noted, the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* — YESAA — Reset Oversight Group is a joint effort between the Government of Canada, the Government of Yukon, and First Nation governments to collectively seek efficiencies and other improvements to the YESA process. I do recognize that this process has taken longer than anticipated. The three parties of the Oversight Group are actively working on progress on this file and will be making the terms of reference, a list of priorities, and records of decisions available online as they go through the Government of Yukon and the Wiki platform — that was all done in October.

The member opposite is correct that there was a meeting to advance the dialogue of a technical work — a YESA forum, per se, is what it was being called. That was held yesterday —

invitations to all of those governments, to the YESA board, as well as the transboundary and non-settled First Nations, NGOs, and industry organizations.

Whether it's the YESAA reset or the substantial changes that have been made through a memorandum of understanding with the Water Board to identify and clarify the roles of the Premier, the chair, the secretariat, and the board, we are moving forward always to make sure that we have an industry that protects the environment, but also doesn't overlap processes.

Mr. Hassard: I'm not sure that changing the name of the committee is what the Premier considers progress, but it is clear that the Liberals either don't care enough about industry concerns to even make an effort or they just don't understand that governing doesn't stop at the press release.

It has been almost 32 months to the day since the Liberals promised the mining industry that they would address their concerns over timelines and reassessments, and here we are today — and, well, nothing accomplished, not even a timeline, Mr. Speaker. The government even refuses to put the topic on the agenda when they meet with industry.

Will the Liberals agree to hold a meeting with all parties before or during the 2019 Geoscience Forum, which begins on November 16, to specifically discuss the issue of timelines and reassessments of mining projects?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Accomplished — Mr. Speaker, we're no longer in a recession. We have the largest gold mine in Yukon history moving forward. I would say that, as far as industry and talking with us — whether it be through the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources with his responsibilities or through my responsibilities with the Water Board — I believe that industry is extremely happy with the progress that we're doing. Is everything fixed? Is everything completed? No.

We do remember the MLII process being delayed for years under a previous government, and hopefully the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources can come up and speak to that.

Again, Mr. Speaker, we are doing lots of work to make sure that we're streamlining processes. We're engaging with industry. We're going international as well to help drum up the business, and it's working. We have the lowest unemployment rate in Canada. We have the largest gold mine in history that is in production now. I want to thank John McConnell and his team for that endeavour.

We know that the industry is eager to be involved in this conversation — absolutely. The Oversight Group has had engagement with industry over the last year and half on the trilateral, joint priorities identified at the YESAA forum, and the Oversight Group is very eager to get a deeper conversation with industry. Nobody wants to see that more than the minister responsible, and I am very, very confident in the leadership of the chair of the Water Board, the chair of YESAB, and also the work that we're doing in the government.

Mr. Hassard: So, it's interesting to hear the Premier say that industry is happy with this progress, because I tend to disagree.

The Liberals have made zero progress on their commitment that they made to the industry in March 2017 to

address industry concerns of timelines and reassessments, as I've already said. We continue to hear from companies and individuals who are concerned that the Liberal government has been unable to deliver on this promise. Frustration continues to mount in the industry, and the government refused to even put the topic on the meeting agenda.

Can the Liberals provide one tangible action that they have taken over the last 32 months to address industry concerns over timelines and reassessments, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Speaking directly to the question that was just asked by the Leader of the Official Opposition, there is something called the mineral development strategy. The opposition would remember that from 2015. They announced it at Roundup, but it never happened. It never happened because they went out with communications before they ever had a plan set and a partnership in place.

Over the last year, 11 self-governing First Nations, in each and every case, passed a resolution at the chief and council level. An independent group that has met with all three political parties is now underway, and they are focused on ensuring that all issues — whether it be reclamation, security, timelines, or the future of mining in the territory — are addressed. I think that's pretty concrete.

Question re: Yukon mineral exploration program

Mr. Kent: The Yukon mineral exploration program, or YMEP, is a funding program designed to support individuals and companies exploring for placer or quartz occurrences by shouldering a portion of the risk capital required to explore. This year's budget cut the program from \$1.6 million to \$1.4 million. According to an article in *North of 60 Mining News*, the Yukon Geological Survey indicated that the Liberals made this \$200,000 cut to this incentive program to assist with the Beaver River land use plan.

Can the minister explain why the government cut money from this incentive program to support the Beaver River land use plan?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: If you look back at the trending use of YMEP, you will find that it was underutilized in the previous year. What was requested internally, as I understand it, is that, through discussions in the Mineral Resources branch and in discussions with the Yukon Geological Survey — of course, all the while, speaking to industry groups — there was a discussion about using those dollars internally so that the Yukon Geological Survey could do more advanced work.

Of course, the Yukon Geological Survey is at the forefront — not just nationally, but globally — in the work that they do. A lot of the investment that comes into the territory is because of the data that they collect and their expertise, all the while ensuring that, if funds need to be reallocated to ensure that there is more incentive for investment, those are things we can do — broad dialogue inside of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources with all players at the table and deciding the best way to use that money.

Mr. Kent: We would be interested in getting the current information from the minister on how many applicants used the mineral exploration program in previous years before it was

cut. In particular, I am interested in knowing how it leverages investment in the territory. This information would be useful in helping us to understand how the government arrived at the decision of cutting it.

If the Liberals were set on funding the Beaver River land use plan through cuts to other programs, presumably they could find cuts in other areas of government spending, such as the one-quarter million dollar increase to the Liberal Cabinet Office or the raise given to the Premier.

Could the minister explain how they arrived at the decision to cut the Yukon mineral exploration program?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I believe that the member opposite is mischaracterizing a reallocation. There were no cuts. There was work that was increased in the Yukon Geological Survey. The money stayed within the Energy, Mines and Resources budget. There is continued work.

I think that the member opposite would agree that the work that the Yukon Geological Survey does is fantastic work. I truly believe that putting the resources in their hands at a time when it was underutilized — and even through the application process. I'm happy to come back with a bit of a trend on the previous years of use of the program. I think that is a good expenditure for Yukon government. I know that when we are out on the road — whether at Vancouver Roundup or at the Prospectors and Developers Association conference in Toronto — the key people whom companies across the world want to meet with are from the Yukon Geological Survey. I think that ensuring that they have the right resources to do their good work is a good way to spend money in the Yukon government.

Mr. Kent: As we indicated, it was the Yukon Geological Survey that was quoted in a *Mining North* article saying that the Liberals' \$200,000 cut to the Yukon mineral exploration program, or YMEP, was so that they could support the Beaver River land use plan. What we are asking is: Why couldn't that money have come from somewhere else? The Beaver River Land Use Planning Committee's work is due to be completed on March 31, 2020.

Once that work has been completed, will the Liberal government be restoring their \$200,000 cut to the Yukon mineral exploration program?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: First, I think that it is important to touch upon the fact that the Yukon Geological Survey continues to — in their very important work — they are assisting on data collection around the Beaver River process. Of course, the whole process came about because of focus on the area and some of the exploration activity that had happened around the Rackla belt. So, increasing the data in that area is very important when you are doing a sub-regional plan.

I think that we have always been focused on the fact that, if there is a true need in some of these different programs, it is important for us to be nimble in the sense of how we ensure that we continue to see investment in the Yukon. My thoughts have always been that — working with the senior leaders at Energy, Mines and Resources — if it seemed that the application process continued to become more robust and there was more of a need for the money within the YMEP program, it would be a smart decision to put that back in place.

These are all things that we are always contemplating, and I look forward to more questions from the opposition.

Question re: Whitehorse Emergency Shelter and Housing First supports

Ms. White: A number of questions have been asked with regard to the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter. Unfortunately, what we haven't heard are many clear answers.

The community impacted by activities at the shelter have also been looking for answers and solutions to the concerns they have raised. Recently, the community had asked for clarification to a number of their questions. The department responded with answers that offered some information, but their vagueness left recipients with even more questions. When asked about plans and timelines, the answers referred to actions already taken and then mentioned that there would be more in the coming weeks — hardly reassuring to community members seeking information on the real concerns that they have today.

Mr. Speaker, when will the minister provide real answers with clear timelines to the real questions being asked by the community?

Hon. Ms. Frost: As Minister of Health and Social Services, it is my priority to enhance the well-being and quality of life of Yukoners — all Yukoners. Just this very morning, I met with the City of Whitehorse to speak about the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter, Housing First, and the schematics and drafting for the 4th Avenue and Jeckell Street project.

Our government is investing in people. We are looking at prevention. We are looking at creating a stable place for our vulnerable population. We are looking at evidence-based decisions. We are working with our partners and the questions that have come to us. We have responded in engagement sessions with the downtown association, with concerned citizens, and with businesses. We will continue to do that, Mr. Speaker.

If there are specific questions that the member opposite would like answered, I would be happy to endeavour to get that back to the member. But the vagueness of the question — I can't respond specifically to the request, because I don't know what it is she is asking for. But I would be happy to do that.

We have gone above and beyond with consultation and engagement with our partners. We will continue to work with the Downtown Residents' Association. We will work with the citizens in that core area as well.

Ms. White: That could have been a quote directly from citizens communicating with the Minister of Health and Social Services. The community has been looking for answers, but more importantly, they're looking for action on concerns that they have raised. This morning, we received an e-mail from a community member. Included in the e-mail were photos of a fire made from pallets burning in the alley across from the shelter close to a building. The Whitehorse Fire Department attended, and luckily the fire was extinguished with no apparent damages. Imagine, Mr. Speaker — now with the cold weather — having to be concerned about fires being built next to homes and businesses in the middle of the night.

This government is trying to placate them with vague answers and promises that have instead left residents frustrated and angry. They're trying to be good neighbours, but instead, their patience is wearing thin. How will the minister address these new concerns around the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter, and how will they be communicated to the community?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I want to just acknowledge the feedback just received, because I think that's really critical. It's critical that we look at the issues and the concerns that are brought to our attention and look at mitigating some of these concerns and pressures. We certainly have to look at the whole of our community, ensuring that we design a model that meets the needs of the residents, the businesses, and the clients at the shelter. Not one can function without the other.

We have to look at providing a resource and an opportunity for those who frequent the emergency shelter. We're not in any way turning a blind eye to the issues that have come to our attention, and we have addressed them, and we are working with our partners through the city and through the Department of Justice; we are working with the Kwanlin Dün; we are working with Ta'an Kwäch'än; we are working on a community safety plan and a model that will meet and address the concerns.

I absolutely am concerned as well, because there are new issues, and we want to ensure that, as we move into the winter months, we provide supports, but it has to be safe, and it has to be aligned with core principles of the city and of that region and of that particular part of our city, and that means that the partners have to be at the table. We will continue to endeavour to ensure that they are participating in the planning process.

Ms. White: The minister announced yesterday that the new Housing First apartments will be opening next week. The minister indicated that the community had been consulted and were aware of what was happening. After seeing the fallout from the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter on that neighbourhood, we would expect that a more thorough consultation would be done with this new project.

It would also make sense that clear plans would have been made public and shared in order to address the concerns the community or individuals might have. As with the community surrounding the emergency shelter, people want to welcome the individuals moving into this new housing project and see its success. They also want to know that the appropriate supports and services are in place before the new tenants move in.

Has the minister shared her department's plans for the Housing First facility with neighbours and nearby businesses? If so, did the plan include who will be staffing the building? What types of security are in place? What contact numbers should people call if their concerns are not being addressed?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Great questions, for sure. The Housing First residence was announced in November 2017. We worked on a tight timeline to address and bring into our portfolio of housing and housing availability in our city to the vulnerable populations — those who are precariously hard to house. We know that it requires special requirements. We need to ensure that we bring in programs and supports to make it successful.

Now, in terms of consultation and some of the concerns that have been brought to our attention — the Housing Corporation delivered letters to the neighbourhood at that time explaining the project. We discussed Housing First and housing philosophies, what that means, and how we provide answers to the public in this very House. We have had open houses. We will continue to do that.

We are working with — through the housing action plan committee, we have worked with F.H. Collins because they obviously have a school next door. We're working with the neighbours and we will continue to work with Kwanlin Dün and Ta'an Kwäch'än and the Safe at Home members to address the program design and the needs in that particular community. We are working on ensuring that we have continued open houses and dialogue and we will continue the invitations to the neighbourhood as we open up in the weeks.

Question re: Macaulay Lodge closure

Ms. McLeod: Last week, we asked the Minister of Health and Social Services what the government's plans are for the old Macaulay Lodge and the minister refused to answer at the time.

The 2018-19 five-year capital concept said that the government was planning on demolishing Macaulay Lodge in 2020. Can the minister confirm whether or not the government is still planning on demolishing Macaulay Lodge — yes or no?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am rising on behalf of Highways and Public Works, which manages the building supply for the Yukon government. The Yukon government manages and maintains roughly 600 government-owned buildings valued at approximately \$1.6 billion, and our building inspection program assesses all of our key buildings over a five-year period, including all buildings open to the public.

As far as Macaulay Lodge is concerned, that building is now empty — it's vacant. We are currently looking to see what the future plans for that building will be.

Ms. McLeod: So, I gather from that the government has no idea — after all this time — what they are doing with that. So, what are some of the things that the government is contemplating for the use of the old Macaulay Lodge?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Great question, because as the Minister of Highways and Public Works has raised and spoken to, we are looking at all of our resources and certainly looked at — as we closed down and moved the clients out of the Macaulay Lodge facility into the new Whistle Bend facility, we are now contemplating and working within government. We are looking at the facility itself and perhaps redefining, but at this moment in time, we do not have a specific answer on what we are going to do with that facility.

At some point in the near future, we will have a decision made, but that will certainly take into consideration the viability of that facility. For one thing, it's at the end of its life cycle. Is there a future use for it? Well, that will be determined once an assessment and a comprehensive review has been done.

Ms. McLeod: As I have stated, the demolition of the facility was in an old five-year capital concept, but it is not in

the most recent five-year capital concept. In its place are some new group home projects.

Has the government been approached by any other parties with a proposal for what to do with the old Macaulay Lodge?

Hon. Ms. Frost: What I can speak to is the fact that the government — our government, the Liberal government — is providing the essential services that are required for Yukoners so that they can maintain happy and healthy lives where they reside, whether it is for youth in care or seniors in care or collaborative models through the mental wellness hubs. We have taken the expanded scope of practice to ensure that we provide collaborative care for all Yukoners, Mr. Speaker, and I'm awfully proud of that.

Now, with respect to what we're going to do with the building that is sitting empty right now — we are providing the necessary dialogue to look at whether that would be a useful building in the future. While, at this point in time, that's not something I can respond to or answer, I can say that we are working very diligently with Yukoners to address their core needs, and we are very proud of that good work. We are essentially working to look at bringing services to rural Yukon communities, something that perhaps was not thought about in the past. But we are working to ensure that Yukoners are successful where they reside, and that means bringing the supports to them.

Question re: Mining sector development

Mr. Kent: In March of this year, the federal, provincial, and territorial governments released the *Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan*. In the plan, governments committed to six key actions to help support growth of the mining industry. One of those actions was a pan-Canadian geoscience strategy — and I quote from the report: “The federal, provincial and territorial governments and industry should explore options for increased funding for geoscience and examine ways to increase international collaboration on geoscience innovation.”

Can the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources explain what he has done since March of this year to support this commitment?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, this gives us a good opportunity to talk a bit about the collaboration around the federal, provincial, and territorial table on these topics.

The Canadian mines and minerals plan is, first of all, a very strong plan. There have been some challenges at the table. It started in Nunavut in August of 2018 when a number of provinces left the table. My feeling was that it was more for political reasons than for the content and the bulk of the work. A lot of private sector people across the country have fed into it. Again, we are in a key position. We will be hosting that exact meeting this summer. In July, we will have ministers from across the country coming in.

We continue to collaborate on this work with our other provinces and territories, but the other key thing is that, since the summertime, the federal government — which the previous minister would know from his work around the forestry table — there is a collaboration that gets done and coordinated through Ottawa.

Right now, we're looking to see who will be the new minister in charge of Natural Resources Canada, and we will continue the work around the metals plan at that time.

I know that the team will continue to do that work as we meet all those goals that have been laid out in the plan.

Mr. Kent: In July of this year, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources attended the mines ministers federal, provincial, and territorial meetings. According to the communiqué from that meeting, which the minister would have signed off on, ministers discussed a path forward on six key actions of the plan that I mentioned.

Another key commitment in that plan was on tax and financial assessments. To quote from this section of the report: “The federal, provincial and territorial governments should review Canada's tax position and adjust tax policies and other fiscal instruments to support cost competitiveness and attract investment.”

Can the minister update us on where Yukon is at in that review? Has the government reviewed our tax policies, and does he anticipate any changes?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I think that it's important for Yukoners to know that these are things that we give direction to our departments on, and our departments — Energy, Mines and Resources, Economic Development, and Finance — are extremely capable individuals — as we give that policy direction.

On this particular topic, what we have been focused on, when it comes to the financial levers that help enhance investment, has really been working with the BC government and looking at pools of capital that can be used to enhance investment. It's an item that had come out of the AME work in British Columbia. We have done a bit of legal analysis of what it would look like. This is work that, under my critic, did not get done. We think it's important work. It is work to really look at how you can enhance investment, understanding that many dollars have gone into other industries.

That's the work we're doing. We're working with the BC government to analyze what the options are on pools of capital — not unlike Plan Nord with the Québec government — and where we can enhance the opportunity for junior mining companies to move forward on their programs. I'm happy to come back with more on that and I am always looking at our regimes that are in place to improve the investment criteria.

We must just touch on the fact that, last year, in the analysis, we were in the top 10 globally as a place to look for investment in mining.

Mr. Kent: The minister should maybe put a line in his briefing notes that says, “I don't know; I haven't read it”, because that appears to be what it is.

This report was released in March of this year. It was discussed at ministers meetings in July of this year. I haven't been the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources for quite a long time.

Another key action that the minister committed to under the *Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan* was enhancements to our regulatory system. Another quote from this plan on that is — and I quote: “The federal, provincial and territorial

governments should ensure that those government bodies conducting environmental assessments have the capacity to deliver advice and decisions in a timely and efficient manner.”

What actions has the minister taken since March when this plan was released to ensure that the regulatory bodies conducting the environmental assessments have the capacity to deliver decisions in a timely manner? How is the minister monitoring whether or not these actions are successful in supporting the regulatory bodies?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, we just would like to correct the record. Of course, sitting there and taking part in those meetings, getting ready to host this important event this year, and going through these documents — yes, of course, we have read it. You can take any one of the 400 notes here and cherry-pick a document and ask me if I can recite it, but yes, of course, I understand where we’re going; I understand where we’re going on this particular topic.

I think that the important thing to think about is — when you look back and you think, “What we can do on the regulatory side?” First, what we have done is, in our conversations with the federal government, we have always reminded them that there has been a commitment in Bill C-17 to ensure that the YESA group — whether it be the First Nation governments that are working with YESAA or in the YESA offices — that there has been a commitment for more federal funding. I have discussed that with the federal ministers, and I am looking forward to knowing who the next minister in charge will be and to remind them that we need those funds. That would be one thing that falls in line with the pillar.

But, of course, the mineral development strategy is a very important topic. This was something that failed miserably under the previous minister. I think that the fact that we have all 11 First Nations together — it’s great to be able to see the person who the previous government had as chair coming back to do that work, but now under a regime of partnership. That’s why we’re seeing the success we’re seeing.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

OPPOSITION PRIVATE MEMBERS’ BUSINESS

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 66

Clerk: Motion No. 66, standing in the name of Ms. White.

Speaker: It is moved by the Leader of the Third Party:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to conduct a forensic audit into the finances of Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services from 2017 to 2019.

Ms. White: Today I rise to speak to Motion No. 66, which urges the Government of Yukon to conduct a forensic audit into the finances of Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services from the years 2017 to 2019.

There are a number of reasons why we brought this motion forward today. This summer, Many Rivers, a respected Yukon institution for more than 50 years, closed its doors — potentially forever. There are many folks out there in the community — whether they be members, former board members, former clients, or former counsellors — who want to know why. They want to understand what happened and why it happened, and they want to know, beyond all else, who was responsible for the hundreds of thousands of dollars of misspent government funds.

We are also asking for a forensic audit because we think that government should care what happens to its money. We understand that this government would probably like nothing more than to put the Many Rivers debacle in its rear-view mirror, but there are still a number of unanswered questions and opportunities to learn from these mistakes so that it does not happen again.

To understand what happened at Many Rivers, we need to go back to the very beginning. At the same time that Many Rivers counsellors were very publicly saying that there was something wrong, they went on strike last November. Mr. Speaker, you just have to think about the lost wages, you have to think about the missed mortgage payments, and you have to think about the financial stress that these employees and their families were under — but they believed so strongly that light needed to be shone on this organization that they chose to go on strike anyway. Mr. Speaker, it was long. It lasted until after Christmas. I think it was 11 weeks long.

At the same time that this was happening, behind closed doors, there were problems developing with the way that Many Rivers was spending its money and the oversight — or the lack of oversight — from Yukon government. As the strike continued, Many Rivers was quietly spending money in a manner that was not consistent with the budget submitted to the Yukon government. Examples included a 58-percent increase in the travel budget and payments in euros to the Paris School of Business for a doctorate in the business administration program.

Mr. Speaker, everyone knows what followed: The Many Rivers strike came to an end, a collective agreement was agreed to, and when the doors reopened, staff were nearly immediately laid off. The embattled Many Rivers board was then replaced on April 26 by a board that committed to resolving issues with the registrar and getting the organization back into compliance.

Mr. Speaker, things were looking good. At that point in time, the minister even publicly pledged the government’s support. But behind the scenes, Health and Social Services clearly knew that Many Rivers was in bad financial shape. Their third-party review revealed financial mismanagement and they were meeting with the RCMP to review claims of potential criminal activity within the organization. Mr. Speaker, at the same time that this government was meeting with the RCMP, they were also encouraging Yukoners to come together and resurrect Many Rivers by volunteering, attending meetings, and joining the board.

Things finally came to a head when the newly formed Many Rivers board received a letter from the Department of

Health and Social Services that highlighted the outstanding debt being carried by the organization, stating that members would be liable, and then they were told to come up with a way of paying it back. This letter was effectively the end of Many Rivers, as the board resigned with a seemingly hopeless task of finding the funding necessary to resolve the outstanding debt.

Mr. Speaker, if you didn't look any further, you might think that this action was reasonable. Many Rivers spent the money after all, so they should be responsible. But what about the Government of Yukon's responsibility? Does the Government of Yukon have an oversight responsibility? The answer, I believe, is: Of course they do. Did they oversee? Did they make sure they fulfilled their role of financial oversight? No, they did not. That's the resounding answer: No.

When the Government of Yukon enters into an agreement to fund a non-governmental organization to provide services, it signs what is called a transfer payment agreement, or a TPA. These agreements set out expectations of both the Government of Yukon and the NGO. They lay out the amounts that will be transferred, where those amounts are allowed to be spent, and the services the government expects that non-governmental organization will deliver in return for that money.

An essential component of a transfer payment agreement is a requirement that the non-governmental organization submits regular reports on the funds spent throughout that year. These reports are called variance reports, and they indicate whether or not that NGO is spending the money in accordance with the terms of the agreement that they signed with the government.

You can ask any Yukon NGO and they will tell you that any funding is dependent on the due diligence of the board and the staff to ensure that reports and financial statements are completed accurately and on time.

In the letter detailing the findings of the department's financial investigation of Many Rivers, the department indicated that there were issues with Many Rivers' compliance with the reporting requirements — and I quote: "... reporting requirements state that quarterly variance reports and forecasts were to be submitted, and that these variance reports were to show actual expenditures to date, compared against budget..." Mr. Speaker, the letter goes on to say — and I'm quoting again: "YG never received these variance reports." So, if the government didn't receive the required reports, how come they gave money to Many Rivers anyway?

So, it is clear that this government failed to conduct their financial oversight role. They have an obligation with the transfer payment agreement. The way that this government very publicly laid the blame for the financial mismanagement at the feet of the newly elected Many Rivers board also does not reflect the concerns of potential criminal wrongdoing that were being raised throughout Yukon.

Even ahead of the strike, we know that staff were raising concerns of wrongdoing with this government, with the office of the registrar, with government officials, and with the RCMP. Our office raised these concerns directly with the Cabinet office. They were legitimate and they deserved a closer look.

Mr. Speaker, this government decided that a financial investigation or a third-party review was sufficient even though, according to the report itself, it says — and I quote again: "... we cannot guarantee that fraud, error and illegal acts, if present, would have been detected when we performed the requested procedures."

We have heard from this government about their third-party review of Many Rivers, but this review did not investigate whether criminal wrongdoing occurred. We have all had a chance to look at that report now and it begs questions.

The minister then argued that the Government of Yukon could not conduct a forensic audit into Many Rivers' finances because there was no evidence of criminal wrongdoing. The purpose of a forensic audit is to establish whether or not there is any evidence of criminal wrongdoing, and that is not something that the RCMP does — that is something that Yukon government needs to do in this situation. So, either the Government of Yukon does not understand the purpose of a forensic audit, or they have other motives for resisting one.

The RCMP cannot move forward with an investigation until they have access to more information. They have made that clear but, to date, this government has been unwilling to initiate the forensic audit that could uncover that information. More than that, it could tell us where the money that the Yukon government gave that organization went.

By their own admission, the government failed to provide financial oversight of the funding that they provided to Many Rivers, and when legitimate concerns about the spending were raised, they failed again by conducting a review rather than a forensic audit.

This government has sent a horrible message to volunteer boards throughout the Yukon — horrible — and it's hard to imagine how people will proceed forward, because essentially they have said that, if we screw up — as Yukon government — you, as board members, will be to blame.

So, Mr. Speaker, why are we calling for a forensic audit? I would like to think that it's really simple. We know that the Government of Yukon's third-party review did not investigate whether or not criminal activity occurred — and, as such, it was not shared with the RCMP — but what it did do was find information gaps that raised significant concerns about the practices and procedures of that organization, an organization that did not fill out its transfer payment agreement by completing its variance reports. Remember that government didn't receive those variance reports.

A forensic audit would fill in the information gaps that were identified by the third-party review that was undertaken by the Government of Yukon. A forensic audit would investigate whether or not criminal wrongdoing occurred, and if it did, it would collect evidence that would be admissible in legal proceedings.

The evidence produced by a forensic audit could also be shared with the RCMP and allow them to undertake an investigation if required. Yukoners want answers, Yukoners need answers, and Yukoners deserve answers.

More than that, we have had dedicated staff, we have had dedicated community members, and we have had clients who

have all cried foul, and what they want right now is for this government to show leadership.

So, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the conversation, and I am hopeful that the government also wants to know what happened to their money, and more than through the third-party review.

Hon. Ms. Frost: I rise today to speak to Motion No. 66, brought forward by the Leader of the Third Party. I would like to start by identifying some of the common ground that the Leader of the Third Party and I share with respect to Many Rivers. We both have serious concerns about the financial decisions that were made by the previous board of Many Rivers.

I would like to assure the member opposite and members of the Yukon public that we are working with our colleagues in the Department of Justice to review our options moving forward.

We conducted a third-party review of Many Rivers' finances for 2018-19. The results of this financial review did not reveal whether or not criminal behaviour occurred. It did, however, alert Health and Social Services to practices and procedures within the organization that were of significant concern. The member opposite has raised some of those today. These concerns include contracts that went over 430 percent over the original budget, computer and IT amounts that went 73 percent overbudget, and professional development training that was not related to mental health or counselling services. We are also aware of \$177,000 in debt owed by the organization.

So, as I have said, Mr. Speaker, we agree that there are concerns with the financial decisions made by Many Rivers. Given the work that is currently underway with the Department of Justice to review our options related to Many Rivers, I would like to propose an amendment to the motion.

Amendment proposed

Hon. Ms. Frost: I move:

THAT Motion No. 66 be amended by deleting the word “conduct” and inserting the words “consider conducting”.

Speaker: We have a proposed amendment to Motion No. 66 — if copies could be distributed to members for their review.

Speaker's statement

Speaker: In my comments right now, I will be singling out the Minister of Health and Social Services, but I would say in a general sense that, on Wednesdays, all members should be prepared with their amendments. Ultimately, the changes in wording which I believe are being suggested are relatively minor. In any event, an admonition today for the Minister of Health and Social Services — but, in general, if best efforts can be made for all members. I know that there are sometimes negotiations and that sometimes matters change on the fly. That's not what has occurred today, in my estimation.

I believe that we will have the proposed wording here momentarily — but, please, if members could endeavour to be prepared and to ensure that the House's time is used in as expeditious a manner as possible.

The motion is procedurally in order.

It has been moved by the Minister of Health and Social Services:

THAT Motion No. 66 be amended by deleting the word “conduct” and inserting the words “consider conducting”.

So, the motion would then read:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to consider conducting a forensic audit into the finances of Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services from 2017 to 2019.

The Minister of Health and Social Services, on the proposed amendment, please.

Hon. Ms. Frost: I believe that the amendment I proposed is consistent with the desires of the members of the Third Party and reflects our shared concern with how things unfolded with Many Rivers. We too have questions about how money was spent under the previous board. As I mentioned before in this Legislative Assembly, we are currently reviewing our legal options moving forward. These options include, but are not limited to, a forensic audit. So, to be clear: This amendment does not rule out a forensic audit. It does not prejudice what course of action the government will take as long as it continues to look into the situation that unfolded with Many Rivers and identify the possible next steps. This amendment reflects our commitment to continue to work with our legal team to determine what appropriate actions and steps can and should be taken. We are committed to being a fiscally responsible government, and so we take these responsibilities very seriously.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to the original motion and to be able to table this amendment, and I look forward to hearing from other members.

Ms. White: This is an example of “do as we say, not as we do”. We have heard in this House multiple times on opposition debate days or backbencher days that if we have, as members of the opposition, a suggested amendment, we should have a conversation with the Minister of Community Services or the mover of the motion so that we are all prepared here for what the conversation might be and what might happen next.

Here we are — blindsided by the Minister of Health and Social Services — although I'm not surprised. I was saying off-mic before to the Member for Watson Lake that I am forever optimistic — which is a wonder, considering that tomorrow will be our anniversary of election. In my case, I'm in my ninth year. So, we have a government that says, “You know, if you're going to move an amendment or if you want to strengthen a motion, talk to us first. Give us the opportunity. Give us the respect. Talk to us first.” Well, this is not a surprise motion. This has been on the Order Paper for a while. I'm open to conversations. I'm really easy to find. I'm around every day between 8:00 and almost 6:00. I'm here. I'm ready for conversations.

So, what we see right now is “what happens in vagueness stays in vagueness”. We have no timeline. We have no guarantee. We’re not even saying, “Well, it could happen in this calendar year. It might happen in 2020.” We can say right now that a year ago — a calendar year ago — the staff of Many Rivers went on strike and the house of cards fell from that point forward.

We have a government saying that they might consider — they might consider — a forensic audit. We have no timeline. We have no guarantee and we certainly didn’t have the respect of the conversation prior to this amendment being moved.

So, Mr. Speaker, do I support the amendment? The answer is no. I do not. I don’t find that it’s respectful, nor do I find the way that it was done was in consultation with other members of this House. We get told over and over that it is our responsibility to approach the mover of a motion with proposed amendments. We get asked not to do it during the Sitting. We ask that you do it before it comes to the floor of the House so that everybody knows what’s coming. Did I know this was coming? I did not, Mr. Speaker. Like I said, what happens in vagueness stays in vagueness. So, we will not be supporting this amendment.

Ms. McLeod: I can only echo the comments from the Member for Takhini-Kopper King. Given the importance of this issue, the number of lives it has affected, and the number of lives it continues to affect, I find this dismissal of the importance of getting to the bottom of this issue to be disrespectful to Yukoners. Quite frankly, I find it somewhat despicable.

Obviously, I will not be supporting this amendment.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would like to say that when I have, in the past, invited or welcomed — I never required anyone to come and talk to me. I have just said that I would welcome it. What I heard from the Member for Takhini-Kopper King is that she would also welcome it and that she wished that it would have happened. I appreciate that. I think a heads-up is always a great thing.

I think that the language the Member for Watson Lake used is not — I don’t think that characterizes this at all. I think what I’m hearing is that there is a desire to try to find out — let me just see if I can find the wording.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Streicker: No, that’s not the wording I was looking for, thank you.

The Member for Takhini-Kopper King, in her opening remarks, talked about whether there is a caring to try to find out what is happening. The answer, from my perspective, is yes, and there continues to be that interest. We would like nothing more than to discern where this went wrong.

The challenge that lies before us is that the motion, as it is worded, is looking to be prescriptive — “do it this way” — whereas the investigation itself and looking at it with the Department of Justice may lead to a multitude of routes that are before it, possibly not including a forensic audit, if that is what is recommended.

What I think would be important is that the information be shared so that everyone understands why that is. Okay, Mr. Speaker — the question for me is that the minister is saying, “Yes, let’s have the look”, but it isn’t yet prescriptive. That is nothing — I believe that is a respectful approach.

Mr. Cathers: I just want to speak very briefly to this and note that this is a serious issue. People’s lives have been affected by the gap in services. In doing this, the way that the government proposed the motion — in fact, they didn’t get the wording of the amendment right — in bringing forward an issue that — as the Member for Takhini-Kopper King noted, they had plenty of notice that we were discussing this — is much in line with how they have handled the whole issue around Many Rivers.

They fumbled this issue from the beginning. They have left Yukoners, including clients and staff, paying for that failure of leadership on the part of this Liberal government.

It’s unfortunate that again today, when a motion is brought forward by the Member for Takhini-Kopper King regarding a serious request on a serious issue, all we see is more fumbling by this Liberal government and games-playing regarding the wording of the motion.

Speaker: Is there any debate on the proposed amendment?

Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Disagree.

Mr. Kent: Disagree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Disagree.

Mr. Cathers: Disagree.

Ms. McLeod: Disagree.

Mr. Istchenko: Disagree.

Ms. White: Disagree.

Ms. Hanson: Disagree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are nine yea, eight nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the amendment carried.

Amendment to Motion No. 66 agreed to

Speaker: Is there any further debate on the motion as amended?

Ms. Hanson: I think that, as I start out, I just want to express that, like my colleague, the Member for Kopper-King and the Leader of the NDP, who brought this motion forward, I am more than disappointed in the response of this government. There are a number of reasons for that, Mr. Speaker.

What we know is that this government and many members of this Legislative Assembly knew that there were issues and problems associated with the management of the former Many Rivers. The executive director had taken that board in a direction that was not healthy for the organization and ultimately led to the demise of it. On the opposition side, we don't have the obligation for due diligence or accountability to ensure that the money that was appropriated in this Legislative Assembly for disbursement to the Many Rivers society for those two fiscal years that my colleague identified as being the subject of a forensic audit — that's not our job, nor do we have the ability to do that oversight.

The Minister of Community Services has a compliance obligation to ensure that the society is in good standing. It was not. The Minister of Health and Social Services has a responsibility and an accountability to this Legislature and, in turn, to all citizens to ensure that the money that was appropriated in the budgets that she tabled for her department in this Legislative Assembly was spent according to the terms and conditions of the transfer payment agreements that they entered into with the Many Rivers society.

It clearly was not. At some point, there was a break in oversight. There was a break in the ability of this minister to stand, in all good faith, and say that things were going well at Many Rivers. It begs the question: What contact was there between the Minister of Health and Social Services and her senior management and Many Rivers over that period of time?

The minister referred to unauthorized expenses with respect to a pursuit of a doctorate in Paris and travel costs associated with that. That didn't happen last spring. That was not in 2019. It was during the period of time when this government was still flowing money to Many Rivers. Surely to goodness, a minister responsible for Health and Social Services and a minister responsible for funding one of the largest NGOs in the Yukon — an NGO that, up until two years ago, had a solid record in terms of service delivery, that started in Whitehorse as Yukon Family Services Association 50 years ago and expanded throughout the territory, a service that provided trusted service to many citizens who could not afford the services of experienced counsellors otherwise or who, for lots of personal reasons, were uncomfortable approaching those services provided by government — you can think of many reasons why that would be, Mr. Speaker.

When it started to be clear that there were problems — and I'll tell you from my own personal experience. My husband worked for many years for Yukon Family Services Association. That was an agency that was not unionized until they started having management problems, so it was not once, but twice,

that Many Rivers went on strike. It looked like it was recovering after that debacle a number of years ago. My husband and I were on the picket line then, because we believed — even though he had retired — in the integrity of the services and the people who worked there.

There has been a history in this territory — where we have had people who come into this territory and who take advantage of non-government boards. It's unfortunate, but it's true, and I would suggest to this House that we have just seen that again. What we are asking of this government is to stop blaming the victims here, but to actually get to the core of this, because we're going to see the same thing happen again.

If government backs down on doing a forensic audit, finding out where the rot started in Many Rivers, and, if charges need to be laid, making sure that those are pursued — but if government backs down now, then you can just watch over the next few years. This will continue to happen in this territory, and government — whichever stripe of government is on that side — cannot afford to let that happen. People need to have confidence that, when government is saying that they are doing something, they are actually doing it.

Mr. Speaker, I say this not only from the perspective of seeing and watching the workers from Many Rivers, who cared so much about the integrity of their organization that they were willing to stay on strike for those 11 weeks. After that, when it became clear that there was no money and no organization to keep running, when I attended those early meetings at the Gold Rush, at the High Country Inn, and at Yukon College — I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the minister cannot say that she was not informed or that she was unaware of what was happening or of the kinds of concerns and issues that were being raised. The deputy minister had his special advisor at all of those meetings taking detailed notes. The system was aware.

The system was aware of some of the background information that was being shared at those meetings by people with experience with the organization. They were aware of how deeply felt the commitment was to having an agency like Many Rivers able to provide them with services. There were heartfelt stories that were shared by people who put their names forward to try to revive Many Rivers, because they personally or their family members had benefitted from the services provided by Many Rivers over the years.

Then, in the meeting at Yukon College this spring when the board met and the concern was being raised — well, it's June, so what are we going to do? Well, the government has this special investigator. It's not a forensic audit — no, it's not a forensic audit. We can't call it that. It is a special review — a special audit that is being done. They think it will take two weeks.

These are volunteers, Mr. Speaker. They are volunteering to help highly paid public servants do this work, and the question is raised: What happens then? Well, at the end of that, the government says — then we will be in a better position to look at funding for Many Rivers because then we will know what the liabilities of the previous board are and we can move on.

There are words for that kind of communication from government to innocent citizens. I'm not going to use them in this House because they would probably be called unparliamentary, but it's true. This government allowed its officials or directed its officials to lead those citizens on — those people who were volunteering to try to revive a highly respected entity in this territory.

I think that the government has a chance to show that it's serious about this, that this is not a stalling tactic, that the amendment that was proposed this afternoon was not intended to simply say, "Get it off the table right now, because it's a lot easier, and we'll just punt it to someplace somewhere in the future, and hopefully people will forget about it." If that's the intent, the government sorely misunderstands the intensity of feeling that's around this issue.

I would ask the government to consider positively a proposed further amendment to Motion No. 66 that would indicate that the government is actually serious about taking action here.

Amendment proposed

Ms. Hanson: I move

THAT Motion No. 66 be further amended by adding "and report back to this Legislature before the end of the current Sitting" after "2019".

I have copies, Mr. Speaker. We are prepared.

Speaker: Thank you. The Member for Whitehorse Centre has a proposed amendment to the substantive motion as amended. There are copies for distribution to all members so they can have an opportunity to review the proposed amendment, and I will review the same with Mr. Clerk.

I had an opportunity to review the proposed amendment to the main motion, as previously amended, with the Clerks-at-the-Table. There are preferred drafting changes that I am going to suggest, with the advice of the Clerks-at-the-Table. It is just to specify it more particularly.

THAT Motion No. 66 be further amended by adding "and report back to the Legislative Assembly" instead of "this Legislature" — and then it would be "before the end of the 2019 Fall Sitting." That is more precise.

Is there any issue with that from the Member for Whitehorse Centre?

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker: No? With those proposed drafting modifications, the amendment to the main motion, as amended, is procedurally in order.

It has been moved by the Member for Whitehorse Centre:

THAT Motion No. 66 be further amended by adding "and report back to the Legislative Assembly before the end of the 2019 Fall Sitting" after "2019".

The Member for Whitehorse Centre, on the proposed amendment.

Ms. Hanson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Clerks for their attention to the detail there. It does provide greater clarity.

I think I have made it quite clear that really what we are looking for is an indication of good faith and commitment to the same outcome that the minister had indicated in her opening remarks. My colleague and I had both indicated that we are optimistic and hopeful that the government was — and is — serious about addressing this issue.

So, by agreeing — and we have heard since the beginning of this Sitting that this matter has been "under consideration." We have heard and we have known that there has been work done since this whole debacle became public and Many Rivers previous board resigned and was replaced at a meeting at the High Country Inn on April 26. So, this is not a new issue. I am quite confident that there are public servants who have been tasked by senior public servants to be looking at matters related to this. So, we are confident that the government is quite capable — if they have the political will — to be able to report back to this Legislative Assembly by the end of the Fall Sitting.

We would look forward to hearing from them that they are serious about reporting back on when they will be — the considerations that have been given and the decision with respect to the forensic audit that this motion calls for.

It's really up to the government. Do they have the political will and commitment to the words that are used every day in this Legislative Assembly by members opposite — about how this as an open government, this is an accountable government, and this is a government that is committed to transparency?

It's very simple. It takes — I would say that, at this point of the game, it just would be an "agreed" and "we agree with this". But I will leave it to the members — my colleagues in this House. All joking aside — because our days — sometimes there are many days when being an optimist in this place is kind of like being a fool. But despite that, I remain optimistic that members want to do and will do the right thing.

We look forward to hearing from colleagues in the House and to a positive response from the members opposite in particular and from the minister and her colleagues in particular.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the new wording on the proposed amendment to the motion. I would like to acknowledge again that we are committed. I am committed — I have been from the very beginning — to ensure that we provide appropriate and adequate services to all Yukoners and we are doing that. We're doing that through the establishment of our mental wellness hubs, social workers in every community, counsellors in every community —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Leader of the Third Party, on a point of order.

Ms. White: The amendment is very specific. It has a timeline. So, I'm going to suggest that this is Standing Order 19(b)(i): "... speaks to matters other than (i) the question under discussion..." We're talking about a timeline here.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: Are there any further submissions on the point of order? You could be at Standing Order 19(b)(i). You could also be in, as I recall, Standing Order 35(b), I believe.

I will listen carefully, but I tend to agree with the Leader of the Third Party that this is a fairly discrete and specific amendment that is being proposed.

Hon. Ms. Frost: With respect to timelines, what I was leading to is the fact that the non-compliance existed far before I arrived in this seat as the Minister of Health and Social Services. With regard to Many Rivers and their signed agreements, and where we are —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Leader of the Third Party, on a point of order.

Ms. White: Based on your suggestion, Mr. Speaker, this time I'm going to cite Standing Order 35(b): "a member, other than the mover, shall confine debate to the subject of the amendment."

Again, it's a timeline about considering the forensic audit.

Speaker: Minister of Community Services, on the point of order.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I heard the Minister of Health and Social Services talk about was timelines and what is affecting those timelines, which is exactly the point of the debate of the subamendment or the additional amendment.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: I will have to continue listening closely, but if the minister were, as the Minister of Community Services is indicating, indicating that there were concerns with complying with the proposed timelines, that would likely be orderly and topical.

Minister of Health and Social Services, on the proposed amendment.

Hon. Ms. Frost: With respect to the timelines of a forensic audit, it doesn't start as of October of 2018. The timelines that go back and the proposal that was brought —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Leader of the Third Party, on a point of order.

Ms. White: The amendment has been amended by the government member to say "consider". The proposed amendment right now to that amended motion is actually talking about reporting back as to whether or not we're considering that forensic audit or not. I ask that the member keep her comments to this. So, I can cite Standing Order 19(b)(i) or Standing Order 35(b) — whichever the Speaker decides fits best for the situation.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: The only issue I have is that the one amendment has "consider conducting" and then you're reporting back before the end of the Fall Sitting. What are you reporting back? I guess you're reporting back in some manner, but I do tend to agree with the Leader of the Third Party that it's just a discrete amendment. Whatever form that report shows — and it's obviously light on details before me — it's a timeline for reporting.

Minister of Health and Social Services, please.

Hon. Ms. Frost: With respect to the timeline, reporting back in two weeks is not possible. Now, the expectation to report back — the requirement to do the analysis, to work with the Department of Justice, to work with the 20-some boxes that we have, the requirement and the recommendations that were brought — the concerns that were brought to our attention state — from the executive director and the board that existed — that they had some major issues that go back years, and that's exactly what's being assessed. It's impossible, Mr. Speaker.

Absolutely — we want to ensure that Yukoners are made aware of how the funds were spent. We all want to know that. I want to know that. Now the accountability lies — it certainly should fall on the people who were responsible. We have an obligation to report.

The reason I was going back in time is to indicate that this is what the board and the executive director brought to our attention — to state that —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Leader of the Third Party, on a point of order.

Ms. White: The amendment in front of us says to report to the Assembly before the end of the 2019 Fall Sitting. If the Minister of Health and Social Services wants to debate the motion after, that's fine. But what we're talking about right now is the very clear and direct amendment. Again, it's going to be Standing Order 19(b)(i) or 35(b).

Speaker: Member for Porter Creek Centre, on the point of order.

Mr. Gallina: I can appreciate members focusing on a specific timeline. What I'm hearing — and what I'm hearing from the minister — is she is explaining why she is not in support of a specific timeline. I think that the member could take time to explain to this House — why she is not suitable to this amendment.

When I look at Standing Order 19(b)(i) and I look at the annotated Standing Orders, it talks about there being some time to state their case as to relevance. I haven't seen much time being given to the minister to be able to state her case on this amendment.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: What I would agree with is that the Leader of the Third Party — I understand where she is coming from, but she has been fairly quick to jump up. The minister really hasn't

said much, so one could certainly — from what the minister has said in her limited submissions, one could certainly say that it is off-point and does not comply with section 19(b)(i) or with section 35(b). But I do take the Member for Porter Creek Centre's point to an extent that I'm prepared to listen a little longer to the Minister of Health and Social Services — but just a caution that this is a discrete amendment.

Minister of Health and Social Services, please.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would conclude by saying that the timelines proposed are not something that I or the departments of Health and Social Services and Justice can work with. I would propose that we would certainly be willing to put a timeline forward, but two weeks is not possible.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thank the member opposite for the proposed amendment. Right away, when we saw the proposed amendment, we quickly caucused and asked the very specific question: Did the minister believe that the department could make it in that timeline — to make it by the end of this session? Her description was that there were 20 boxes of materials or records that they were trying to work through and she didn't believe that they would be able to achieve it in time. It's just very clear that there is still this desire to get the answer for all involved, but we're just not able to meet the timeline, as proposed in the amendment.

Ms. White: The amendment, as I see it right now, is asking for a timeline. The Third Party, the Yukon NDP, had to respond to an amendment that we didn't know was coming by suggesting a timeline. We are open to timelines, but what we're looking for is a date. That's why we picked this date — because it's a date. It says that we will come back, that we will know that government is going to either do or not do a forensic audit — because it has been changed to “consider”.

So, what we're looking for in this Assembly is a response — yes or no — a forensic audit will be done. We're not looking for it to be completed. We want to know that one will be started or not started. We were hoping that the answer could come to this Assembly before the end of the fall legislative Sitting.

That's what this is about. It's about a timeline, and it's about asking — once it was changed to “consider” whether or not they were going to conduct a forensic audit — that they could respond not just to this Legislative Assembly, but to the community, to the people who were on the Many Rivers board, the people who were employed at Many Rivers, the clients of Many Rivers — whether or not government was going to move forward on this or whether or not they were going to conduct a forensic audit.

So, we're not looking for the completion — we're looking for a commitment that an answer would come — yes or no. That was why we have a timeline — because without timelines, we can be talking about this again in the spring and in the fall and again and again.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on the proposed amendment?

Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Disagree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Disagree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Disagree.

Mr. Gallina: Disagree.

Mr. Adel: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Disagree.

Mr. Hutton: Disagree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 8 yea, 9 nay.

Speaker: The nays have it. I declare the amendment to Motion No. 66, as amended, defeated.

Amendment to Motion No. 66, as amended, negated

Speaker: Is there any further debate on the motion as amended?

Ms. McLeod: I was all ready to get up and be very happy to speak to Motion No. 66 as presented by the Member for Takhini-Kopper King, and I have got to say that I am a little less excited to speak to this new motion which really escapes the attention of what the Member for Takhini-Kopper was trying to do.

I am kind of having a moment of déjà vu here, actually. This whole debacle over Many Rivers and its management has me thinking about this spring when we had another mismanagement of epic proportions over the matter of group homes, but here we are.

We have not had much luck in finding out exactly where the government is in their work with Many Rivers. In fact, after the large number of questions posed to the minister this fall alone by both opposition parties regarding the mismanagement of finances and what the government was doing about it, the government has managed to muddy the waters even further. There was ample time to make a clear and satisfactory decision around the path the government would take to develop an adequate set of talking points and to stick to them — but here

we are with no real idea of what has been done or what actions the government is going to take on this.

The government has different responses to give to each of the opposition parties and the media, and we are left with even more questions than answers. In fact, not only is this government unable to keep their stories straight from day to day — we saw the minister contradict herself last week over the course of just 10 minutes of answering questions in Question Period. We have been talking about the challenges around Many Rivers for a very long time in this House, Mr. Speaker, and it is time for commitment and it is time for answers.

I am hopeful that this discussion today will lead to some concrete action by the government — ever optimistic. The evidence is there, and it points to the government conducting a forensic audit into the finances of Many Rivers.

We have heard time and time again from the government that they have a concern on how resources were spent by Many Rivers and have yet to hear a commitment to order a forensic audit. In fact, the minister seems to think that the government has done their — and I'll quote here: "... due diligence and monitor and track accordingly." That was from a discussion here in the House on October 23. The minister goes on to say — and I quote: "At this point, I am satisfied with where we are and we will ensure that we don't run into this situation again."

We've heard a number of different actions that the Liberals have allegedly taken on the discovery of financial irregularities within Many Rivers, but we're not entirely sure what those actions were. Third-party investigations, financial investigations, criminal investigations, no criminal investigations — we're not sure exactly what action the government has taken, but to be clear — and I believe the Member for Whitehorse Centre has said this in the House as well — each of these investigations differs greatly from a forensic audit.

My question to the government is this: How can the government be satisfied with their work and ensure that nothing like this happens again if they don't know what happened in the first place? A forensic audit would give answers to what happened to these resources and would provide solutions as to how to prevent it from happening again.

The minister has admitted to having a legal obligation and a fiduciary obligation to taxpayers. Unfortunately, the actions of the government appear to be falling short of those obligations. I would encourage the minister to view this entire situation objectively.

Now, laying blame isn't the answer. I hate to see the minister trying to blame the society or the previous government. That does not get to the bottom of the issue at hand, and it is simply time to launch a forensic audit.

I want to take a moment to recognize that Many Rivers, despite financial issues over the last couple of years, has provided communities across the territory with incredible services for decades. Their dedication to mental health and wellness should not go unrecognized. Many Yukoners have benefited from these important services. I know that both sides of the House have noticed this in the past.

I'm concerned that, while the government has taken on the full delivery of services in the communities, there are still communities that are feeling the pinch. They are not satisfied with the options for addressing their mental wellness concerns. Entering into counselling to address one's problems takes a great deal of strength, and then, to develop a relationship with a counsellor and indeed all of the support staff is an important part of the healing and wellness.

These front-line employees have suffered because of issues that were not of their making. We have heard concerns from many constituents in the communities who feel that they are no longer provided with the services they need. They simply do not feel comfortable sharing their personal and intimate details with government employees. I would encourage the minister to take a close look at the work that Many Rivers has done over the years with communities, ensure that service levels are up to the same standard, and also be cognizant of the fact that this situation could be more disruptive to individuals' care and treatment than the government is aware of. Not every individual who was receiving treatment and services from Many Rivers is content with having to be treated by government. It is important to remember that government-operated mental health hubs and government workers may not be adequate for those seeking private services.

We have heard that Many Rivers patient files have been collected by the Yukon government for storage. There have been concerns voiced by constituents who believe that they should have the option to take control of their own files, as they have never been clients under the Yukon government and do not want their personal information in the hands of government. I am interested to see whether this is something that the minister has considered and whether those who request their files are able to retrieve them from the government.

I would like to express again that this is a serious situation, and we have seen a serious lack of leadership from this Liberal government. The government should have taken the initiative to order a forensic audit, taken action where required, and made policy changes as necessary to ensure that fiscal mismanagement does not happen in the future. Instead, the minister is satisfied where they are. There is still time, Mr. Speaker, to get this done.

I urge the minister to listen to the concerns being brought forward to her today and for the government to take action, because with or without a motion on the floor to compel her, the minister could take the initiative and indeed report back to the House before the end of this Sitting on what action the government will be taking.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Let me begin by echoing some of the remarks from the Member for Watson Lake — that mental health and counselling services are so critical for all Yukoners and for our communities in particular.

It is essential. I heard her criticizing the mental wellness hubs — okay. I hope that, if there are citizens with those concerns, that — if they don't feel comfortable using the services that are provided, I hope they're able to share those

concerns so that we can continue to refine those services for Yukoners.

But I think that, first and foremost, mental health and counselling services are critical. I would like to thank Many Rivers for 50 years of work that they did. I would like to thank all of the volunteers over the years who have worked with Many Rivers — it is quite something — and the staff who have worked there, but for all those people who have worked to try to support Many Rivers over the years.

When Many Rivers first started having some challenges and it was coming to my attention, I noted at that time — I would say that societies sometimes — and this wouldn't be the first society — fall behind on their reporting. We always do our best to try to support those societies to get back into compliance while living within the rules of law that are in front of us, but I would say there is an interest to do what we can to try to support those societies to get back into compliance.

I recall being in this Legislature some time ago — I think it will be a year ago this past spring. There were societies that were here, and I heard from members opposite that we should not be judging those societies, that we should be supporting them, that we shouldn't be looking at them — and I heard that we should trust those societies to do their work. I heard that we should allow them to be doing the good work that they're doing.

I also heard from members —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order, please. The Minister of Community Services has the floor. I'm having some difficulty hearing him at points.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I also heard in this Legislature suggestions that we step in on the labour dispute that was taking place. At that time, when I got those suggestions, I called up the head of the union for the Yukon Employees' Union to ask him for his personal advice about whether we had a role of stepping in on a labour dispute. His advice to me was "Absolutely not." So, I gave those words.

So, I get different levels of — "should step in" or "should not step in". There is a challenge at all times about whether we should — how far we should go. If a society is taking decisions under its board and under its constitution and is doing so in a healthy and respectful fashion, I don't think there is the job to step in. The question comes when it is not in a good place and where that role comes for us to engage.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize that the issue of administration and regulation of societies has had a high profile in the media over the last few months. That being said, Yukon societies' legislation and the office of the registrar of societies have been functioning precisely as they should be. The role of the registrar of societies is primarily to enable the creation of local societies, enable outside societies to expand their operations to the Yukon, maintain a public registry of all societies, and facilitate the maintenance of societies as valid, not-for-profit corporations under the legislation.

All societies are obligated to file ongoing reports and financial statements with the registrar to maintain their status of compliance. If a society breaches legislation, the registrar can investigate; however, the registrar does not have a role in overseeing societies' day-to-day operations or to manage their contracts or funding agreements. The Yukon's new *Societies Act*, which follows the national trend, received assent here in this Legislature last year on November 22. Consultation on regulations is planned for later this winter and the new act will come into force once regulations are complete in 2020.

Yukon's current societies' legislation provides for a complaints process for raising concerns related to alleged breaches of the *Societies Act* regulations or the societies' bylaws. The registrar can look at breaches of the *Societies Act*, but it has no authority to consider internal operational matters, including how a society carries out its purposes or how directors ultimately spend its funds.

When questions arose about public funds intended for providing Many Rivers' clients with mental health services, the Department of Health and Social Services, in its role as funder, arranged for an accounting firm to review Many Rivers' financial statements. It is our understanding that the review shows discrepancies between the budgeted amount authorized by the transfer payment agreement and actual spending in several areas. Health and Social Services is doing its due diligence as the funder and continues to consider, with the assistance of legal counsel, the appropriate next steps regarding questions of financial management.

Let me turn to that, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that the members opposite would like to see a timeline. Their expectation is that it should be possible for department officials, working with accountants and talking with the Department of Justice, to have a full review of the documentation that they have for Many Rivers and report back by the end of this session.

I heard the minister explain that she is not able to do that. I know that she spoke with her department to try to understand what an appropriate timeline would be, and she has passed me a note, which I will share here, regarding what is possible — so a status report by spring 2020, which may or may not include an audit. They are assessing the next steps, based on the information that they have now and in these historic files.

I understand that the members opposite are scoffing at that timeline. Respectfully, that came from the public officials. They were asked what kind of timeline they could provide. I get that the members opposite don't think that is appropriate. I understand that there are 20 boxes of files — complex files — which go back to 2013-14 and it will take time to review those and it is not possible to resolve that in the coming weeks. But what I think is important is that we do care what happens with that funding and we do care to try to find out where there is responsibility to be attributed.

Both the Member for Watson Lake and the Member for Whitehorse Centre talked about this as blaming the victims, or blaming. The Member for Watson Lake said, "You know, we shouldn't be laying blame. That is not the answer." But the whole point of looking at these files is to understand where

responsibility lies and to attribute it so that all Yukoners will know what happened here.

The challenges of Many Rivers go back many years, Mr. Speaker. I wish that there was a way to get an answer today. I thank the officials who are looking at these documents to try to understand where things went wrong, but what I will say is that the concerns that I have heard — even raised by the members opposite today — talk about problems that go back in time. At what point in time did this happen, and where is that documentation inside of these files? We look forward to an answer — just as the members opposite do.

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

Does any other member wish to be heard in debate on Motion No. 66 as amended?

Ms. White: Opposition Wednesdays are always — they are fascinating days. On my very first opposition Wednesday, I learned the power of language, and here we are almost over eight years later learning it again.

The addition of the word “consider” — I can consider whether I’m going to have chicken or pasta for dinner; I might consider whether I’m going to go for a bike ride tomorrow or if I’m going to take the dog for a walk. What we were looking for with the attempt to add a timeline is that the government could consider whether there was going to be a move forward.

Now we have a motion that — I mean, it does have the words “forensic audit”, so maybe I should view that as a win. But what we were trying to do here in this discussion today was talk about the seriousness about both the importance of government departments that have transfer payment agreements with non-governmental organizations and their responsibility to look at the variance reports as they’re submitted by those organizations.

The reason why I mention that again, Mr. Speaker, is I’ve had conversations with other NGOs in the community. I say, “What would happen if you didn’t submit your variance report?” Across the board, it is a resounding, “Well, we wouldn’t get any money; we wouldn’t get any more money.” But what we see in this example is that variance reports were not submitted. They weren’t submitted, but Yukon government still funded the organization.

The review highlights all sorts of things that we should all be concerned about. I heard the Minister of Health and Social Services say that there was concern. Those reviews highlighted concerns. We agree.

We have been told that Health and Social Services is working with its colleagues in Justice — but what exactly does that mean, and what kind of timelines are we talking about? I’ve mentioned before in this House that, without timelines, I have learned that this can be a conversation in perpetuity.

So, I appreciate that the Minister of Health and Social Services sent the Minister of Community Services a note that said maybe by spring we would have a decision. My commitment here is that I will bring back the motion in the

springtime asking if we’re going to conduct an audit, if I don’t know — a forensic audit.

I appreciate the conversation today. It is true, I am highlighting that I will bring this back. I’m not done with it yet. I think some of the disservice to the community, at this point in time, is that — essentially, it has been just about a year since the strike started and just under a year since the organization completely folded, and at this point in time, people still don’t understand how it happened and how it went wrong — how a non-governmental organization that is responsible to submit variance reports didn’t. How was that organization still funded through government? How did they still collect money? That is the big question.

There is responsibility on all sides, Mr. Speaker. We didn’t think it would be an easy issue, but as I was saying earlier and I will say again, I remain optimistic. I look forward to a press release or a ministerial statement in the Spring Sitting saying that government is moving ahead with a forensic audit. That would be fantastic. I look forward to responding to that.

It is not cut and dried — how I feel about this motion now that it has been amended. To me, “consider” is such waffling language that it’s hard to say, “Well, I’m going to vote in favour of it.” Because what I’m saying then is that I’m okay with not having concrete timelines and that I’m okay with the fact that we might consider, sometime in the future, whether or not we move forward with a forensic audit. I am left torn here; I am left torn. Do I vote in favour of the motion that I originally tabled or do I not?

With that, I am just going to wrap up my comments and I guess look forward to another opposition Wednesday sometime in the future.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Member: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Disagree.

Mr. Kent: Disagree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Disagree.

Mr. Cathers: Disagree.

Ms. McLeod: Disagree.

Mr. Istchenko: Disagree.

Ms. White: Disagree.

Ms. Hanson: Disagree.

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

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion as amended carried.

Motion No. 66, as amended, agreed to

Motion No. 77

Clerk: Motion No. 77, standing in the name of Mr. Hassard.

Speaker: It is moved by the Leader of the Official Opposition:

THAT this House urges the Members' Services Board to waive confidentiality regarding all e-mails and correspondence between members of the committee related to the August 2, 2019, letter from Floyd McCormick, former Clerk of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Hassard: It's a pleasure to rise today to speak this afternoon on Motion No. 77. As you have just read the motion, Mr. Speaker, it is very clearly an important motion.

As we all know, the letter that former Clerk, Dr. Floyd McCormick, sent to Members' Services Board was on the Liberal government's flawed and unfair electoral reform process. There has been much discussion about how the Liberal process stacked the deck in favour of just the Liberal Party so that they could force through whatever changes they wanted to the electoral reform system that suited the needs of their political party.

It was this potential for abuse by the Liberals that Dr. McCormick raised concerns about, but our democracy does not belong to this Liberal Party. It belongs to all Yukoners. The fact that this Liberal Party and all of its MLAs in the Legislature have supported this process is very concerning. I think the fact that efforts have been taken by members of this Liberal Party to prevent this issue from being discussed in public is also very concerning.

For that reason, I think it's important to thank the Member for Whitehorse Centre for bringing this issue to light by tabling the letter that Dr. Floyd McCormick sent to Members' Services Board.

It was important that the letter was brought forward so that Yukoners could see the concerns with this approach to electoral reform, because, as I said, Mr. Speaker, these are serious concerns. Having that letter remain secret is bad for democracy and bad for transparency.

My remarks today will focus on two things: first, the motivations for bringing this motion forward; and second, the importance of this motion.

First, just for everyone's background, according to the Legislative Assembly's publicly available website, the Members' Services Board is made up of five MLAs: the Liberal MLA for Klondike, the Liberal MLA for Riverdale South, the Yukon Party MLA for Lake Laberge, the NDP MLA for Takhini-Kopper King, and it is chaired by the MLA for Riverdale North, who is responsible for setting the agenda and who is also a member of the Liberal Party.

As members may know, the deliberations, including the agenda of the Members' Services Board, are confidential. As we pointed out on a ruling by the Speaker on November 28, this means that we are limited in what we can say and talk about when it comes to the topic of the Members' Services Board and its agenda. But it would appear that the Premier and the Liberals have a double standard on this, because some of us are limited in what we can say. The Premier has probably broken the record for the number of times that he has complained or tried to shut down debate about committee proceedings and agendas being discussed, but he seems to think that he should be provided the latitude in what he is allowed to say about Members' Services Board, its agenda, and how they characterize discussions at the board.

So, on October 15 of this year, the Premier — during the course of debate in this House — referenced and began to characterize discussions that occurred at Members' Services Board not once, but twice. Then, on October 17 of this year, the Premier once again began to discuss and characterize discussions that occurred at Members' Services Board. On October 22, the Member for Whitehorse Centre tabled the letter from Dr. Floyd McCormick to Members' Services Board detailing concerns with the Liberals' unfair approach to electoral reform. On October 23, I referenced that letter here in this House. Also on October 23, the Premier began to characterize discussions that occurred at Members' Services Board regarding this particular letter. On that same day, the Premier once again referenced Members' Services Board, and this time he began to explicitly discuss the agenda of Members' Services Board.

I will just quickly quote him in his second reference to Members' Services Board from that day, where he said — and this is an exact quote from Hansard: “Without indulging in the confidential agendas, it wasn't me who put it on the agenda, but it was opposition who put this very issue on the agenda to speak about in the Members' Services Board.”

That's a quote from the Premier with respect to the agenda for Members' Services Board. Obviously, it's important in the context of all the times that the Members' Services Board, its discussions, and its agenda have been discussed in this House by the Premier, but it's actually important for other reasons as well, and I'll return to discuss them later as I proceed.

Back to October 23 — the Premier began to discuss Members' Services Board discussions around the electoral reform letter once again, so we're up to three instances on that day of October 23, but we aren't done. Once again, on that same day — October 23 — the Premier divulged more information about what was said at Members' Services Board, so we're up to four instances on that particular day.

Then, later on that day, the Premier for a fifth time went on further to discuss Members' Services Board discussions around the letter to the board highlighting concerns with the Liberals' unfair approach to stack the deck. That makes five references by the Premier just on October 23 explicitly discussing the agenda and the conversations that occurred at Members' Services Board.

Let's move on to the next day, Mr. Speaker. The Premier once again referenced Members' Services Board. Here's his quote from that day: "It's interesting that the agenda of the Members' Services Board is now being discussed in the Legislative Assembly." The fact that the Premier delivered that line with a straight face without a hint of irony certainly was Oscar-worthy.

On October 23, the Premier not only spoke at great length about discussions that happened at Members' Services Board, but he also spoke about a Members' Services Board agenda. He even went a step further and made claims about who put something on the agenda, and I'm happy to read that quote again: "Without indulging in the confidential agendas, it wasn't me who put it on the agenda, but it was opposition who put this very issue on the agenda to speak about in the Members' Services Board." That's the Premier on October 23.

Again, just so Yukoners and those listening at home can see the true extent of the gaslighting that this Premier conducts on a regular basis, here's a quote one day later from October 24 — and again, it is an exact quote from Hansard: "It's interesting that the agenda of Members' Services Board is now being discussed in the Legislative Assembly."

So, Mr. Speaker, one day the Premier has no problem not only speaking at length about Members' Services Board discussions, but also about speaking about the agenda. Then the next day, he is shocked that anyone would bring up the agenda. I think I will leave it up to Yukoners to decide if the Premier is purposely being disingenuous or if he just can't remember what he said after he says it.

We will move on, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Minister of Community Services, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Well, what I will stand on right now is that I just heard the Leader of the Official Opposition talk about being purposely disingenuous, which sounds like a deliberate falsehood under Standing Order 19(h).

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: I can look at Hansard. If that is what the Leader of the Official Opposition said, then those phrases together should probably be avoided. I agree. But like I said, I didn't entirely hear that. I will review Hansard and return if necessary.

The Leader of the Official Opposition, please.

Mr. Hassard: On October 28, the Speaker made a ruling in this House stating two things: (1) that the Member for Whitehorse Centre shouldn't have tabled the letter that was sent to Members' Services Board from Dr. McCormick, and as a result, that letter would be tossed down the memory hole and erased from record; and (2) that —

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order, please.

The members must take care to not involve the Speaker in the debate on this motion. I remind members that the Speaker is not a part of this debate. The Speaker is the impartial arbiter of the debate. You may discuss this issue to a large degree, as the Leader of the Official Opposition has done so far, but now you have, in my view, engaged the Speaker in the debate going forward with that phraseology. Of course, the Chair or the Speaker is not in any position to respond or participate in debate.

So, I would ask the Leader of the Official Opposition, going forward in the material that you have before you, to be cognizant of that admonition.

Mr. Hassard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker — duly noted.

So, the second part of the ruling was that I, the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin, should not have discussed the Members' Services Board in the Legislature.

Of course, we have to feel a little concerned when some members of the House are limited in what they can say or do with respect to Members' Services Board — and I will put a heavy emphasis on "some members", because members from the two opposition parties have apparently been told that they aren't to talk about it. But, as pointed out, the Premier has referenced Members' Services Board — including the agenda, including characterizing discussions that occurred at those meetings — on many occasions, and that appears to be okay. I will leave it to Yukoners to decide why it might be that members from the Yukon Party and the NDP are prevented from talking about that letter, but the Premier is not.

At this point, I should also mention that again on October 29, one day after the ruling, the Premier once again discussed the board's agenda. Then again on November 5 — which was just yesterday — the Premier went on at length to detail discussions that occurred at Members' Services Board.

It is this existence of what appears to be a double standard in the House for what can and cannot be discussed around Members' Services Board, and that is a large reason for today's motion and it really speaks to why we need to pass this motion — because, as I have stated, there is one set of rules for the Liberals and another set of rules for the opposition parties. That is how we have gotten to where we are today.

Now, let's talk about why this motion needs to pass. First off, I think it's obvious that discussions about changing our democracy should be done in the open. In fact, the Official Opposition has raised this issue with the Liberals and the Premier many times, but for some reason, the Premier has been very reluctant to have these discussions in the open. We have written to him half a dozen times with lists of questions about his unfair electoral reform process, and these questions highlight many of the concerns that were in Dr. McCormick's letter as well.

So far, the Premier has refused to answer these questions. It appears that he doesn't want things in writing, and he appears to be trying very hard to avoid a record of anything. When we raised the issue in the House so there is a public record, the Premier said that he didn't want to have these discussions in the House. He did not see that as productive. In his words, he would

prefer that we have a meeting between party leaders to discuss these issues.

So, on Monday, I wrote to the Premier asking for a meeting to discuss these issues. Then during debate yesterday afternoon, the Premier criticizes us for wanting to have a meeting instead of wanting to discuss it in the House. This is just another example of the Premier gaslighting Yukoners. One day, he refuses to discuss electoral reform in the House; he would prefer to have a meeting. The next day, he refuses to have a meeting and would prefer to discuss this issue in the House. In fact, we only suggested a meeting in my letter because of what the Premier had previously said last week. So, he wants a meeting; he doesn't want a meeting — no wonder he has mismanaged this process so badly that it has gone off the rails.

The inconsistencies and the flipflopping by this Premier are really something. He flips, he flops, he rewrites the facts — all to serve his purposes. Those purposes are to cover up for lack of leadership, as near as I can tell, Mr. Speaker — to cover up his government's inability to get anything done and to avoid public accountability.

It really is a disturbing trend that we see from this Premier — that he would show so little commitment to any sort of principle that he would mischaracterize and gaslight people on a such a frequent basis. But the concerns raised by Dr. McCormick to Members' Services Board are very serious.

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order, please.

I'm just not — pardon my ignorance, but I'm not entirely sure about the definition of "gaslighting". I have certainly read about it in the context of American politics. I will do some research. I'm certainly — in the context of the Leader of the Official Opposition's presentations — I'm virtually certain it's not congratulatory or laudatory.

My tummy test is approaching that it's close — it might very well be close to unparliamentary. If the Leader of the Official Opposition is proceeding with that terminology multiple times again — like I said, I will get back to the House specifically with respect to that word. In my recollection, it doesn't appear to have been a word that has actually been utilized in the 34th Legislative Assembly. Maybe it has, but it seems to be new. Like I said, my gut reaction is that it is at best close to the line.

Leader of the Official Opposition, please.

Mr. Hassard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that. So, as I was saying, the concerns raised by Dr. McCormick to Members' Services Board are very serious, and they highlight major concerns with the Premier and the Liberal government's one-sided and unfair approach to electoral reform. As discussed, the Premier has gone to enormous lengths to prevent a written record on his electoral reform process, which, quite frankly, stacks the deck in favour of the Liberals.

Of course, the Liberal approach not only skirts around access-to-information legislation, but it ensures that no one knows why or how decisions to change the way we vote were

actually decided. We know that the Liberals have now hit the pause button on electoral reform, and we now see that the reason for this is that the former Clerk of the Assembly wrote to the Speaker on August 2.

Mr. Speaker, if I could just quote from that letter — Dr. McCormick says, "No one party should, therefore, be allowed to control the reform process or the outcome."

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order, please.

I am not quite sure how this can occur. I would say parenthetically — anyway, I will keep it brief. I am the arbiter. I am the holder of the Standing Orders, and I interpret the Standing Orders. I receive advice from the Clerks-at-the-Table, and it is up to members to change their rules. The Members' Services Board has been, based on the information that I received, in camera since 1978. If Members' Services Board wishes to change that, they are certainly open to.

My query is: First of all, Dr. McCormick's letter — in some respects, I would just urge him to publicly distribute it, if that is what he wishes to do. The problem is that it became within the control of Members' Services Board, and therefore, if members could read my ruling from a number of days ago, rules apply. I am here to enforce those rules without favour and with the best advice that I have received from the Clerks-at-the-Table.

I am not sure how members can get around the fact that the document has been received by Members' Services Board, is deemed to now be the product of Members' Services Board, and Members' Services Board hasn't changed their rules yet that appear to apply.

Like I said, I would certainly go on the record and say that I would urge Dr. McCormick to publicize everything that he writes to the general public. He is a private citizen; he can do whatever he wishes. I feel that, based on the advice that I received, I was constrained by the rules that I have been tasked by all Members of the Legislative Assembly to uphold. I would certainly be chastised if I wasn't doing that.

Perhaps the Leader of the Official Opposition can make his point without quoting, because in my view, that seems to be a backdoor way of getting what Members' Services Board has received as a confidential document back on the record. In any event, at a previous Sitting — and the general public can read Hansard — another member of the Legislature has quoted fairly extensively from Dr. McCormick's letter, so it's available. It's available to the general public, I think.

Mr. Hassard: Of course, that letter is on the *Yukon News* website, so it is out there and is certainly very public. I mean, I just was quoting from that very public letter —

Speaker's statement

Speaker: My quick question to you is: Will you be quoting extensively from this letter?

Mr. Hassard: No, sir. I planned on one more quote coming directly from that letter.

Speaker: Fine. You can proceed.

Mr. Hassard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I was saying, we know that the Liberal electoral process was designed specifically to give only one party, the Liberal Party, all of the control over the process and the outcome. It's curious why the Premier and the Liberals wouldn't want Yukoners to see this. As you know, this letter is 10 pages long, and luckily, the *Yukon News* has posted this letter online so it's there for the public to see, and I certainly encourage all Yukoners to read it.

The letter states that the Liberal electoral process undermines the Legislature. I will take my last quote from that letter, Mr. Speaker, where it says, "... the electoral reform process infringes on the Legislative Assembly's fundamental right to govern its own proceedings."

The former Clerk indicates that he would be willing to meet with Members' Services Board to discuss these matters. It was such a damning letter, indicating that the Legislative Assembly would be undermined, that I would think that the Members' Services Board would want to meet as soon as possible to discuss that letter.

In response to questions on the topic of this letter that I asked the Premier in the House, he stated that the letter was actually put on the agenda of the Members' Services Board.

Once again, I would like to quote the Premier, because this really is, I believe, an important quote from him for a number of reasons. The Premier said — and I quote: "Without indulging in the confidential agendas, it wasn't me who put it on the agenda, but it was opposition who put this very issue on the agenda to speak about in the Members' Services Board." Again, these are his exact words from Hansard.

We know that the Premier stated that: (1) Dr. McCormick's letter was put on the agenda for the Members' Services Board; and (2) the opposition put it on the agenda. This motion is very key today, I believe, and it will let us know whether or not the Premier was being completely truthful. Was the letter ever put on the agenda? The Premier says that it was, so let's let the Members' Services Board waive confidentiality to see if, when the Premier spoke about the agenda of the Members' Services Board here in the Legislature, it was, in fact, completely correct. If for some reason it wasn't put on the Members' Services Board agenda, I think Yukoners would be very interested to know why. Why would it not be put on the agenda? We already established earlier whose job it is to set the agenda. By waiving the confidentiality of the board, we could find out those two things. Was it on the agenda, and if it wasn't, why?

I believe that both of these points are very important to Yukoners, because they speak to the credibility of this Liberal government. Can the Premier do something as simple as tell us what, in fact, took place on the agenda of the Members' Services Board — a board that he knows the opposition parties are essentially muzzled from talking about? If he mischaracterizes anything, we are prevented from correcting the record. I really hope that the Liberals are confident enough, in the words of the Premier, that they are willing to waive the confidentiality to see if this was ever put on the agenda.

If they vote against today's motions, I think that will make Yukoners wonder why. Why do the Liberals not want us to know what the discussions were around the former Clerk's letter expressing concerns over electoral reform? Why do the Liberals not want us to know if the Premier perhaps didn't tell the entire truth?

At this point in time, I think it's important to read from the Twitter account of CBC investigative reporter Nancy Thomson. On October 24, after the Premier made his claim that his letter was put on the agenda of Members' Services Board, this reporter tweeted a copy of a leaked letter. This leaked letter is now part of a public letter that is publicly available online for anyone who goes to this Twitter account. If I can just — this letter is from the chair —

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order. I don't think so; I don't think so. No, I'll just say — do you want me to go on the record again? You can sit down for a second.

Members must take care not to involve the Speaker in the debate on the motion. I'll remind members that the Speaker is not part of the debate. The Speaker is the impartial arbiter of the debate. You'll have to govern yourself accordingly.

Mr. Hassard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, I guess my question would be: Am I allowed to quote from this Twitter account?

Speaker's statement

Speaker: I mean, my initial reaction is that you can quote — you mean from what Ms. Thomson has said?

Mr. Hassard: I'm quoting from a letter that is on her Twitter account.

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Well, okay. This is the deal, in my view. We are the MLAs and we are bound by the confidentiality. I don't disagree that the letter is in general publication, but we as MLAs can't circumvent our own rules. We have to change our rules.

I have no particular issue with that letter, I suppose, but once again, I cannot — or any previous Speakers or future Speakers cannot — be part of the debate. Like I said, that letter ended up in general circulation somehow.

I'll read the motion to the House again:

THAT this House urges the Members' Services Board to waive confidentiality regarding all e-mails and correspondence between members of the committee related to the August 2, 2019, letter from Floyd McCormick, former Clerk of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

In some respects, some of your submissions today — Leader of the Official Opposition, you're getting the relief that you're seeking in this motion by reading some of the documentation that you're seeking — which in some respects, would make your motion at least partially moot. By putting whatever additionally on the record, you're publicizing that which you're actually asking Members' Services Board to do. You're asking Members' Services Board to do something, but

arguably, by broadcasting it, you're achieving the relief that you're seeking in the motion.

Mr. Hassard: Mr. Speaker, I believe that — if we don't have all of the information in front of us, how do we make informed decisions on how to vote on whether we should allow Members' Services Board to do this?

Speaker's statement

Speaker: In my view, you're requesting documents, so you can particularize, I suppose — if you wish, for the purpose of the debate, to particularize the documents — but in my view, as members, we can't — you will achieve the relief that you're seeking by reading the content. As I said before, I think it will make the motion essentially moot. What you want is Members' Services Board to waive confidentiality. That's the relief that you're seeking. So, you can focus the remainder of your comments on that topic.

Mr. Hassard: I think we may have to agree to disagree on some of that, because I don't believe that we are getting everything just from what we are saying. I think that the important fact here is that the Members' Services Board be allowed to waive confidentiality. It is very challenging to make an argument as to why they should be allowed to waive confidentiality if you're not allowed to provide the information as to why that would happen.

It is disappointing that debate that is critical of the Liberals is being — for lack of a better term — censored here in this House. I do want to assure the House that all of my concerns and all of my intended speech for today certainly will be sent to the media so that they can see everything that I had hoped to say here today.

Unfortunately, it is going to have to come to that because we don't get to provide the full details of what we had hoped to say here today to try to accomplish what we set out to accomplish in the first place.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that, I will just close by saying that democracy dies in the dark, so let's shine a light on this issue.

Mr. Gallina: Today I am speaking to Motion No. 77, which brings forward the important topic of confidentiality and how, as MLAs, we are transparent in reporting to this House and being accountable to Yukoners.

I am sure that all members of this House agree that transparency is a vital part of a democratic government. It is a value that we hold strongly here in the Liberal caucus. As well, we value the ability to have meaningful discussions that could include Yukoners' personal information or opinions that they have which they may or may not want to share in public but still feel are important to bring forward.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about the experience that I have as a member of four all-party standing committees that report to this Legislative Assembly and how transparency and confidentiality are applied within these all-party committees. I am the chair of SCREP, which is the Standing Committee on Rules, Elections and Privileges. This committee has a mandate to review parliamentary procedure and practice in this

Legislative Assembly. It also deals with questions surrounding parliamentary privileges of the Legislative Assembly and its members. I am the vice-chair of PAC, which is the Public Accounts Committee. There, we are responsible for reviewing the Public Accounts and all reports for the Auditor General. As well, Mr. Speaker, I sit on the Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees and, finally, the Standing Committee on Statutory Instruments.

These committees adhere to Standing Orders and rules, of which confidentiality and transparency are important elements. Mr. Speaker, standing committees can call witnesses to appear in camera or appear publicly to provide information or to be asked questions by members of the committee. Standing committees are accountable to Yukoners in many ways. One of those measures is through committee reports tabled in this Assembly, which are, of course, debated publicly.

In PAC during the 34th Legislative Assembly, we have held public hearings for three performance audits brought forward by the Auditor General of Canada. In these hearings, witnesses were called to answer questions in public and provide information, and these hearings were recorded by Hansard so that a formal record of proceedings is available. One of the reasons that not all of the business that we do in committees is public is because we are often dealing with personal information submitted by Yukoners. This could include — but isn't exclusive to — personal opinions, resumés, cover letters, and the list goes on. If committees no longer had personal elements, members of the public may be discouraged from submitting information that they felt was confidential, and they may be concerned that they could garner unwanted public attention.

Mr. Speaker, in looking at addressing this issue from the complete perspective, as opposed to a one-off situation where a motion has been made to share communication on a specific matter, with this motion, I feel we could be setting a precedent that may raise concern among Yukoners knowing what information is considered confidential and what information is considered public when it comes to dealing with committees of this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, to be clear, I'm not opposed to making our committees more open and transparent. In fact, I would be in favour of having those discussions, and I know that the Premier has stated in this House that he would welcome those discussions as well.

So, if it's the desire of members of this Legislative Assembly to have a discussion about making committees more open and transparent, in my view, that should happen. It should happen at the specific committee level or even through the Standing Committee on Rules, Elections and Privileges. I believe that the focus should be on how the committee is governed overall rather than deciding if one matter or the other should be made public. Again, by focusing on one-off situations, I believe that we could be creating uncertainty among Yukoners about what committee information is confidential and what information is public.

In closing, confidentiality and transparency are important to this government and, I believe, to all members of this

Assembly. There are a number of House committees that have rules that structure how they are governed, how they conduct business, and in particular, how these committees interact with the public and Yukoners. If it's the desire of members to amend how committees of this House are governed, I believe those conversations should happen at the committee level and, in this case, at Members' Services Board or through the Standing Committee on Rules, Elections and Privileges.

Speaker: Is there further debate on Motion No. 77?

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: Just before the member speaks, I just had a clarification from the Clerks-at-the-Table which is consistent with what my gut reaction was on the motion. The House has not decided the matter on releasing documents — and a number of the other matters that I talked about as far as the general confidentiality going back to the Members' Services Board from 1978. Until the House does or until a separate committee does, members — as I think I articulated, but I will articulate clearly as a ruling — you cannot quote from documents, because, by doing so, you are doing something by another means that the individual could not do in the ordinary course.

As I said, that's consistent with what I have said this afternoon, but that is the motion — that's what the Leader of the Official Opposition is urging the Members' Services Board to do.

If 50 percent or 75 percent — or whatever percent — of what is being sought formed part of the submission, then in my view, that doesn't make a great deal of sense and is procedurally not in order.

Ms. Hanson: I just wanted to make a couple of comments. It strikes me, at the outset — I am somewhat agnostic on the merits of the argument put forward, but I would note that, at some point — and I have said this before — we in this Legislative Assembly are going to have to come to terms with the fact that we have a system that's dysfunctional.

It's good to say that we should talk about these matters in these various committees, but quite frankly, when you have a majority government and you have the chair who says, "Our position is...", the conversation doesn't go much further than that.

I enjoin members of this Legislative Assembly to find a creative way to actually act as elected members, representing all Yukon citizens, to find a way to use this Legislative Assembly to have that conversation.

We talked about how, 40 years ago, we came another step in terms of representative government. In 2003, we went another step in terms of having the responsibility for management of land and resources, like a province. In 2019, surely we can find a way to have conversations about things that are really materially impacting this territory and not be stultified by rules that were established prior to representative government in 1979.

I will disagree on the floor with the notion that the conversation be sent back to the various committees that are

there, because they don't work. They don't work to the extent that the voice of the opposition, official or not official, is not heard. It's not heard when the declaratory statement is made at the outset that "Our position is..."

By default, I will support this motion because it is an expression of frustration and people may want to feel complacent about how those are the rules and that's the way it is. I would challenge that things change; perspectives change. As members, if we're elected to represent all Yukoners — I don't care if you're government or opposition, you are supposed to — we are supposed to be hearing Yukon voices. This has generated a lot of conversation, and we don't look good. We don't look good as members of this Legislative Assembly and that's not good for democracy. We can't be seen to be undermining democracy when we're seeing what's going on across this country and south of us. It's not healthy.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, I wasn't going to stand today other than to just say that my reason for not supporting this motion is the one-off notion of it. I have had conversations with members opposite about how I do agree that we should change the rules of Members' Services Board — absolutely. I think more open and more accountable government is a good thing. But what I don't think is proper for any Legislative Assembly is for a particular member to feel that we can go back in time with the current rules — go back in time and one-off — well, in this case, let's change the rules for this particular item that — to your point, Mr. Speaker — is already out in the public anyway. But it's the practice. It's that dangerous practice that, in my opinion — maybe not so much in this because, in this case, we're talking about almost a moot point for two different reasons: (1) we've already said that we are more than willing to work with both opposition parties — to the Yukon Party's credit, they want to restart — we're more than willing to consider that; (2) to the NDP's point, not having ECO in the process — no problem. We've already got to a place where we're willing to compromise. We're willing to change direction.

For one point, it's interesting that we're even having this conversation; second, it's interesting we're having this conversation because, to the member opposite's own credit, he said this is all out there anyway.

Again, that's all beside the point as to why I think it's dangerous for us to take one particular board with one particular set of minutes or one particular piece of that under the current rules and say, "The current rules shouldn't apply for this one particular piece." That's my issue. As I said to both parties in the past, if we want to change how Members' Services Board sits, how SCREP sits, how all of the select committees or special committees or Members' Services Board which the members opposite — the Yukon Party enjoyed that anonymity for 14 years — no problem. We can move forward from this day forth and have that conversation — absolutely — no problem.

But I believe it is, in my opinion, a bit reckless to go into a process that allows us to pick and choose on an issue that —

again, it is hard to see past that concept, for me. That is my main reason.

Again, thank you, Mr. Speaker, for my opportunity to speak today, and thank you to my colleagues in the Legislative Assembly for this debate.

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

Does any other member wish to be heard on Motion No. 77?

Mr. Hassard: I think it is interesting that the Premier can stand here and say, “The more open and accountable, the better. That’s a good thing.” Yet, in the same breath, he says that he can’t support this motion to be open and accountable.

We have heard that we can’t do things on a one-off. I think there have been a lot of things done on one-offs, and a lot of things will continue to be done on one-offs. That is a reality of life.

When we are talking about something as important as how we elect our government — you know, this is an integral part of what we call democracy. So, does the public not have a right to know how this process is being done and what is wrong with the process currently?

We have someone with a doctorate in political science who worked in this Assembly for 18 years — we took his advice every day — and when he writes to the Members’ Services Board to say, “You know, there is a problem with what’s happening here” — don’t we owe it to Yukoners to do a one-off and allow Members’ Services Board to waive confidentiality and have some real and meaningful discussions on this extremely important topic? It is just mind-boggling. It is very unfortunate.

I had hoped that the government would see the error of their ways and agree to this motion, but I guess we had a discussion earlier about being optimistic and realistic. It looks like we will have to have that discussion again. It’s very sad to say that it appears the Liberal government is going to vote this motion down.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Disagree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Disagree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Disagree.

Mr. Gallina: Disagree.

Mr. Adel: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Disagree.

Mr. Hutton: Disagree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are eight yea, nine nay.

Speaker: The nays have it. I declare the motion defeated.

Motion No. 77 negatived

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

Speaker: It has been moved by Mr. Streicker 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

Deputy Chair (Mr. Adel): Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter now before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 200: *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — continued

Deputy Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I want to again welcome Chris Mahar, Deputy Minister of Finance, who is with us here today. I do have some remaining answers to questions that were either partially answered or I endeavoured to get the information back to the member opposite. I put three on the record last time, and I will now just kind of keep on with that list.

We were asked, specific to mineral, oil, gas, and forestry — and I’ll quote: “On page 113, on resource revenue — mineral, oil and gas, and forestry — the actuals for that category are down \$292 million from 2018.

“Could the Minister of Finance provide a breakdown as to where the big deviation was from the year previous?”

First, I would like to clarify that the member asked about a decrease of resource revenue of \$222 million. That amount shown on page 113 of the Public Accounts is in fact \$292,000 — a difference of a lot of money. The bulk of that decrease in resource revenues is attributable to a reduction in quartz application fees in this fiscal year. Quartz application fees vary annually based on activity. While it is down year over year by 27 percent, the quartz application fees were actually quite comparable to the 2016-17 year — less than 10 percent, actually, down from that fiscal year. That is just to clarify the numbers there that were quoted. The members opposite might want to check that.

There was a question from November 4 in Committee of the Whole on supplementary estimates for Economic Development. The question that was asked by the Third Party at that time was: What is the purpose of the contribution to the Gold Mining Alliance on page 176 of the Public Accounts? Why is it not in the main estimates?

Again, we did have a bit of a conversation on the floor of the Legislative Assembly at that time, but I have some more information. The \$301,500 was part of a three-year \$904,500 commitment with the Yukon Gold Mining Alliance that ran from 2016-17 to 2018-19. It was \$301,500 per year for three years. The contribution was to support strategic marketing initiatives to promote Yukon as a smart place for investment in the mineral sector.

The contribution supported the planning and hosting of the Yukon Mining Investment Forum and property tours, representation at Cambridge House at the Vancouver Resource and Investment Conference, representation at the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada conference in Toronto, creation of a Yukon investment video, and representation at the Denver Gold Forum.

The allocation was previously under 0200, but shifted to 0300. The budget was not realigned until this year — the 2018-19 year — when it was decided that the arrangement works for the department, and it included adding the property tours part, hence the increase in the budget to \$397,500 from \$301,500 and some minor inflation adjustments for the costs of the various events. This is an example where, historically, it was listed as a contract rather than a transfer payment. So, in the main estimates of 2017-18, this funding would have been in the “Summary of Expenses” under “Other”. By moving it to a transfer payment, it has its own line item in the Public Accounts. It is not an example of last-minute spending, but rather an informed decision regarding a contract that shows value.

I have more answers to questions from the November 4 Committee of the Whole. We were asked specific questions for Finance on some of the rural community banking. We did answer the question, but I just want to verify and add a little bit more content to those answers, Mr. Deputy Chair. The Government of Yukon has an overall banking contract that delivers all commercial services for the government. Community banking is an important part of the overall banking contract, because it ensures that banking services are provided

in communities that otherwise might not warrant a commercial service.

Another question that was asked was: How many rural banking arrangements are in place? We did answer at that time that there are 10 communities that currently have rural banking facilities. Those communities, to be more specific, are Beaver Creek, Burwash Landing, Carmacks, Faro, Haines Junction, Mayo, Old Crow, Pelly Crossing, Ross River, and Teslin.

We were asked also: Is the arrangement with TD a multi-year contract? The current term is for an individual term of five years, with three one-year renewal options. To clarify that, I believe we said five years, but the complete term is five-year terms with also three one-year renewal options.

When will it come up for renewal and how is it assessed? The current contract expires, and it is not eligible for any more renewals, on July 31, 2020. There is currently a request for proposals process underway. Assessment of the NRFP will be done by an evaluation committee representing key stakeholders within the Government of Yukon. An internal contractor has been engaged as project manager and advisor. Evaluation factors are a balance between community banking, rural community banking, northern knowledge and experience, and Yukon First Nation participation.

I think there was one other question, and this question was specific to Highways and Public Works on November 4 Committee of the Whole supplementary estimates. I believe it was the Member for Copperbelt South who asked: What was the latest number for the francophone high school? What is the total number for the francophone high school — an update on the initial estimate that we gave of \$34.5 million. Does the Premier have an update on what those additional costs are for? Also, they asked for an update on how much the additional costs are expected to be.

The current construction contract with Ketz Construction is \$29.6 million. The original contract was \$29.4 million. Other costs required to build the school include property management, traffic studies, geotechnical studies, furniture and equipment, landscaping, design, site work, and contingency. These other costs total \$5.8 million. The total cost of the project for the school is \$35.4 million. The project is on budget and will be completed within the \$35.4-million budget.

I believe that's the end of the outstanding questions. So, I will pass the floor off to my colleague across the way.

Mr. Kent: As I advised the Acting Government House Leader this morning, we're going to focus in on some questions, in the little bit of time that we have left here this afternoon, on Energy, Mines and Resources.

Members will recall that, when we debated this department in the mains in the spring, the Member for Lake Laberge and I have split responsibilities, so he was asking some sustainable questions with respect to agriculture, forestry, lands, and those types of things. I had hoped that the department would be recalled for me to ask some questions on my responsibilities, which are mining, oil and gas — those types of things — but we never got a chance to get back into EMR. So, that is one of the reasons why I will be looking for some updates here from

the Premier during general debate on Energy, Mines and Resources.

As I did with Education, I wanted to start by just having a look back — because the Premier has updated the mandate letters for his ministers. So, a few things jumped out at me from the 2017 letters that I was kind of hoping to get an update on here today.

The first question that I would like to ask the Premier is — in the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources' mandate letter from the Premier — and I will just read the text here that will lead to the questions. It says, "Increase the availability of renewable energy solutions, while reducing the reliance on non-renewable sources and lessening energy consumption by..." — and in one of those bullets, it says, "... allocating \$30 million annually for an energy retrofit program for residential, commercial and government buildings."

I know that the minister has, in Question Period earlier this Sitting, outlined some of the numbers, but can the Premier let the House know if that direction was met — if \$30 million was allocated annually from the publishing of this letter, which was January 6, 2017 — so the first budget or the first fiscal year it would deal with would be 2017-18, I guess, and then going forward from there? Was that \$30-million-per-year target for the energy retrofit program met?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, we have had this conversation on the floor of this Legislative Assembly a few times on the question of the \$30 million.

I believe the last time that this question was asked, the minister for both Energy, Mines and Resources and Community Services spoke of the \$120 million over the next four years for these endeavours and issues. At that time as well, he listed a whole list of these different projects, of these different programs, that this money contains.

Mr. Kent: The Premier mentioned that it's \$120 million over the next four years, and there were a number of projects. I can appreciate that he perhaps doesn't have that information with him right now. That's going forward.

So, this mandate letter was written in January, as I mentioned — January 6, 2017. We would have expected that \$30-million annual allotment for the energy retrofit program for residential, commercial, and government buildings — as was stated in the mandate letter — and the responsibility to the Deputy Premier, in his role as Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources — we would have thought that would have been for 2017-18, 2018-19, and the current 2019-20. Is that not the case? Was that \$30-million allotment not met in those first three budget years?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Members opposite have had this conversation, I believe, every year so far. Last year, we allocated \$14 million for the retrofit-specific program. Our government now has allocated over \$120 million over four years, starting this year, in the territorial government and federally secured funding, as well, to implement the energy efficiency initiatives throughout the Yukon. This does work out to an average of \$30 million annually.

This is thanks to a joint investment with the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon. Through that joint

investment, we're able to dedicate this funding for energy efficient retrofits for residential, for commercial, and for institutional buildings as well. Being more energy efficient is our first line of action in addressing increasing demands for energy. This is why the Government of Yukon is offering retrofit incentives to make upgrading insulation, improving window quality, and draft-proofing a home, commercial, or institutional building accessible and affordable.

To date, Mr. Deputy Chair, our retrofit programs are delivering measurable benefits by relieving pressures on our energy-generated needs, reducing our collective greenhouse gas emissions, and creating green jobs that stimulate Yukon's economy.

I have had some great conversations with folks in the construction industry who have really redesigned their small business to focus on the millions of dollars that are available for these programs. In a booming economy, it is nice to be able to specialize and to work in partnership with the government for these dollars. The federal funding is specifically designed and designated for working with First Nation governments, municipalities, and also businesses, local industries, and homeowners to retrofit buildings and residences to improve that energy efficiency.

Just a little bit of background: We did successfully negotiate funding agreements with the Government of Canada. I know the members opposite are asking if this started in the first year, and it didn't. The members opposite know that it didn't, but we got there. This work does average out to \$30 million a year, as of this year — so, \$120 million over the next four fiscal years. The total funding amount includes territorial and federal contributions. This funding is available across government departments as well — specifically for energy-efficiency retrofits of those existing buildings in Yukon.

Looking at some of the private investment in my town of Dawson — Dawson City in the Klondike — there is one particular construction company — and, of course, I am not going to name it, but this individual and his family are fourth-generation Yukon placer miners, but they are also in the construction industry. It was his family and these are his words — he said, "The best thing you could do as far as being environmentally conscientious is — see all these buildings? Let's retrofit these buildings. Let's not throw these building and the materials away. Let's make our best efforts to make sure that we use the infrastructure that we have to be able to not only modernize those buildings, working in partnership with the territorial and Canadian governments, but also to preserve that history."

This individual spent his youth walking through buildings and playing in these buildings that look like they were abandoned on a day's notice. It is pretty interesting to see that in a boom-and-bust economy that Dawson has historically had over the years. To be able to breathe life into those buildings is an extremely important part of us — not only working with an environmental conscience, but also with a view to preserving our history as well, which is extremely important.

As I said, the funding is available across government departments, specifically for energy retrofits in existing Yukon buildings. These government energy-efficiency retrofit programs are targeting a whole bunch of different initiatives, and we're glad to see that money coming out.

There is a funding breakdown over the next four years by each design recipient. We have — homeowners and businesses and commercial and municipal interests can benefit from a total of \$23.7 million in initiatives for residential. For commercial and institutional building retrofits, that would be led from the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. First Nation governments can benefit from a total of \$10.36 million, and that's designated for their housing or community building retrofits, including installing biomass-based heating systems. That, again, is being led by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, but also by the Yukon Energy Corporation.

All Yukon communities, whether First Nation governments or municipal town councils, can benefit from the \$31.6 million available for energy audits and institutional building retrofits. That is led by Community Services, alongside the good work of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources.

The Yukon government has a total of \$58.9 million to do energy-efficiency retrofits to its social and staff housing, as well as its larger institutional buildings. That's led by the Department of Highways and Public Works and the Yukon Housing Corporation.

I will give credit where credit is due. We are in a building right now that the members opposite, in their term in government, put money in to retrofit. I can't speak of the past Premier's experience in the office upstairs, but I heard that it was pretty drafty at times and that sometimes the ice was coming in on the windows. I have to say now that the building has definitely benefited from these retrofits. Again, to be able to give credit where credit is due is extremely important.

I also want to say that there are some really interesting companies, such as Solvest, that are expanding and hiring more Yukoners to be able to do this good work.

We have a list here. The member opposite was looking for some details. Whether it be the building retrofit incentives through those designated recipients led by EMR or through the other initiatives, the combined funding — as we listed them — and I could add them all up together here. Suffice it to say, all of this information is readily available through the department websites, and it does total \$120 million for four years, totalling an average of \$30 million in retrofit money moving forward.

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

Deputy Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Silver that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Adel: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

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

Speaker: It has been moved by Mr. Streicker that the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

The following legislative returns were tabled November 6, 2019:

34-3-6

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Mr. Kent related to general debate on Bill No. 200, *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — new French first language school (Mostyn)

34-3-7

Response to oral question from Ms. Hanson re: Whitehorse Correctional Centre segregation cell (Streicker)



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 20

3rd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Thursday, November 7, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
Don Hutton	Mayo-Tatchun

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King
Liz Hanson	Whitehorse Centre

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Dan Cable
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, November 7, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

Speaker's statement in recognition of Remembrance Day

Speaker: Before the House proceeds with the Order Paper, the Chair will make a few remarks.

This coming Monday is Remembrance Day. It is a day when Canadians from coast to coast honour those who have served and continue to serve in the Canadian Forces, the RCMP, and other related agencies and remember those who were lost in the line of duty.

November 11 was declared a day of remembrance after the end of World War I. Every Canadian child learns in school that the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918 marked the armistice that led to the end of the First World War. Across Canada, we continue to hold ceremonies to remember the men and women who defended Canada during times of war and continue to try to bring peace to many troubled parts of the world.

The first Remembrance Day was held in Canada on November 11, 1919 — 100 years ago this coming Monday. Given the passage of time since the end of World War I, the last Canadian veteran of that war passed away a number of years ago, and our remaining Canadian World War II veterans are largely in their 90s.

What is remarkable is that Canadians still mark Remembrance Day in the millions, and in the Yukon, once again, thousands will mark this solemn occasion in ceremonies across the territory.

In 2018, we commemorated the 100th anniversary of Canada's 100 Days — a three-month series of Allied military victories in the closing months of the First World War. We also commemorated the centenary of the armistice that finally ended the battles of the Great War, tragically mis-named "the war to end all wars".

While Remembrance Day has always been a day to remember those who have died in the service of Canada, we are also more aware that the price paid by our servicemen and servicewomen sometimes extends beyond their time in uniform. We must remember this and continue to support these fellow Canadians.

I, along with my MLA colleagues, have once again had the honour of marking Remembrance Day in our territorial public schools. I know that I speak for all Yukoners: It is our fervent hope that our children never have to suffer the terrible costs of war and make the ultimate sacrifice that we have and continue to ask some of our citizens to make during times of global conflict. However, it is important that they remember, appreciate, and are aware so that, when they become decision-

makers themselves, they are cognizant of the terrible cost of war.

In World War I, it is estimated that 61,000 Canadians were killed in action and another 172,000 were wounded. Canada's population in 1914 when the war began was just eight million citizens. In World War II, it is estimated that 42,000 Canadians were killed in action and another 55,000 wounded. Canada's population in 1939 when World War II began was 11 million. By comparison, today our population is just over 37 million citizens. It is estimated that in both World Wars, well over one million citizens were involved directly or indirectly in the war effort. The stunning enormity and brutality of these losses and the concept of a desperate, all-encompassing national war effort is almost unfathomable today.

While it is true that our casualties have been less than in subsequent battles, the danger to our citizens and to our towns and cities in a nuclear age is actually far more dire than it was in either of the World Wars.

In discussing remembrance and the importance of remembrance with Yukon students, I try to stress the important messages that war tells us. We need young people to avoid war and seek alternative resolutions when there is conflict. War should never be a first or second choice; it should be the last resort to settle disputes.

Recently, the Department of Education has worked with the legion to help to increase the understanding of the cost of war. The six-part documentary series that was recently delivered to Yukon schools covers both Canadian men and women in the Canadian Army, Royal Canadian Air Force, and the Royal Canadian Navy during the Second World War, the Korean conflict, Afghanistan, and worldwide NATO missions. This important resource was started in 2016 in Saskatchewan with the endorsement of the Royal Canadian Legion and has spread across Canada from there. Educators across Yukon will be able to engage students in meaningful discussions as to why it is so important that we continue to honour the sacrifices of Canadians.

Before I conclude my comments, I want to remind members and our guests in the gallery today that tomorrow is National Aboriginal Veterans Day. In Yukon, we talk of reconciliation with indigenous citizens as a priority; however, we have a history of not recognizing the sacrifices of our indigenous servicemen and servicewomen who served in the military in the same way as we have recognized non-indigenous citizens.

It must be remembered that status Indians in Canada did not have the right to vote or to be candidates for the House of Commons or the Yukon Territorial Council until 1961. In other words, Canada's aboriginal soldiers, sailors, and Air Force personnel who fought in World War I, World War II, and in the Korean conflict fought for rights that they themselves did not yet have. Reconciliation must occur in many ways and in many areas, but the most urgent in the coming days should be those indigenous veterans who served and, in many cases, are now entering the latter years of their lives.

We also must continue to do better in recognizing the sacrifice of all of our citizens, regardless of their identifying gender or ethnic background.

As Members of the Legislative Assembly, we, like all Canadians, are the beneficiaries of freedoms that have been provided to us by the sacrifices of others. These include the rights of peaceful assembly, freedom of speech, and long-standing parliamentary privileges, all of which have been hard fought for. It is easy to take all of these for granted.

Lest we forget.

DAILY ROUTINE

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

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Speaker: Under Introduction of Visitors, I have some guests in the Speaker's gallery. Allow me to introduce World War II veteran and retired Corporal Louise Miller. I believe Corporal Miller was also the recipient of a Quilt of Valour within the last six months. As well, we have legion second vice-president Terry Grabowski, and Stan Borud is also in the gallery supporting Ms. Miller — if we could recognize them.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Silver: I want to also recognize Louise Miller for her service, but also, other members of her family are here as well. We have Susan, Stan, and David Borud — I hope I am pronouncing that last name properly — and Tammy McKay and Jack Thompson, all members of Louise's extended family.

Also in the gallery, we have David Laxton, former Speaker of the House. We also have, as mentioned, Red Grossinger, Serge Harvey-Gautier, Paul Scholz, Morris Cratty, Helmer Hermanson, Arthur Briss, Lorne Whittaker, Alex Truesdale, Chris Green, and Max Fraser. Mr. Speaker, combined with the Member for Kluane, what we have here in the Legislative Assembly and in Yukon — Yukon veterans who have given a combined total of over 200 years of service. Thank you very much to all of you for your service.

Applause

Ms. White: Just in line with what the Premier said, I would also like to recognize Maxwell Harvey for the service that he contributed as a member of the Armed Forces.

Applause

Speaker: I have the pleasure of welcoming Sylvie Hamel's sciences humaines grade 10 class from Vanier Catholic Secondary School. I think we have a few former pages among them, so the members will recognize some of these students. I apologize in advance if I mispronounce any names.

I have Christopher Blakesley, Brooklyn Comeau, Marko Cooper, Carla Janine Dumadag, Kelsey Forbang, Adele Harries, Jayden Iskra, Kristin Jackson, Joshua Andrew Manalad, Alyssa McCulloch, Cooper Muir, Ian Paton, Mettias Schmidt, Amelia Wallace — I know she is a former

page — Josh Wanless, and also a former page, Heather Mislant.

If the members could welcome this class. Thank you.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I wonder if we could please welcome past city councillor Mr. Dave Austin to the Legislature today.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors? Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Remembrance Day

Hon. Mr. Silver: I rise today in honour of Remembrance Day to pay tribute to our courageous Canadian soldiers, sailors, airmen, and airwomen.

Every year on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, Canadians join together in honour of our veterans. On Monday, we will once again be gathered at memorial halls, schools, community centres, and cenotaphs across Yukon. We will bow our heads and reflect upon the more than 100,000 Canadians killed in conflict since the beginning of World War I. We will remember the young men and women who answered the call and paid the ultimate price on our behalf.

Every November 11, we witness and endure grief felt from their loss. We see it in the eyes of veterans who live with memories of friends who have never come back and in the sadness of grieving spouses and the children of parents lost, but not forgotten. By pausing to remember their sacrifices, we also remember why they fought on our behalf. They fought for our values, for our human rights, for our democracy and our rule of law.

Many were young Canadians who went to war simply because they answered the call to serve, because they felt they could make a difference and help contribute toward a better tomorrow. Yukoners have always been counted among those who answered the call — from World Wars to Afghanistan. Yukoners have left our quiet, northern homes to stand together with Canadians in keeping the peace, protecting the vulnerable, and pushing back oppression.

We are very proud of our Yukon veterans, and I encourage everyone to take time this Remembrance Day, if only for two minutes of silence, to reflect on their sacrifices. There are opportunities to join with other Yukoners in thanking our veterans at ceremonies happening around the territory, including at the Canada Games Centre here in Whitehorse on Monday, November 11. By attending these services, we honour our uniformed men and women, both past and present, and we show our deep gratitude for everything that they have done for us and for future generations.

Lest we forget.

Mr. Istchenko: I am pleased to rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to

Remembrance Day. I do want to welcome all the veterans and serving members who are here today. Thank you for coming.

The peaceful and democratic society we enjoy was created by the efforts and sacrifices of generations of Canadians who have put their lives on the line in the cause of peace and freedom around the world. Remembering and learning about all that they have done helps us to better understand our nation's history and its future.

But why do we remember? We must remember. If we do not, the sacrifices of those 100,000 Canadian lives will be meaningless. They died for Canada, for their families and friends and everything they believed in. Their sacrifices rest with our remembrance, and our path forward is a tribute to each and every veteran who fought for that path.

The wars touched the lives of Canadians without discrimination. Fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters were lost, killed in action, or wounded physically and mentally and forced to live with those scars. Those who never saw war directly served at home on Canadian soil in other ways, some in factories, in voluntary service organizations, or wherever they were needed.

For many of us, war as those soldiers saw it is an abstract concept. Most Canadians have not seen war aside from through photographs and videos, from journalists' accounts, or from re-enactments on the cinema screen. Many of us have ties to wars through photographs, uniforms, badges and medals, and letters from family members who have served. Fewer of us have heard the direct accounts of what took place from those family members. For those of us born during peacetime, all wars seem far removed from our daily lives, but remembrance is important, and we will continue to ensure that our children know the value of their freedom, year after year.

We must continue to teach our next generation of Canadians not to take for granted our values and institutions, not to take for granted our freedom to participate in events of a cultural or political nature and our rights to democracy. We need to continue to teach them and remember the service and sacrifice of those men and women who fought for our freedom, who believed that their actions would make a significant difference for the future of Canadians and our country, Canada. It is up to us to ensure that their dream of peace is realized. So, on Remembrance Day, we acknowledge the courage and sacrifice of those who served their country and acknowledge our responsibility to work for the peace that they fought so hard to achieve.

I do, Mr. Speaker, want to thank the Royal Canadian Legion and the members who are here today. Your guidance and wisdom through the poppy and wreath campaigns and leading up to Remembrance Day are definitely appreciated by all of the Yukon. I want to highlight my fellow Rangers and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in our Yukon communities who are participating in or are organizing ceremonies. Your service to our country is not unnoticed.

Let's remember all those Yukoners and all Canadians, past and present, for their role in our freedom.

They were young, as we were young,

They served, giving freely of themselves.

To them, we pledge, amid the winds of time,
To carry their torch and never forget.
We will remember them.

Vigilance, lest we forget.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, I had prepared a tribute in advance of today, and then this morning, along with a number of other members of this House, I had the privilege of attending again the Porter Creek Secondary School Remembrance Day ceremony.

This annual event gets more effective and more powerful each year. This year, one of the teachers, Robin Carrey, shared a poem that she had written in response to questions that she heard from friends and students about "Why Remembrance Day? Why not peace day?" I asked her if she would allow me to share this poem with the Legislature today. I am humbled, on behalf of the NDP, to share Robin Carrey's poem:

365 days a year, we know that peace is better than war.

But for today — let us remember

364 days a year, let us celebrate that for the most part, we live safely away from armed conflict, from abject poverty and in a country with a safety net of services for when disaster strikes us.

But for just one day, let us remember and celebrate our military, who go into dangerous places to provide disaster relief, medical aid, peace keeping and to facilitate humanitarian missions in places most of us would fear to go to help people who have lost more than most of us could ever imagine.

364 days a year, let us teach our children that there are better ways to solve conflicts than fighting, let us teach them about forgiveness and gratitude.

But for just one day, let us remind our children that not everyone is so fortunate, and that people have died to ensure that they live free.

364 days a year, let us celebrate that Canadians are known the world 'round as peaceful, friendly, welcoming and open-minded.

But for just one day, let us remember the brave and determined men and women who have fought courageously, through horrors and deprivations, representing our strength to the World.

364 days a year, let us be thankful that we live in a country where we have the chance to be educated, to be healthy, and to live long and prosperous lives.

But for just one day, let us remember the men and women who have died, or sustained wounds to their bodies, to their

hearts and to their minds on our behalf and on the behalf of others who are not so privileged.

364 days a year, let us think critically about believing what we hear and see in the media, let us demand accountability from our leaders, and hold everyone who represents us to the World to a high standard of ethical and moral behaviour.

But for just one day, let us remember those who have fought for our country because they believed in their hearts that it was important, that it was right, and that it was their duty.

364 days a year, let us engage in civil action, in lively debate, in orderly dissent and participate in the political processes of our country.

But for just one day, let us remember those men and women who fought to protect our right to do so.

364 days a year, let us try to forge peace with words, wisdom, patience and care.

But for just one day, let us remember that there may be times when someone must fight to protect the peace we enjoy, and that thousands have done so.

364 days a year, let us open our minds and hearts, and hold put our hands to each other, in friendship, in welcome, in the belief of the best in humanity and in each other.

But for just one day, let us remember that sometimes those with power and authority will turn their backs on open hands, that offers of peace will be rejected, we may need to stand against violence and we will need people who are prepared to do battle to protect us.

364 days a year, let us be thankful for our friends and families. But for just one day, let us remember those who have lost friends, husbands and wives, parents, siblings, and children in armed conflict.

364 days a year, let us remember, as a wise man once advised us, that “love is better than anger. Hope is better than fear” and “Optimism is better than despair.” Let us remember to “be loving, hopeful and optimistic”.

But for just this one day, this day, today,
Let us remember those who have gone into the fray for our grandparents and parents, for us, and those who may one day do so for our children or our grandchildren, at times, when despair, anger and fear guide the actions of our fellow man.

Every day, all days, peace is better than war.

Let us honour peace 365 days a year, but today, let us also honour those who have fought so that we might have the luxuries of hope and optimism.

They have given us so much but asked so little in return, let us give them, wholeheartedly, at least this one day our grateful regard, our unstinting respect and our thoughtful remembrance.

In recognition of National Aboriginal Veterans Day

Hon. Ms. Frost: I rise today in honour of National Aboriginal Veterans Day.

National Aboriginal Veterans Day takes place tomorrow on November 8. As many as 12,000 First Nation, Inuit, Métis, and other indigenous peoples served in the First World War, the Second World War, and the Korean War. Today we pay tribute to all the courageous indigenous veterans who fought to uphold the values of this country, and today we recognize and remember the indigenous people who came home wounded and traumatized and those who did not come back at all.

I want to acknowledge and thank the indigenous men and women who are in active service today. Bravery, patience, stealth, and marksmanship are a few of the valuable attributes and skills that indigenous people brought with them to the battlefield. They were often seen as some of the most valuable soldiers among their peers. Many served as snipers and scouts. Since then, many have been recognized for their service and decorated for their bravery.

Here in Yukon, indigenous people contributed to the war effort through their vital role in the construction of the Alaska Highway, working as guides and suppliers. Despite the unequal treatment of indigenous people in Canada, during this time in history, thousands answered the call to join the Armed Forces.

The transition to military life was challenging, as indigenous people were often being exposed to different cultures, traditions, and languages for the first time, although from many accounts, indigenous soldiers quickly adjusted to the new lifestyle. Indigenous soldiers fought side by side with non-indigenous soldiers as they worked, fought, and suffered together. These shared experiences broke down barriers, which created a sense of camaraderie and unity. Through their experience, non-indigenous Canadians learned to better understand indigenous soldiers and treated them as equals.

It is important, Mr. Speaker, to note that those non-indigenous people who fought beside our indigenous members affected our very society today — and I want to just take a moment to acknowledge all of us here who have been impacted very significantly by the various wars. My son had two great-uncles who died in the Second World War. His grandfather served in the Korean War. I have other family members who have also lost lives. But that affected and impacted us today. They fought bravely to make our society a better place. They faced a reality back then that we can't even fathom now.

Indigenous people were still subject to prejudice and inequality — including not receiving the same benefits as other veterans upon their return home. This was the case for Elijah Smith, a Yukon indigenous soldier who fought in the Second

World War. As many of us know, Elijah Smith of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations was a leader in the Yukon's land claims process. His experiences as a soldier brought new perspectives on the inequalities and the unequal political and social landscape of Yukon. He was motivated to fight for equality as he represented indigenous people.

Today, I would like to thank all indigenous veterans who served in the war for their services and sacrifice. I would also like to thank those who supported at home. I would like to give a special thank you to Yukon indigenous veterans who served and who fought for a better Yukon for all individuals and communities. We continue to strive to do better to honour the sacrifices made by these brave men and women.

Mr. Istchenko: I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to National Aboriginal Veterans Day. It is observed in Canada annually on November 8 to remember and recognize the significant contributions of indigenous veterans over a number of wars and conflicts and also to recognize those who serve today.

Thousands of aboriginal people voluntarily enlisted in the Canadian military to help Canada's war efforts. Indigenous people from every region of Canada served in the Armed Forces, fighting in every major battle and campaign of the conflict. To serve their country, indigenous people had to overcome unique cultural challenges. Their courage, sacrifices, and accomplishments are a continuing source of pride to their families, to their communities, and of course to all Canadians.

In the early 1940s, Yukon First Nations were aware of the war. They heard the reports on the radio and read about it in magazines. They truly had no idea of how great an impact World War II would have on their lives after this great world event. In 1942, the Americans built the Alaska Highway, connecting Alaska to the rest of the continental United States. First Nations were hired as guides to show the soldiers the best routes. Much of the highway of course existed on the old trails used by the First Nation people to travel by foot and by dog team. The highway brought a road link to Alaska to help with the threat of the west coast invasion by the Japanese. The overwhelming support for Canada's war effort shown through enlistment, contributions to war charities, and labour in war-time industries was a measure of aboriginal people's willingness to assume their responsibility in the crisis facing Canada.

Their contribution was well-received, and most aboriginal people found acceptance as partners in the country's war effort. The casualties of war included many officers and of course decorated soldiers. Indigenous communities felt compelled to contribute to various war funds. Money was raised and donated toward the war effort. The communities raised money by holding fundraising events and collecting iron and scrap tires.

One of the most notable efforts came from Old Crow, where Chief Moses walked from his home in Old Crow to Alaska, carrying furs for sale. He then proceeded to the nearest Royal Canadian Mounted Police post and donated about \$400 to go to the orphaned children of London, England. During subsequent fundraising efforts, the same First Nation donated

money to the Russian relief fund and then to the relief of Chinese victims of war.

Mr. Speaker, I have served proudly alongside many First Nation people over the past 30 years. I would like to highlight one individual who is in Italy right now for a ceremony, and he will be back for the national ceremony in Ottawa on November 11. He will be laying a wreath on behalf of the Assembly of First Nations and for all First Nation veterans. He is my fellow Canadian Ranger — we call him "Uncle Chuck." He is Chuck Hume from Dakwakada — so *günischish* to him. I want to thank him.

The brave indigenous men and women who left their homes during the war to contribute to the struggle for peace were true heroes. The extra challenges they had to face and overcome makes their achievements all the more notable. We thank them and those who serve today.

I want to end on a note — many years ago while working with the Junior Rangers, one of the Junior Rangers came up to me and said, "Why did you serve?" I looked right at him, and I said, "I served for you."

Vigilance, lest we forget.

Ms. White: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon NDP to pay tribute to National Aboriginal Veterans Day and to honour all indigenous Canadians who have served and continue to serve Canada both in times of war and in peacekeeping.

Indigenous Canadians have stood tall for their values in their country long before World War I. They played a significant role for Canada during the War of 1812. The conflict forced various indigenous peoples to overcome long-standing differences and unite against a common enemy, standing with Great Britain against the Americans.

It is staggering to know that this dedication to country continued when over 12,000 indigenous people volunteered for the First and Second World Wars and the Korean War — "volunteered" because they weren't eligible for conscription, because at that point in time, they were not yet considered citizens of Canada. Indigenous people were not allowed to join the Canadian Air Force until 1942 and the Canadian Navy until 1943. Both men and women enlisted, serving as soldiers and nurses and in other roles. Many served with distinction, winning medals for bravery in action.

But that was all forgotten when they returned home. Having enlisted to serve the country overseas, many returned to Canada to find that they were not welcomed on their home reserves because, as enlisted people, they had become enfranchised and were no longer considered eligible for any of the programs or services that the federal government provided to Indians. At the same time that they were unable to access services on reserves, indigenous veterans were not able to access the same services provided to returning veterans through Veterans Affairs, because they were Indians — a horrific and shameful catch-22 carried out by the Canadian government.

It is no wonder that so many Second World War veterans, including some of our most decorated aboriginal war veterans, re-enlisted for the Korean War simply because they were unable to return to their communities and to their pre-war lives

or that the lives of numerous aboriginal veterans ended in despair and poverty.

Let's remember that, in spite of so many decades of hardship brought about by restrictive government policies, many indigenous communities and people still demonstrated a profound generosity of spirit through their contributions to various efforts.

Mr. Speaker, returning indigenous veterans who had fought in overseas wars on behalf of democracy were denied the most fundamental exercise of democracy on Canadian soil until 1960, when they were finally given the right to vote.

As we celebrate National Aboriginal Veterans Day, let's remember that it wasn't until 1995 — the year that I graduated from high school, 50 years after the end of the Second World War — that indigenous peoples were allowed to lay remembrance wreaths at the National War Memorial to remember and honour their lost comrades.

Today, we remember all of the indigenous people and their families who have given their lives and express gratitude to those indigenous members of the Canadian Armed Forces who continue to serve on behalf of all Canadians.

Speaker: I would at this time ask all present to stand as we observe a moment of silence in honour of Remembrance Day.

Moment of silence observed

Speaker: They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning

We will remember them.

Thank you. Please be seated.

Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I have for tabling the *Yukon Heritage Resources Board Annual Report — April 1, 2018 — March 31, 2019*, under the legal authority of subsection 7(7) of the *Historic Resources Act*.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I have for tabling a legislative return in response to a question posed here in this House on October 17.

Mr. Kent: I have for tabling the *Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan* and the 2019 Energy and Mines Conference communique. This meeting was hosted on July 17, 2019, in Cranbrook, British Columbia.

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, I have for tabling a letter from the Porter Creek Secondary School Gender and Sexuality Alliance written to the Minister of Education, the Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate, and both leaders of the opposition parties.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

YuDriv

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Our Liberal government is committed to modernizing government legislation, programs, and services to meet the needs of Yukoners in the 21st century. As Yukoners know, we have updated many pieces of legislation to reflect contemporary standards and to make them inclusive of all Yukoners. We also continue to improve our program and service delivery to improve the lives of Yukoners.

We are digitizing our land titles system to overcome the slow and cumbersome paper system used here for decades. Earlier this year, we launched our open data portal, an online repository of information that puts more government information in the hands of citizens to support openness, transparency, and economic diversification in the innovation, knowledge, and IT sectors.

These are just some examples, Mr. Speaker, and this week, we announced another initiative to modernize our operations.

Our government has launched a new integrated system that will streamline vehicle and licence-related transactions and better protect the personal information of Yukoners. The current vehicle registration mainframe was developed in the 1980s, and the driver's licensing system was developed in 2011. Despite having similar data collection needs, the current system, known as IDrive, is not fully integrated, causing a duplication of effort in data entry, inefficiency, and red tape. YuDriv is a client-centred platform that includes a new driver's licensing and registration system. YuDriv will provide a more stable system and better privacy protection, and it lays the groundwork for future online services.

A number of vehicle-related services are already available online, such as vehicle registration renewal. Once it is fully implemented, Yukoners will have secure access to a wider range of vehicle driver's licensing and permitting transactions online. In order to be consistent with the new *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, another example of our modernization efforts, YuDriv offers enhanced safeguards to ensure that Yukoners' personal information is protected and is not improperly stored, accessed, or shared.

YuDriv allows the government to consolidate multiple current systems into one streamlined system. This will allow for increased system stability and superior data collection and will reduce duplication of information. Full implementation is expected by April 2021.

The Department of Highways and Public Works has been in contact with the City of Whitehorse for several years about the new system and upcoming changes. While it is true that this system will represent a change for the city in terms of their

process to collect unpaid parking tickets from drivers, in real-world terms, this new system will require 60 seconds per vehicle check, rather than the previous 30-second time frame. Because of our government's commitment to collaboration, the City of Whitehorse can collect their unpaid parking tickets using our system, and we are pleased to support this continued access while better protecting the privacy of Yukoners.

This new system will lead to more accurate data collection and lay the groundwork for increased self-service e-service tools for Yukoners in the future.

Mr. Hassard: I appreciate the opportunity to respond to the ministerial statement today.

First off, I will just point out that a large part of this ministerial statement is a re-announcement of Monday's press release. However, in the statement, the minister said that the government is now in the process of digitizing the land titles system.

As you know, the land titles system is an integral part of our economy, as it is the registry that determines who owns what.

Now, digitizing that so that it will be more efficient is laudable; however, as we've seen this week in Nunavut, the electronic systems of governments are not immune to cyber attacks. The Government of Nunavut saw their entire network sabotaged by ransomware, causing key government records to essentially be held hostage by hackers. This forced the government to have to switch to paper records and essentially move away from computers and digital files in the short term. We have questions for the minister as to what the government is doing to ensure that our land titles system would be protected from such an attack, as any such attack could have serious repercussions on the Yukon Territory's economy.

With respect to the vehicle registration change that the minister referenced, I certainly have questions about things that he didn't reference in his remarks. We understand that there are a number of changes to the vehicle registration process, and a couple of examples — it's our understanding that the proposed changes mean that all commercial vehicles will now have to be licensed according to the manufacturer's label of the gross vehicle weight or GVW. This could have major impacts on not only commercial vehicle owners, but also on the Yukon weigh scale stations here in Yukon. We're curious: Will all commercial vehicles with a manufacturer GVW greater than 4,500 kilograms now be required to report to the weigh scales every time they're within 20 kilometres of one? Will these vehicles be required to obtain safety certification every six months, the same as larger commercial vehicles? Hopefully the minister can confirm whether or not this is in fact the case. There are obviously many considerations for government to make if such change is happening.

Near the end of the ministerial statement, the minister highlighted how this new process will be off-loading more work to the City of Whitehorse and he stated that the new process will double the amount of time that it takes the city to do a vehicle check, and apparently he doesn't think that this is a big deal. Maybe one is "not such a big deal", but if the city is

doing thousands of vehicle checks a year, I'm sure it adds up to plenty of time. We've seen this minister in particular pick a fight with the city previously over the topic of the airports act, so I certainly hope he's not headed down that path again.

I would also be interested to hear from the minister on how his discussions with Mayor and Council of the City of Whitehorse have gone with respect to these changes which, as I said, appear to be doubling the amount of work required by the city when it comes to vehicle checks. We're curious: When did he meet with mayor and council? What was the feedback he received? I guess, if he didn't meet with them, why?

Ms. Hanson: On behalf of the Yukon New Democratic Party, I want to thank the minister for the statement and thank the many staff who have worked on this project to ensure its rollout. We already have the option of renewing our vehicle registration online and we appreciate that. Having the opportunity to do more is positive, though it is not clear in the minister's statement what those opportunities might be.

Will we be able to renew our licences online? Can we submit our own photo? The minister also mentioned "permitting". We are unsure as to what types of permitting are now done at Motor Vehicles, but we would be interested in knowing more about that.

The minister mentioned the City of Whitehorse and how this new service would result in city staff spending more time to process unpaid parking tickets. The minister played down the impact of this additional time by stating — and I quote: "In real-world terms, this new system will require 60 seconds per vehicle check, rather than the previous 30-second time frame."

Thirty seconds doesn't sound like much, Mr. Speaker, but look at it another way: The new system will require city staff to spend twice the time they used to take — certainly not an efficiency or streamlining for them. We too would like to know if this was discussed with the city beforehand.

Does the minister know the real-time impacts these changes will have? What other options were considered that wouldn't require additional city staff time? The minister talks about collaboration and how the city may continue to use the government system, yet as I understand it, the city doesn't have an option. It is the Yukon government that manages the information related to licence plates.

So, Mr. Speaker, this sounds good for staff at Motor Vehicles and for people renewing vehicle registration, but not so great for the City of Whitehorse.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am going to start my response by just highlighting that today in our Motor Vehicles system I am "Richard Piers Mostyn". Yesterday, I was "R.P. Mostyn". I was "R. Mostyn". I was "Richard Mostyn". I was "Mostyne". I owned a Mazda GLC, a Toyota Tercel, and a Honda Civic — and nobody knew who owned what. It was messy, chaotic, and unmanageable.

Today, there is one "Richard Mostyn" — "Richard Piers Mostyn" — and they know what vehicles I own and what vehicles I have registered. That is one of the things that the hard-working staff at Highways and Public Works have

wrangled through the introduction of the new software — actually creating a single database tied to one individual so that now they can know who I am, where I live, what my phone number is, what vehicles I own, and what vehicles I have registered. That didn't exist before because this whole system had been woefully neglected for almost 15 years. It was on a server that was more than 30 years old and it was on the verge of collapse, which would have put us in a very dire situation, with no data relating to our *Motor Vehicles Act*. This government heard this, we recognized this, and we took decisive action to change the system and make a new approach to the way we collect and manage data in Motor Vehicles.

As a result, today we have a much better database, more efficiency, less red tape, more efficiency within the civil service, and things are on a better mainframe that isn't going to collapse at the drop of the hat and which was made in the era of Pong, Mr. Speaker. YuDriv will be implemented in phases, including a driver and vehicle module, a national collision database module, an impoundment module, a weigh scales module, a carrier profile system module, a public website, and online services. The full implementation of this system, Mr. Speaker, is expected by April of 2021, as I said earlier.

The new system will lead to more accurate data collection and lay the groundwork for increased self-service and e-service tools for Yukoners into the future. YuDriv reflects our government's commitment to improving service delivery through modernization and innovation. Yukoners can expect a range of benefits as YuDriv is fully implemented, including stability. A primary driver behind YuDriv was to address multiple systems well beyond their end of life. YuDriv will be a much more stable system, meaning it will be much less prone to disruptions in service and will therefore allow us to continue to provide consistent service to Yukoners.

Privacy protection, Mr. Speaker — YuDriv has enhanced privacy controls to ensure that private citizen data is protected. The Member for Whitehorse Centre and I had a great discussion over the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, which we also modernized. I know how important privacy is to her, Mr. Speaker — not so much for the Leader of the Official Opposition and the Yukon Party who sort of just ignored those things, as well as data provision, but that's another story.

Online services, Mr. Speaker — while phase 1 of YuDriv was focused on drivers and vehicles, a future phase of YuDriv development will be to further enhance our online services. This will make services more accessible and convenient for Yukoners.

Mr. Speaker, these efforts to modernize and improve the delivery of driver's licensing and registration services complements our efforts to modernize and improve the legislation that governs our land transportation network. As Yukoners know, we are in the process of rewriting Yukon's *Motor Vehicles Act*, which dates back to 1977 — just before the database was created — and which has not been significantly updated since. Rewriting the act is necessary for the continued safety of Yukoners.

Speaker: Order, please.

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Kluane Lake School relocation

Mr. Istchenko: The 2018-19 budget allocated \$50,000 to plan for the relocation of the Kluane Lake School from its current location in Destruction Bay to Burwash Landing. On March 20, 2018, I asked the Minister of Education how much money would be earmarked for the project in the 2019-20 budget. In her response, the minister said — and I quote: “My recollection — although I am sure friends will correct me if I am wrong — is that there is \$500,000 in next year's budget for the continuation and construction of that project.” As we discussed in this House already, the Liberals cut this from \$500,000 to just \$50,000. That's a \$450,000 cut from what the minister said that there would be.

Of the remaining \$50,000 that was left over, can the Liberals tell us how much has been spent so far?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you for the question. I will do my best to give a thorough answer. As part of our commitment to reconciliation and long-term capital planning for all Yukon schools, we are pleased to be working in partnership with the Kluane First Nation to relocate Kluane Lake School from Destruction Bay to Burwash Landing. This move comes at the request of the Kluane First Nation. We know that this has been a long-standing desire of the community. Several students at the school live in Burwash Landing. Yes, \$50,000 was allocated in 2018-19 — and an additional \$50,000 in 2019-20 to continue planning work on this project with the Kluane First Nation.

We will provide, of course, more details on the plan for the school's relocation as the discussions proceed. This will be in complete collaboration. This is our commitment to Yukon First Nations: that we will work in partnership with them. This is a very, very important matter that has been discussed at the Yukon Forum and one of our most enduring and high priorities as a government.

I know that there are planned trips in the very near future to this community with a number of ministers.

Mr. Istchenko: I don't think that I got an answer. I asked how much was spent of that money.

As I said, the Liberals originally told us that this year's budget for Kluane Lake School would be \$500,000, and it turns out that they were off by a zero, because it has now been cut to \$50,000, which really makes me wonder if you can trust any numbers that this government gives you. Regardless, the \$50,000 doesn't really seem like it's going to buy you very many building materials. It really doesn't seem that this project is a priority for the Liberals.

We are left wondering: How much, if any, money will future budgets commit to this project? Further, we don't even know how much of that money has been spent, like I said earlier. Can the minister tell us when the construction will actually begin on the new Kluane Lake School?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Our government is committed to reconciliation with Yukon First Nations. We're working very hard on that file and are working with our First Nation partners throughout the territory.

As part of our long-term capital planning for the territory's schools, we are working with the Kluane First Nation to determine the best approach for a new school in Burwash Landing. We're committed to working together — government to government — to help meet the needs of residents of Burwash Landing and the surrounding area.

We are going to work very closely with our partners. We are going to find out what their needs are and how they want to proceed with this very, very important piece of community infrastructure. We have to do that, Mr. Speaker. We know that this hasn't happened in the past, and we are committed to actually making those partnerships, working with the community very closely to get a facility that will serve their needs.

Mr. Istchenko: It's disappointing. We see a very small amount in a line item every year, and it actually doesn't really seem — to contradict the minister's statements — that they're working very hard at all.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the current school is in the community of Destruction Bay, and the proposal is to move the school from Destruction Bay to Burwash Landing. If the school moves to Burwash Landing, there will be a building left behind that could be repurposed for the use of the community.

I hope I can get an answer on this question; I'm going to have my doubts here.

Is the government working with the community of Destruction Bay? That means that you have to go to Destruction Bay and actually talk to the people to discuss plans for the old school building and what will happen to it.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you for the follow-up questions.

I clearly stated our commitment to working with all of our stakeholders on this matter. Our Minister of Education has worked very diligently. I want to just point out to the members opposite that we see our relationships with Yukon First Nations as one of our highest priorities. We are working toward reconciliation in our territory. We are building a new foundation for these relationships to take place. We will continue working with all of our partners.

I hear the question. Again, we are working in collaboration with the Kluane First Nation. We will continue to do that, and we will look at all of the other decisions that need to be made as a follow-up to the decision that is made.

I thank the member opposite. We are absolutely committed to our relationship with our Yukon First Nation partners and to all other stakeholders.

Question re: Condor Airlines

Ms. Van Bibber: Earlier this year, international tour operator Thomas Cook collapsed. Thomas Cook is the parent company of Condor Airlines, which is a vital air link between Yukon and Europe. According to Thomas Cook, 3,500 people took the direct flight to Whitehorse from Europe this summer.

The minister is quoted in the CBC article from September 27 stating that Tourism Yukon was to send officials to Germany during October to discuss the future of the airline.

Can the minister tell us if these meetings occurred and what the results of those meetings were?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you for the question regarding tourism. I am happy to stand and talk about tourism. It is very important to our territory. It is our second largest industry and one that we have worked very hard to build out — and to continue seeing it grow.

Hopefully I will be able to talk about some of our work on the tourism strategy, but I will specifically speak about the matter that has been asked. Our officials absolutely did go to Germany and meet with officials. We have certainly also supported the Condor flights continuing. It is important. This is our largest overseas market, and we have worked on this market for over 25 years. We see this as vital access to tourism in our territory. My deputy minister went to Germany in October and had a very successful trip. I am happy to talk more about that, but again, I just want to say how proud I am of the work that our department has done, along with all of our stakeholders, to build a new tourism strategy for Yukon.

Ms. Van Bibber: We now know that the meetings occurred, but now we need to know the results.

According to the September 27 CBC article on this topic, Condor believed that the German government and the state of Hesse was asked to meet its cash needs for six months.

Does the minister have an update on that? What assurances does the minister have that there will be no disruption or reduction of Condor's air service to Yukon next summer?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Again, I want to just restate how important the German-speaking market is to Yukon. It is a market that we have worked to develop over the last 25 years and beyond, I believe. Based on our recent visitor exit survey, it remains one of our top markets — certainly for our overseas market.

We know that the Condor flights are going ahead as scheduled for the next season. This, again, is something that we support as a government. We will continue to work with our partners in Germany and continue to foster the relationship, as it is a very strong relationship. I will, as I have the chance to be on my feet, talk again about tourism and how important this industry is to the Yukon. It is the second largest industry in our territory. It represents 3,500 good jobs. That is the highest in Canada. Tourism attributes to 4.4 percent of our GDP and we want to see that grow.

Ms. Van Bibber: I didn't hear an answer.

In the event that Condor ends or reduces direct flights between Yukon and Europe, which does represent a large portion of our European visitors, has the minister begun to explore options to encourage other air carriers to fill these gaps?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I know that I have answered the question. I did state that the flights are scheduled for the next season. Just this last year, we actually saw an increase in flights with Condor, so they see it as a priority as well.

Again, access was identified in our *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* that we released in 2018 as a high priority. We will continue to work with all of our partners to look at other opportunities.

In terms of access to our territory, we know that — in terms of our *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*, we are looking to double revenue attributable to tourism over the next 10 years. We know that access is a very important aspect of that and we'll continue to work with all of our partners.

Again, I want to thank all of the stakeholders who worked on the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* over the last couple of years. We look forward to the growth in tourism. We will continue to work with our partners with Condor and to see this great service continue for Yukoners and for visitors.

Question re: Department of Education sexual orientation and gender identity policy

Ms. White: Yesterday, the Porter Creek Secondary School's Gender Sexuality Alliance circulated a letter to all political parties regarding the Department of Education's sexual orientation and gender identity policy — also known as the SOGI policy. This policy is supposed to protect LGBTQ2S+ staff and school community members from discrimination and provide support to individuals facing discrimination.

The Porter Creek GSA highlights a number of concerns of the implementation and effectiveness of the SOGI policy across all Yukon schools. They describe a school system in which discrimination, including transphobia and homophobia, not only persists, but often goes unaddressed by both staff and students alike. A policy that is intended to protect rainbow students and staff from bullying, harassment, and discrimination does anything but.

Mr. Speaker, it's apparent that the SOGI policy is not accomplishing what it was set out to do, so what is being done to ensure that staff and students across all Yukon schools practice appropriate behaviour and actions to prevent homophobic discrimination and harassment?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I thank you for the question. All matters relating to LGBTQ2S+ have been an important priority for our government and one that I've been proud to work on. I know that our Minister of Education has worked closely in partnership on these matters. The most important consideration for this government is that young people feel safe, welcome, and successful in school. That is our priority. We are really proud of the work that the department has been doing to ensure this and to support students who identify as LGBTQ2S+.

The Government of Yukon implemented a sexual orientation and gender identity policy in 2012. The policy recognizes that homophobic and gender-based comments, discrimination, and bullying are demeaning and they are not permitted in Yukon schools. The Department of Education has also reviewed and updated its curriculum and resources to ensure that they are inclusive of transgender students.

Again, this is one of our priorities, Mr. Speaker. You have heard me speak about this a lot in the Legislative Assembly. I will add further on what we are doing as a government overall in the supplementary.

Ms. White: Not all young people feel safe in schools, and that is why we are bringing this issue forward. The letter that we all received highlighted that, while the SOGI policy

sounds nice, it lacks teeth and resources. Consequences for discrimination are unclear. Specific policies and practices are not publicly available. Supports for rainbow students are piecemeal. Systemic inequalities and barriers are still in place, and rainbow students are not receiving the clinical counselling support that they need.

The letter is also heartbreaking. The students describe environments where discrimination is commonplace and where homophobic and transphobic slurs often go unaddressed by teachers. It is reminiscent of a time that has gone by, and it's unacceptable. The system is failing these kids, Mr. Speaker.

Will this government admit that homophobia and transphobia are still present in Yukon schools, and will they agree that this is unacceptable?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you for the question. Thank you for bringing this to the floor of the Legislative Assembly. I think that anytime we can talk about inclusion and safety for our young people is a good day — and one that our government is absolutely committed to.

I will get specifically to an offer to the member from across the way in a moment, but I want to say that we have done the most extensive consultation around the needs of LGBTQ2S+ just this past year. We have a number of recommendations, and we are working on an action plan that includes a whole-government approach.

We are working to change this culture, because you are right: People who identify as LGBTQ2S+ are absolutely discriminated against in our entire society, and it is not acceptable. That is why we are so committed and so dedicated to working toward changing that reality — because every young person certainly has a right to feel safe in their school. I have stated that, and I know that our minister is committed to that as well.

I would really like to offer to meet, along with my colleagues, to further address this matter that has been brought to the floor of the Legislative Assembly.

Ms. White: I thank the Minister of the Women's Directorate for that answer.

The SOGI policy has been in place for seven years. That is part of the problem: It has been there for seven years. Every day that goes by is another day that we are asking marginalized kids to grit and endure while we get our act together. Meanwhile, discrimination goes unaddressed, and students and educators aren't being given the resources and the support that they deserve.

We know that rainbow youth are already at a higher risk of mental illness, substance abuse, addiction, and suicide, so these actions to address the lack of SOGI policy should be a priority. Mr. Speaker, we win when we don't tolerate this behaviour in our workplace, yet every day we are asking rainbow youth and educators to show up and participate in an unsafe space.

What policies and procedures will the Department of Education, the Women's Directorate, or the government as a whole enact to address the concerns raised by the rainbow students about homophobia and transphobia in Yukon schools? When can the students expect a response to their letter?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I thank the member opposite again for the question. Again, we will reach out and meet with the students themselves. I like to hear things directly. I want to again thank the member for bringing forward this matter. It is something we are absolutely aware of. We know that folks who identify as LGBTQ2S+ face discrimination every day. We are absolutely committed to ensuring the safety of young people in particular. They are one of the vulnerable groups of people in our communities.

We are working collaboratively as part of the government's commitment to LGBTQ2S+ inclusion. We invited the World Professional Association for Transgender Health — WPATH — to provide training to medical and mental health professionals. We have extended new counselling services as well within the LGBTQ2S+ community for better access. We have a number of recommendations that have come out of the LGBTQ2S+ engagement that we are following up on. We have a deputy minister's committee that is working on this collaboratively.

Thank you for bringing the question forward.

Question re: Waterside boundaries

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, last week, I raised a question about potentially serious implications for the validity of a number of Yukon citizens' legal title to their land.

The concerns relate to a section of the *Territorial Lands (Yukon) Act* that says that where property abuts a body of water, a lake, or a river, a 100-foot strip of land perpendicular to the ordinary high-water mark is reserved to the Crown, now Yukon. For many waterfront properties, the necessary waiver may not exist, which means that the 100 feet closest to the water may still be government property.

When I raised this with the minister, he could not confirm the validity of these concerns. However, yesterday, in statements made to the CBC, the Yukon's director of land management appeared to confirm the validity of these claims.

Will the minister now confirm that the concerns raised about the potential title defects in waterfront lots have merit?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I don't want Yukoners to be misled, so just let me clarify what we're talking about here. First of all, this has been a dialogue that we have had in the Legislative Assembly, and it really focused on a particular geographic area in Yukon. I want to thank the team at Energy, Mines and Resources for their quick response, research, and due diligence which has led us to bring clarity to the particular situation around South M'Clintock-Army Beach.

What I will say — as I have before in the Legislative Assembly — is that the scenario around some of these discrepancies on waterfront leases and lots is something that has been well-known in the department. The previous government worked on this. This is complex work. I think it will take awhile, in many cases, to move through some of the clarity on leases, but I believe that the department is on the right track and that they are doing good work on this.

But, once again, on that particular area that was brought forward, I believe we have identified a federal OIC that remedies that particular issue.

Ms. Hanson: The scope of this problem remains unclear and it is difficult for Yukoners to know whether their properties have been granted a waiver from the 100-foot exclusion. In the CBC interview, Yukon's director of lands management said that waterfront property owners need to be aware of whether their property has been given that waiver or not. He said that there is no way the government can say just how many lots are affected without digging through all the waterfront land titles issued in Yukon since the 1940s and that, if property owners had concerns, they "should come in and have a chat with us."

This seems to be a pretty casual response to what the government agreed was a potentially "gnarly problem".

Mr. Speaker, is the wait-and-see approach described by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources the official plan for dealing with this issue?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I want to thank the member opposite for this question and for bringing this important conversation here today. The conversation had happened both on the CBC and in the *Whitehorse Star*. A very capable director stated that if anybody has concerns or would like to further discuss this particular issue, they should reach out to the department. I think that's a very valid approach at this particular time — for people to come in. Some people have great clarity on their particular situation, so I think they're doing good work. If people are concerned, they should reach out to the Yukon government and the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources if they are seeking clarity.

Ms. Hanson: You have to give this government credit. They have nailed the public relations aspect of governing. Sending out public servants to fall on their sword while the minister bravely hides behind some meaningless platitudes about taking things seriously is now the norm.

Considering the fact that we get a ministerial statement every day on issues ranging from new DMV software to quadruple re-announcements of road funding, you would think they could at least squeak one in on an issue that could impact whether a Yukoner owns their home or not.

The question remains as to whether the 1985 waiver granted for parts of the Southern Lakes applies more broadly across Yukon. What assurances can the minister give to citizens that the 1985 waiver applies more broadly to waterfront properties across Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I'm sure that the member wasn't deliberately misleading Yukoners with that question. Let me just clarify: Once again, I think there's a great opportunity for the members of our technical team to clarify if people have any questions. I think that's a proper course of action.

In the case of the director speaking on this particular case, it's extremely strong technically. As this case arose, there were some people who were concerned — some professionals had reached out to me and commended the team that's in place. I understood that they had full confidence in that particular team at Energy, Mines and Resources providing a remedy.

My concern all along was that I had hoped we would do the proper due diligence and find out the answers before inappropriate alarm bells were rung. We didn't want to have any unnecessary anxiety put upon individuals. In some cases, I

think that may have happened, but we will continue to answer the questions that people have and work to remedy this particular situation.

Question re: Macaulay Lodge closure

Ms. McLeod: Yesterday, I asked the Minister of Health and Social Services about the future of Macaulay Lodge. As I referenced, two years ago, the government was planning on demolishing this building. Yesterday, the minister suggested that this is no longer the case and that there are currently discussions happening about the future of that building.

I asked the minister if any groups had approached the government to discuss the future of this building, and she was evasive. This leaves us with the impression that some groups have. Can the minister tell us: What groups have reached out to the government to discuss the future of Macaulay Lodge, and what proposals are currently on the table?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I said earlier this week that we are working on Macaulay Lodge. I'll just follow up with an answer today — another answer.

Highways and Public Works is working with Health and Social Services to complete a future use analysis for Macaulay Lodge. Until very recently, Health and Social Services required that Macaulay Lodge be retained for programming needs. It is currently empty. Macaulay Lodge is about 2,785 square metres in size, and the building requires significant upgrades to systems and to code deficiencies. That includes elevator replacements, fire alarm upgrades, building envelope upgrades, window replacements, security systems, air handling upgrades, plumbing upgrades, and aesthetic renovations.

Members opposite ask about lead in buildings. This is a very old building. We would have to look at that, of course, and various other things. Upgrades would likely trigger a larger code upgrade to the entire building, and assessment work is currently underway. Once complete, Highways and Public Works will consider the next steps for the building.

Ms. McLeod: To quote the minister from yesterday — and I quote: “At some point in the near future, we will have a decision made, but that will certainly take into consideration the viability of that facility. For one thing, it’s at the end of its life cycle. Is there a future use for it? Well, that will be determined once an assessment and a comprehensive review has been done.”

With respect to the comprehensive review of Macaulay Lodge that the minister referenced, I’m looking for a little bit of clarity. Who is conducting the review? Has it already started? When is it scheduled to be completed?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I think I just answered that question, Mr. Speaker. I guess the member opposite can’t think on the fly.

But I will say that Highways and Public Works is working with Health and Social Services to complete a future use analysis for Macaulay Lodge. I have gone through some of the issues — elevator replacements, fire alarm upgrades, building envelope. It’s an old building and requires an awful lot of work. There’s no two ways about it.

Highways and Public Works has a variety of ways to identify if a building should be repurposed, sold, or demolished. Three common ways include assessing the building portfolio every five years to determine the condition and safety risk. This data is tracked in a database — again, this is a new initiative that wasn’t in place before. A client department may have a concern with the building, in which case the building is assessed to confirm the issue, and a client department may identify that a building no longer meets their program needs, or Highways and Public Works identifies a technical concern, and the program is moved to another building.

In this case, we have a very old building that is currently vacant. My colleague, the Minister of Community Services, and I recently toured that building. We found that the showers didn’t work and there were other — it needs some real tender loving care, and we’re not sure if it is really worth that. It’s an old building.

We’ll look at it and make an assessment.

Ms. McLeod: It’s kind of frightening if that’s what is called an answer.

As hinted at by the minister yesterday and as we discussed, there appear to be some sort of discussions occurring between government and outside groups about the future of Macaulay Lodge. However, we have not seen any publicly posted RFPs asking groups to submit proposals for the future of the facility.

Can the minister explain why the Liberals are conducting this in secret and why there has been no public posting to allow groups to submit proposals for this facility?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: There is no secrecy. Highways and Public Works has a variety of ways to identify if a building should be repurposed, sold, or demolished. I have just gone through the three ways that we do that, Mr. Speaker.

We will assess this building and see whether it still has value as a building or needs to be demolished or can be repurposed — or maybe there’s another need within the Yukon government or maybe in the private sector.

We are making those assessments, Mr. Speaker. Once we are done, we will announce what we’re doing — maybe in a ministerial statement.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

Speaker: It has been moved by the Acting 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 (Mr. Hutton): Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter now before the Committee is general debate in Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 200: Second Appropriation Act 2019-20 — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Silver has 11 minutes and 35 seconds remaining.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Chair, I believe I spent enough time answering the previous questions, so I will cede the floor to the member opposite.

Mr. Kent: Yesterday, the Premier was answering questions about the commitment for the \$30-million allocation annually for the energy retrofit program for residential, commercial and government buildings. I did jot down some numbers that he quoted. I haven't checked the Blues from yesterday, but I believe he said that there was \$23.7 million for residential, commercial, and institutional and \$10.36 million for First Nation housing, buildings, and other opportunities for them for retrofits.

The four-year commitment, I think, that the Premier mentioned — \$120 million — I am assuming that starts in the 2020-21 fiscal year. If he can confirm that for me, that would be great.

The other thing, though — I'm just curious, because we had expected that this would have started — again, as I mentioned yesterday — in the 2017-18 budget, not only because it was in the mandate letter that the Premier gave to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. I will repeat that one of those bullets was: "allocating \$30 million annually for an energy retrofit program for residential, commercial and government buildings".

I know we have tabled it a couple of times in this House, but the Premier was having a Facebook chat prior to the election in 2016 with a constituent, I believe, of the Member for Kluane. In that document that we tabled, the Premier himself said on October 29, 2016 — this is a quote from there: "We have worked with Ottawa, and they are willing to provide 30 million a year for green energy and retrofits..." — he goes on to say — "so a placer camp can get a grant for solar for their camp." I think that the most important part of that is the fact that this would lead you to believe that work had already taken place with Ottawa and that the \$30 million a year was secured, but obviously that wasn't the case. I am just curious as to why the

Premier would say that during the election campaign and put this specific direction in the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources' mandate letter — I know that we have some video of a press conference where the Minister of Community Services is committing something similar to this — and then three budgets have gone through without \$30 million in annual investment for this program. I am just hoping that the Premier can provide some clarity around this for us.

Hon. Mr. Silver: We have worked with Ottawa, and yes, in the first few years, we didn't get there. We announced from last year's budget — I believe it was \$14 million specific to the retrofit fund. But now we are there. Moving forward from 2019 to 2023, we have announced the \$120 million of total combined funding from the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon, and that's where we are.

Now, this is an unprecedented amount of dollars in partnership with Ottawa, and it did take us time to get to that commitment. But again, we are there now. If you add into that the green economy fund — the Arctic energy fund into that as well, then it actually exceeds those numbers.

We were a little slow to get to there — admittedly — but we are there now — not only there, but actually, if you take a look at whole-of-government — all the different pockets in which you can find these different dollars — it actually is even over that.

We're very happy to be able to work in partnership with the federal government to get ourselves to \$30 million a year. We did make that commitment. Moving forward, that is exactly where we are.

Mr. Kent: If the Premier can just explain then that statement that he made to my colleague's constituent during — prior to the 2016 election — again, I will read it in: "We have worked with Ottawa, and they are willing to provide 30 million a year for green energy and retrofits."

I think any reasonable person would assume that the money had already been secured — that somehow the Liberal Party had worked with Ottawa and secured this funding. It took three fiscal years. We're pleased obviously that, going forward, this money is secured, but during an election campaign — I'm just curious as to why the Premier would have said that to a Yukon resident if indeed — I guess maybe he can confirm for us: Had that \$30 million a year not been secured yet, which would appear to be contrary to what he was telling my colleague's constituent?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, Mr. Chair, we have gotten to the place where we now have this investment. I won't let the member opposite diminish the fact that this is a significant investment and that we've had significant investments from 2017 into 2018.

It is interesting to say that — based upon some texts that were attempted to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly but then weren't allowed to be tabled — some kind of commitment — but at the same time, this is coming from the team across the way who, in the community of Dawson City, had photo op after photo op about a rec centre in two different elections — committing to my whole community — not just one constituent

but a whole community — that they would build a rec centre in Dawson City.

I can understand the member opposite asking why we didn't start directly in the first year with the \$30-million commitment. Lots of conversations with Ottawa — and we are here now. We have had substantial commitment — investment in 2018 and 2019 and the four-year expenditure that is starting in 2019 with the help of federal dollars. We have moved very fast to get this into place, and now the Government of Yukon has allocated that \$120 million over four years, starting this year, in the territorial government and federally secured funding to help to implement energy-efficiency initiatives throughout the Yukon.

We are extremely pleased about this. We know that Yukon private businesses are extremely pleased about this as well. We have a great economy right now. People are working. Local businesses are putting these dollars to work and retrofitting. In doing so, they are not only providing excellent jobs for the private sector, for local business people, for local carpenters, and for local construction companies, but also doing their part to help to make sure that we reduce our emissions and turn to a greener economy.

Mr. Speaker, building more energy efficiency into our assets is the first line of action in addressing increased demands for energy. We know that, with more industries coming on line and more mines coming on line, we really have to make sure that our energy needs are being used as effectively and as efficiently as possible. We believe that, through these types of investments — whether it be through working with the First Nation governments that benefit from the \$10.36 million designated for their housing or community building retrofits, including installing of biomass-based heating systems — that work is being led by the Yukon Housing Corporation and the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources — or whether it is all Yukon communities that are benefitting from the \$31.6 million that is available for energy audits and institutional building retrofits — we believe that this is a sound investment.

I hope the members opposite can at least give a little credit that we did get to that number and can maybe let us know whether or not they are happy that we are spending money on retrofits and if they are happy with our plan to be able to reduce emissions and to help Yukon Energy when it comes to providing power for mines like Victoria Gold that just came on line or some of the other projects that could be in the queue — but at the same time, understanding that we need to be more effective with our energy production.

I have to give credit to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and his team for the availability of battery storage — what an amazing opportunity. The member opposite should know that this community — and the hydro facility in this community — dumps a lot of energy through dumping water on a regular basis in those times when we don't have that peak need. So, again, anything we can do to work in partnership with the federal government to make sure that we increase our energy efficiencies, but also look at how we can maximize our hydro facilities — this is good work, Mr. Chair.

I am proud of the work that the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and the Department of Community Services are doing — the Yukon Housing Corporation as well — to spend these dollars. I could go on and on about this, Mr. Chair, but I do see that we are at 2:55 p.m., and we have some important folks coming in, so I do move that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Silver that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

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

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Streicker that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Hutton: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

Pursuant to the Order adopted by the House on November 5, 2019, the House will now pay tribute to Dennis Fentie, former Premier of Yukon. We may allow a minute or two for the guests to arrive in the gallery.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Member for Copperbelt South, on a point of order.

Mr. Kent: I think that my colleagues were expecting a brief recess, so if you can give us a couple of minutes, I will go and make sure that they are on their way in from the offices.

Speaker: We will resume at 3:00 p.m.

Recess

Speaker: Pursuant to the Order adopted by the House on November 5, 2019, the House will now pay tribute to Dennis Fentie, former Premier of Yukon.

Introduction of visitors outside of the Daily Routine.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. McLeod: It's my pleasure to rise today. I would like to introduce a number of folks here with us in the gallery, some old-time Watson Lakers, esteemed past colleagues of Dennis. I

would like to start by introducing the family. Welcome to Lorraine Nixon, Fiona Simpson — I just ask that you would hold your applause until we're done, because there are quite a number of folks here — Perry Tascona, Christa Tascona, Nicholas Tascona, Jason Nixon, Andrea Nixon, Abigail Nixon, Austin Nixon, Ava Nixon, Ken Tallass, and Donna Publicover.

I would also like to welcome Archie and Karen Lang, Carmen Komish and Mark Robinson, Doug Phillips, Danny Macdonald, Wayne and Roxanne Vallevand, Craig and Geri Tuton, Patrick Rouble, Elaine Taylor, and an old Watson Laker who I haven't seen for a number of years, Yolanda Vandemeer, Darrell Peters, John Schussler, Leanna Hougen, Debbie Gledhill, Skyler Hougen, and Jonas Smith.

Welcome, everyone, and thank you for joining us.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would also like to acknowledge that in the gallery today we have our Senator of Yukon, Pat Duncan. We also have with her some deputy ministers and some officials. We have Paul Moore, Pam Muir, and John Bailey. We also have Chris Mahar, and I believe I saw Pamela Hine up there as well. Stephen Mills is also there, and I believe Ted Staffen is also here.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would like to recognize a couple of colleagues from my office, Mr. Brandon Kassbaum and Monica Nordling, and also a constituent and past Commissioner of the Legislature, Mr. Doug Phillips.

Applause

Mr. Hassard: I would like all members to join me in welcoming a couple of other people who I believe were missed today: Mr. Kells Boland, Mr. Charlie Brown, and Mr. Gordon Steele — thank you for being here today.

Applause

Mr. Hassard: I'm not quick enough to look up there. Ms. Judy Shannon is also with us here today — thank you, Judy.

Applause

In remembrance of Dennis Fentie

Ms. McLeod: It's my honour to rise today to pay tribute to Dennis Fentie. Most of us know Dennis as the MLA for Watson Lake, the Leader of the Yukon Party, and the Premier of the Yukon, but I want to give a sense of Dennis the person — the person from Watson Lake.

Dennis originally arrived in Watson Lake in 1962 as a young lad, with his mom, Mary. As life moved on, Dennis went Outside to school and returned to Watson Lake in 1977. Those were great days in Watson Lake. Things were lively. Cassiar and Tungsten were thriving communities right along with us.

Dennis established his own business, Frances River Construction, along with his long-time friend, Doug Brown. Dennis became a spokesperson for Watson Lake on many fronts and was well-regarded for his integrity. Dennis was a

direct, focused person who was respected for his tenacity, honesty, and no-nonsense approach to private and public sector business.

He had the gift to foresee problems and assess people for their sincerity, and something that always impressed me was his recollection of people — their name and their life situation.

I spoke to some Watson Lake folks about their recollections, and Jenny Skelton had this to say: "He was a great supporter of the Watson Lake Ski Club and all of Watson Lake. He was approachable and willing to talk to anyone. He believed in Watson Lake and the Yukon." Others said that, as a Watson Lake business leader, he was respected and he paid his bills. He represented the issues for Watson Lake in any of his dealings.

Mr. Speaker, we were proud that he rose from Watson Lake to the position of Premier of Yukon.

I watched an interview on a program called *Beyond Politics*, and I believe that this interview took place in 2010. Dennis reflected on how, when entering politics, his mom was so glad that he had finally found a use for his big mouth. He also said how thankful he was for the support of those who were close to him — especially Lorraine — and that helped him in his political successes.

Mr. Speaker, I asked around for some amusing stories about Dennis. As it turns out, he was far better behaved than some of us. Those who knew Dennis can appreciate it when I say that he had a sense of humour that could either have you rolling with laughter or questioning his sanity. If you were fortunate enough to have shared one of these moments with Dennis, chances are that you will remember it always and know that not everything can or should be shared.

In the public sphere and political arena, Dennis was widely known as a serious, good-natured, calculating, and fair person. He was quick-witted, but maintained a professionalism in his attitude and his actions. That would remain to be one of his most noteworthy characteristics.

Dennis had the nickname "Mittens". There must be a good story there, I thought — but it seems that it was a family nickname. It was handed around in the Brown family that Dennis was a part of — and a large family of boys, it was — and it seems that a few other nicknames were handed out, such as "Buttons" and "Bows". So, "Mittens" seems like it was a good fit.

In the days and weeks that followed his passing, friends and former colleagues of Dennis — and Yukoners across the territory — took to social media and other outlets to share stories and condolences. It was amazing to see the outpouring of support and just how many lives were touched by this great man. As I sifted through messages, comments, and stories, I realized how much respect so many people had for Dennis. He was a good man and a great Premier.

When I think about Dennis and I reflect on who he was and the impact he had on so many lives, I remember those who have gone ahead of him. People like John Boy McCammon, Brian Shanahan, and the great Buddy Taylor. Brad "The Animal" Labonte and Grant McBratney. I think about how all

those boys are together again and maybe raising a little hell, wherever they are.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Silver: I rise today to pay tribute to a great Yukoner and former Premier of our territory, Dennis Fentie.

It is with deep sadness that we learned of Mr. Fentie's passing in late August of this year. On behalf of all Yukoners, I offer my deepest condolences to his family, his friends, and his former colleagues as well.

For so many Yukoners, Mr. Fentie was an inspiration and an example of the true definition of public service. He first arrived in Yukon as a boy, as we were told by the Member for Watson Lake — a 12-year-old boy from the City of Edmonton. Like so many others, he fell in love with his new northern home as he grew up in Watson Lake.

As an adult, Dennis pursued many opportunities — trucking and logging, tourism, mining, construction, and fuel distribution. He was a business person and gained a deep understanding of our territory and the needs of Yukoners. He was chosen to be the director of the Association of Yukon Forests and also of the Watson Lake Chamber of Commerce.

Eventually, he was tapped to enter into politics — first with the NDP and then with the Yukon Party, where he became the party leader and Yukon's seventh Premier. Mr. Fentie represented the people of Watson Lake and of southeast Yukon for 15 years in the Yukon Legislative Assembly. His distinguished career had a significant impact on the territory and on all Yukoners. Dennis brought a common, plain-spoken approach to government and to his role as Premier. It was this authenticity that helped garner him so much support.

Beyond his home riding, Dennis was also a champion for all Yukoners. He helped our economy grow and he supported the mining and tourism industries. He wrestled with Ottawa in 2003 over the national health accord. Mr. Fentie worked with other northern premiers in negotiating funding agreements that better met the needs of our unique northern circumstances. Thanks to his hard work, we received greater and stronger recognition in respect to our ability and our desire to make our own decisions about the future of our territory.

He fought very hard on behalf of others — no matter who the person was — and he fought no matter which federal party was in power.

Inside the territory, Dennis travelled extensively and listened to Yukoners in absolutely every community. He took good ideas wherever he found them, and he translated those ideas into actions. Dennis Fentie will always be known as an outstanding person who helped shape this amazing territory. His legacy will continue carrying us forward and we will work hard to honour his legacy.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: I rise on behalf of the Yukon New Democratic Party to join in paying tribute to Dennis Fentie. Much has been said today and in the past in this Chamber both to and about Mr. Fentie. Regardless of whether he served the

citizens of Watson Lake as a New Democrat or as an opposition Yukon Party MLA or ultimately as Premier, Dennis Fentie displayed a ferocious tenacity of spirit and commitment.

Having worked with Dennis outside the political realm in a previous career, I was privileged to witness his skill and adroit management of many federal political leaders, ministers, and senior Ottawa officials. Clearly — and quite often quite emphatically — he would communicate the Yukon perspective on any issue.

I think there are few who knew Dennis who would consider him to be a guy who was constrained by protocol. Back in 2003, when uncooperative weather threatened travel plans for the *Kluane First Nation Final Agreement* signing ceremony in Burwash Landing, Dennis quickly turned to Bob Nault, the federal minister of the day, and said, "Want to drive with me, Bob?" — leaving a gaggle of ministerial- and premier-minders to attempt to catch up with the Premier's famed "flying" truck and to wonder what deals were being cut beyond their watchful eyes.

Dennis Fentie had the shrewd and piercing gaze of a hawk, quick to assess both the situation and to seize an opportunity. He knew that it takes two strong wings to have that hawk soar, and so he was not reluctant to take good ideas from both the left and the right wings of this Assembly. His endorsement of my predecessor — and his former caucus-mate and friend — Todd Hardy's private member bills on smoke-free places and safer community and neighbourhood acts are lasting legacies for them both.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, the lyrics of an old country song always come to mind when I think about Dennis. The song goes:

... Son, I've made my life
Out of readin' people's faces
And knowin' what their cards were
By the way they held their eyes...

... If you're gonna play the game, boy
You gotta learn to play it right

You've got to know when to hold 'em
Know when to fold 'em
Know when to walk away
And know when to run
You never count your money
When you're sittin' at the table
There'll be time enough for countin'
When the dealin's done...

Mr. Speaker, Yukon is richer for the fact that Dennis Fentie knew the risks of the gamble and was willing to take and make them for Yukon. We too extend our condolences to Dennis' family and many friends in Yukon and across Canada.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further tributes?

I would like to thank all the honoured guests in the gallery for attending today, and we will now be returning to Orders of the Day, so feel free to stay or not.

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

Speaker: It has been moved by the Acting 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

Deputy Chair (Mr. Adel): I will now call Committee of the Whole to order.

The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: We will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

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

Bill No. 200, *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — continued

Deputy Chair: This afternoon we will resume general debate of Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Mr. Silver, you have 15 minutes and four seconds.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I believe that I have answered the member opposite's question, so I will cede the floor.

Mr. Kent: I thank those members, including the Premier, the MLA for Watson Lake, and the MLA for Whitehorse Centre for the tributes to former Premier Fentie as we broke. They were all very well done, and having served a little bit of time in the House with Dennis, I have some fun stories perhaps to share later — in this Legislature from 2000 to 2002. We can save those stories for a pint of beer or something.

When we left off before the break, we were talking about this \$30-million annual commitment, and I did mention in my remarks and did congratulate the government for securing \$120 million total for, I understand, the next four years — so \$30 million per year, perhaps even a little bit more being spent — and that is great news.

But, again, what I was focusing on was this conversation that the Premier was having with a constituent of the Member for Kluane during the election campaign and the subsequent mandate letter that the Premier gave to his Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. The Premier — I'm not sure — I mean, I know that we had tabled this a couple of times. Perhaps it wasn't accepted, but I have a copy that I will send over with

one of the pages to the Premier — just of the excerpt that I am referring to. If this wasn't him, then that is important to know as well, because it looks like it is a Facebook message conversation between him and this other individual. I mean, if this isn't him, that would be an important clarification.

Again, I am just curious, because, as this is worded, it seems as though the Premier is indicating to this Yukoner during the election campaign that work had already been completed with Ottawa and that they are willing to provide \$30 million a year for green energy and retrofits.

Perhaps the Premier can confirm that this is him in this conversation, for starters, and then just give us a sense of clarity. If he was indicating that the \$30 million had been secured — and again, I did reference as well that I believe that there was a press conference with the Premier and the now Minister of Community Services in which it was indicated that there would be \$30 million a year pretty much right from the start rather than three budgets into this mandate.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I think that I have answered the question a few times, and again, from our platform commitment — and I know that the Minister of Community Services has had the exact same conversation on the floor of the Legislative Assembly as well.

So, I will comment on our platform commitment. I will comment on the mandate letters.

Again, when we were campaigning, the campaign promise was “building up to”, and here we are at \$30 million. We have worked out a deal with Ottawa, and we do have \$30 million a year in retrofits.

Mr. Kent: If the Premier can confirm that this was him in this conversation — on the paper that I have sent over. It is dated October, 29, 2016 — obviously about a week or so before the election that year. Then perhaps he can provide me with this “up to” language that he is speaking about — with the campaign commitment — because the campaign commitments that we have seen are for \$30 million a year for green energy, retrofits and the stuff that we are talking about here and what was included in the mandate letter. If he could provide us with the “up to” language, then that would also be great.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, this isn't the first time that this conversation has been had in the Legislative Assembly. I am not going to comment on Facebook posts, but I am going to comment on our platform commitment, and we have done good by that platform commitment. We are sitting here right now and we have \$30 million a year for retrofits.

If you take a look at the green economy and green energy files as well, we have actually surpassed that — if you take a look at that.

We can get into this over and over again, but we are going over issues that have been addressed by the Yukon Party. I guess we are going to have to agree to disagree, but here we are at \$30 million a year. Last year, it was \$14 million for retrofits, and every year we have more and more. Now we are at a place where we have \$120 million over four years.

Again, with our platform commitment, we are here now with this commitment. I wish that we could have gotten this off the ground from the first year — absolutely. That would have

been great, because think about all the great opportunities, but here we are now — away we go with \$30 million a year.

Mr. Kent: I am just looking for clarification on this. The Premier is not going to comment on the conversation that he had with a Yukon voter during the election campaign in which he said — and I quote: “We have worked with Ottawa and they are willing to provide \$30 million a year for green energy and retrofits.” That is the end of the quote, so once again, for the Premier — and I sent him over the document that I’m referring to — is that not him in this Facebook conversation with the Yukon voter during the 2016 election?

Hon. Mr. Silver: The member opposite can ask me over and over again to talk about conversations on Facebook. I am going to say again that we did work with Ottawa and we do have \$30 million a year for retrofits.

Mr. Kent: This conversation that the Premier was having with a constituent from the Kluane riding before the election campaign in which he said, “We have worked with Ottawa and they are willing to provide \$30 million a year for green energy and retrofits” — it sounds like a pretty cut-and-dried statement in a conversation that is in writing. Obviously, we are just trying to figure out exactly why there were gaps in this funding in the first three budgets that the Premier and his colleagues tabled during a time when — obviously, as candidates during election campaigns, we have engaged with individuals in a multitude of media, including Facebook message conversations and text conversations, e-mails, door to door, in coffee shops, and the list goes on. The question is for the Premier: This statement that he made during the 2016 election campaign was incorrect — is that what he is saying?

Hon. Mr. Silver: No, Mr. Deputy Chair, I am saying that I am not going to comment on a half conversation that the member opposite has on a piece of paper, but what I will say is that we committed to securing federal funding for retrofits, and we did.

Now we are in our third mandate with that commitment, as opposed to opposition when it comes to building a rec centre in my community. I did get up on this floor many times in the Legislative Assembly and asked over and over again about that. They failed to commit to that, but they did make those promises two elections in a row.

Again, we could go back over and over again. He can keep on asking me to comment on something that I’m not going to comment on because it’s a partial conversation that the members opposite have on a piece of paper. What I will comment on is the unique relationships that we have built with the federal government. We have secured federal funding through many different facets in different infrastructure opportunities. We have increased the ability for THIF funding to be locally controlled and locally used with less strings on it from Ottawa. We have also increased the flexibility when it comes to Ottawa federal funding. We’ve done a great job to secure the funding.

Do I wish that we had that \$30 million in the first year? Yes, I do. At the same time, we are here today making good on a commitment. We are making good on that commitment — \$30 million a year in retrofits. That’s where we are.

Mr. Kent: Okay. Maybe we’ll just go about this in a different way. The Premier doesn’t want to comment on this. We’ll work with the Clerk’s office about tabling the entire conversation that we’ve tabled a couple of times before the most recent throne speech and since the most recent throne speech, and we will see exactly why it is not being accepted. That’s work that we’ll do outside the House.

The Premier has mentioned that they have worked with Ottawa. Is he willing to provide us with any documentation of those negotiations that he had with Ottawa? That perhaps would give us a better sense of why it took three years to get up to this — to what will be this \$30-million-per-year commitment.

Hon. Mr. Silver: As the member opposite knows, we came into office and immediately went to work — went to work solidifying our commitments to Yukoners through mandate letters, and we worked on all of these files. We continue to work on all these files. We have done the Speech from the Throne to showcase to Yukoners what we have accomplished and what we still need to accomplish.

I let the record speak for itself as far as the work that we have done — bringing reconciliation forward, increasing relationships with governments, whether it be the federal government, First Nation governments, or municipal governments. It has been our *modus operandi* to make sure that we focus on common goals and expand conversations where we can find those common goals.

It’s our opinion on this side of the House that working together with other governments is the pathway forward. I know in the past that this may not have been so much. We have talked about former prime ministers being left at the airport here because I guess their polling numbers weren’t so good for the Yukon Party, but we believe that, with whatever government is in Ottawa, we need to treat them with respect, because a positive relationship with Ottawa, a positive relationship with First Nations, and a positive relationship with municipalities is what we’re always going to strive for.

Are we always going to agree? No, Mr. Deputy Chair. Are we always going to get the funding right away? No, Mr. Deputy Chair, but what we’re going to do is commit and continue to commit to trying our best, to working with integrity and continue.

When it comes to the commitment, I’ll read from our press conference, which the member opposite cited before about the campaign. I quote: “We want to create a building retrofit program for all residential, commercial and government buildings in order to reduce energy costs, minimize greenhouse gas emissions, create skilled trade jobs and make it worthwhile to switch the source of heat away from fossil fuels. The program will grow to \$30 million per year to implement such an energy retrofit program for residential, government, and commercial buildings. We know the federal government is looking to support the north to transition to a sustainable energy future and we would work directly with them to leverage funding sources.”

That’s what we did. We worked with the federal government, and we leveraged those funding sources. It did

take some time — I will give the member opposite that — but here we are with \$120 million over the next four years for retrofits.

Mr. Kent: I obviously didn't mean to upset the Premier with this. I'm thinking that perhaps I struck a bit of a nerve. There's some reliving of the past and other things that we often get when members opposite, members of the government, feel like they're being backed into a corner and get upset about the line of questioning.

Again, just to go back to the previous question that I had, if there were negotiations back and forth with the Government of Canada — either prior to the election, as was suggested in this Facebook conversation, or since the election and since the Premier and his colleagues were sworn into government — then obviously there would be a record of those. Will the Premier provide us with that record of negotiations? I guess that's essentially the same question that I asked before. Will the Premier provide us with a record of those negotiations?

Hon. Mr. Silver: No nerve has been struck, and I have answered the member opposite's question. I do remember, when I was in opposition and the member opposite didn't like my question, he would call me a "Timbit hockey player" and personally insult me that way. I am not going to do that. No nerve was struck. I am not going to talk about Facebook posts, but I will talk about our commitment to Yukoners. We made good on that commitment.

Mr. Kent: So, again, will the Premier provide us with a record of negotiations, either prior to the election — we need to talk about prior to the election, because he doesn't want to talk about this document, so we will work on getting the full conversation tabled. Will he provide us with any documentation or record of negotiations with the Government of Canada on this since he was sworn in as Premier of the Yukon in December of 2016?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Deputy Chair, the conversations we have government to government with the federal ministers are a two-way conversation. Whether we are talking about retrofits or whether we are talking about getting money for infrastructure like rec centres for communities, those conversations are ongoing all the time. The member opposite can be assured that, through those conversations, we did get that commitment.

I could see if we are at a place right now where we made a commitment and we didn't actually make good on it, such as a rec centre in Dawson, where I would want to know more about these conversations. I would want to know more about, maybe, the Cabinet meetings that were had when it came to a major investment like that. Maybe the member opposite could share some of those conversations that they had at the Cabinet table, or maybe they could share some of the conversations they had with Ottawa when it came to twice, in two different elections, promising a rec centre for Dawson. In that case, it just never happened. Maybe it could be a conversation about how a government switched from a large, beautiful glass building at F.H. Collins and then kept on increasing all of the different assets that would go into that building, put things back to

tender, but didn't change the actual amount for that school, then scrapped that commitment and built something else.

Again, we could play this game, Mr. Deputy Chair, and talk about commitments, whether or not we made good on those commitments, and produce some documentation for something that came to fruition, and we could ask the same thing to the members opposite about things that didn't come to fruition.

Again, we made a commitment to Yukoners and we made good on that commitment.

Mr. Kent: It appears that the pressure of this questioning is starting to get to this Premier, and I'm not meaning for that to happen.

Obviously, there were some negotiations between our publicly elected government and the publicly elected Government of Canada, and we feel that taxpayers should have the right to know how those negotiations went — what the back-and-forth was. I am assuming there is a record beyond just conversations with respect to these negotiations that the Premier has claimed he had. Obviously, there were some that happened before the election, but let's just park those for a second and let's focus on what has happened since he was sworn in as the Premier.

Again, the question is: Will he provide us with the record of negotiations between the Yukon government and the Government of Canada when it comes to securing this annual funding for energy retrofit programs for residential, commercial, and government buildings — which has been expanded to First Nation housing and their community building infrastructure?

Again, I will congratulate the Premier for securing the money — but we are looking for the record of negotiations that led to the securing of that money.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I am under no obligation to the members opposite when it comes to these conversations. I could ask him the same about 14 years of government. Can you give back all the negotiations that they had with the Ottawa government to the opposition at the time? The member opposite can rest assured that we had those conversations because the proof is in the pudding — we secured the funding.

The member opposite keeps on referencing that this line of questioning is somehow painful to me. It's not. It is an interesting line of questioning. It is under that guise of what's good for the goose I guess isn't good for the gander with the Yukon Party. Now that they are in opposition, they are asking for all the things that they would absolutely never, ever have offered to the opposition. So, that's fine. I remember the Select Committee Regarding the Risks and Benefits of Hydraulic Fracturing, and I remember jumping into the Legislative Assembly one day and finding that I am on a committee — without a conversation and without a dialogue about that. I was assigned to that committee.

So, again, there is a little bit of a double standard here — no obligation right now for me to be sharing conversations that I have had with other levels of government with the members opposite. But at the same time, these conversations happened. They happened whole-of-government — not only necessarily just with me and my ministers at meetings in Ottawa, but also

with other ministers as well. Yukoners can be guaranteed that these meetings happened because the money is here. It is in the mains budget.

I'm happy to continue on this for the rest of the day if the member opposite has no other questions — no problem. It didn't strike any chord. But again, that's where we are, and the money is in the mains.

Mr. Kent: Again, look — I'm not trying to put pressure on the Premier or back him into a corner where he feels like he can't provide me with some documentation. He said that he was under no obligation to provide us with that, but I mean, \$30 million doesn't just come from the sky. These are Canadian taxpayer dollars — Yukon taxpayer dollars — that are going into it. We're just curious as to the record of negotiation.

When the Premier refers to a committee he was on — I mean, I have to remind the Premier that, for quite a bit of time in the previous — from 2011 to 2016 — he was a caucus of one. So, it's really interesting that he would complain about being on a committee during that time when he was the only elected representative from his party. But again, I don't want to — I do want to move on. I do have a number of other questions. But, I guess, why won't the Premier provide us with this record of negotiations with Canada? Do we have to ATIPP it? Is that what he's saying — we have to ATIPP it either through the new and wonderful process that the Minister of Highways and Public Works says exists here in the Yukon, or should we go through the Canada process? I mean, if we want that information, is that how the Premier is suggesting that we get it — by going through ATIPP? Or will he just simply provide it to us here in the Legislative Assembly?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I have answered this question a few times already.

Mr. Kent: So, we should ATIPP it? Is that what the Premier is saying?

Hon. Mr. Silver: The member opposite is aware of the options he has in front of him, and he's aware of our obligations on this side of the House. Again, I'm happy to report that we definitely have the \$30 million secured. He can ask me this question over and over again about getting together a whole bunch of documentation of a bunch of different meetings. I'm not convinced that's the best use of the public servants' time — whether it's in Ottawa or in Yukon — because the funding has been secured. It's in, and it seems to be an odd distraction.

I thought we were here to discuss budgets, but the members opposite can ask these questions as much as they want. I have answered it. I believe there are some Standing Orders about repeating a question over and over again once it is answered. I know the member opposite isn't happy with the actual answer I gave him. But again, we have addressed this issue. That's fine. It's 4:00 in the afternoon. If we want to continue like this, then it's an easy way to pass the afternoon. But I think Yukoners would be more interested in us moving on.

Mr. Kent: I think Yukoners are obviously interested in the expenditure of \$30 million a year — I mean \$120 million over the next four years, as the Premier mentioned, to help out with this program. Obviously, it's something that will be supported. I believe all three political parties that are

represented in this Legislature today made commitments around energy retrofits during the last campaign. Obviously, the Premier made them in a conversation with a Yukon voter before the election last time. But he's not willing to provide us with any record of negotiations between his government and the Government of Canada, so we will — we'll just look at other options, I guess.

It's disappointing, obviously, that the Premier will make us jump through these hoops — whether it's the Yukon process or the Government of Canada process — when it comes to ATIPP. But we'll look at our options and see what we can come up with as far as securing any of the documents that we're asking about here today.

I will move on to a different topic. In that 2017 mandate letter that the Premier gave to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, one of the tasks or one of the key goals that the Premier identified for his minister was: "... ensuring a strong environmental assessment process without unnecessary duplication of effort". I'm wondering if the Premier can give us an update on the work that was accomplished along those lines. Obviously, we have heard significant concerns from industry about the unfulfilled promise of dealing with timelines and reassessments when it comes to the environmental assessment process.

So, yes, if the Premier can give us an update on work on this front, that would be great.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I believe the member opposite is talking about overlap with concerns on the YESA process, the Water Board process, and an overlap there. I'm just looking for clarification if that is what the member opposite is — okay.

Mr. Kent: Yes, this is the January 6, 2017, mandate letter from the Premier to the Deputy Premier in his capacity as Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. I will go up and read it and then read that one bullet so then we can get some clarification from the Premier on some of this stuff.

It says, "Promote responsible resource development balanced with environmental management and demonstrable benefits for Yukon by..." Then the second bullet down, it says — and I quote: "... ensuring a strong environmental assessment process without unnecessary duplication of effort". Could the Premier give us a sense of what has been accomplished along those lines? Because obviously we have heard some pretty strong concerns from industry about the current EA process and how it's working for them.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would love to have this conversation — absolutely. I want to absolutely give credit to the current Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. We were left with a bit of a mess with 49(1) when it came to a really important piece. I think there has not been a lot of disagreement right across Yukon — whether it be in First Nation communities that have to deal with processing when it comes to land use and our processing through YESAA or through the Water Board process. What a great opportunity to take a look at trying to modernize an approach and a process to reduce red tape, but trying to reduce red tape in an area that is not going to have a devastating effect on the environment or any adverse effects on the environment. I think that is a really important piece.

The problem with that was that the previous government decided, in the five-year review of YESAA — which shouldn't take five years, but it was a five-year review that took almost five years — to not have that conversation with all the stakeholders. Then at the same time, through the Senate through Bill S-6 — which is an interesting way to go — they were trying to shove a few amendments that didn't have that consultation piece. Long story short, that did not help the industry. That didn't do us any favours in reconciliation. That didn't do industry any favours — even though, out of the four, we could debate some of the ministerial control pieces that they were looking for which were not necessarily the best approach or the best thing to try to put in at the last minute.

But 49(1) is an interesting concept, because, again, if you are in an area like my riding — with the placer miners or Alexco, for example, currently dealing with this — it would have been great if that process had been a little bit more forthright or a little bit more open and transparent, because we do hear from a lot of different governments in the Yukon that, in concept, 49(1) or something like that might be worth looking at. But at the same time, it has been years where industry could have used a provision such as this, but because of the previous Yukon Party government's approach when it came to Bill S-6, we have spent years trying to bridge gaps with First Nation governments. We spent years telling industry, "Look, we're working on advancing our processes. We are working as much as we possibly can to reduce red tape." So, we hit the ground running with some things — hopefully in the first couple of years trying to figure out the best way forward.

Under my responsibility in the Executive Council Office, I went to work looking at the Water Board and that unique relationship in the Water Board. I want to give credit where credit is due from the chair's position — Mr. Piers McDonald, former NDP Premier of Yukon, in his role — we share an understanding about the policy.

A lot of times in the past, this concept of "quasi-judicial" — it was interpreted in a way that really did a separation of the governments per se and the chair's responsibilities, the board's responsibilities, and the secretariat. There was not a lot of conduit of communication there, and it led to a lot of difference and confusion as to what the roles of each of these particular organizations and individuals had. So, we got right to work to establish and formalize that process through my shop. That was the memorandum of understanding with the Water Board and the secretariat's role — who they report to, what the requirements are, how the chair reports, how the board reports, and also the role of the Premier in that.

So, that was important work and I honestly — as I look back and see the process that you had with Victoria Gold and a water licence. You had amendments to a water licence that took a herculean effort of industry, technical advice, First Nation governments, the secretariat's good role, and the roles of the folks in the Executive Council Office — but the chair — that chair and his ability to work in that role and to coordinate — I shudder to think — if during that process — the people who are in place now, including the secretariat, including the board, the good folks in the Executive Council Office — all working

together on a new interpretation — a new interpretation of very solid regulations and legislation.

Quasi-judicial has to stand — it's an extremely important part of the conversation. It's extremely vital that we respect the quasi-judicial nature of the Water Board, but it's also an opportunity for us to increase conduits of communication, for us to work together more on a human basis with industry and redefine that reporting progress so that we could expedite the process, but never in any way infringing on the extremely important role of the use of water for not only this generation, but generations to come.

When it comes to the mining regulation process improvements in general, we recognize that a healthy and an active mineral sector is a major driver of Yukon's economy. I know the members opposite share our vision on that and our opinion on that — maybe just different approaches to how we get a successful mining industry.

The Government of Yukon continuously strives to ensure that mineral exploration and mineral projects are permitted to proceed in a timely manner while ensuring high environmental standards and aligning with Yukon First Nations and Yukoners' interests — absolutely.

For example, the Yukon government and the Yukon First Nations have established a collaborative process through a memorandum of understanding to explore and to advance improvements in all aspects of mineral exploration and development. What a herculean effort of the chiefs, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, the Yukon Forum, the Department of Environment, and the Department of Community Services. This was good work and hard work.

We had to break down a lot of barriers. We had to rebuild relationships, and we had to build up trust. We got there, and we got the signing done. The *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* — the oversight group continues to move forward on shared priorities. Industry has identified amendments, and they have identified renewals of the previously assessed projects and timelines for assessment and discussion-making as a top priority. We agree. We need to move forward on these issues. These are both on the oversight group's priority list.

That's the good news: We have industry, First Nation governments, and the Yukon government, all together in a memorandum of understanding — all together understanding the oversight group's priority list. That's what we're working on every day.

In the interim, the Yukon government is exploring how to clarify the requirements for amendments and renewals for projects within the current legislation, and we will be engaging with other regulators on a streamlined approach. The First Nations on the MOU table have now endorsed the Yukon to look at policies in Yukon control that can reduce duplication of assessment, and that work is underway, and we will ensure that we report back to the Assembly as we can in due process.

That MOU table continues to work. MDS works now — and that work is underway. As the members opposite know, we did provide the members opposite with a briefing on the work in respect to the working group of the leaders, so the member

opposite has that information. Again, we're going to continue to do this background.

Suffice it to say that regulatory uncertainty has been a long-standing issue in the mineral exploration and mining industry in the Yukon. Recommendations for streamlining Yukon's regulatory regime have been a part of the Yukon Minerals Advisory Board's reports since devolution. In opposition, we always went through those when the member opposite was sitting in the role of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. These were issues then. They weren't solved. We could go on talking about bringing up the past, about the MLII process. I remember chiefs calling me and saying that they're not being consulted on the MLII process — which is interesting — if you look at the litigation that got us to that place, that was the whole intent of that process.

Again, a lot of those issues were unsolved. These were issues that had come up repeatedly over the years — unnecessary reassessments under the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* when a project is renewed or amended; lack of firm, consistent timelines for regulatory assessments; lack of regulatory clarity, making it difficult for operators and investors to understand Yukon's regulatory regime.

What we have now is a huge opportunity, as we're increasing the quartz royalties with the First Nations, their share of that. For years, the previous government argued back and forth as to how much of the cut they wanted to give the First Nation governments when it came to how we shared that royalty. We came in and decided, look, that's not something that we want to necessarily argue about. So, we're hoping — and again, with the minister working with this MOU, we're setting a path forward. It's going to take time, and we understand the concerns that the mining industry has when it comes to this process, but this is good work.

We could talk about the YESAA reset oversight group as well — continuing to advance the dialogue and the technical work from the YESA forum that was just held this week. Over 60 people from Canada, Yukon, First Nation governments, the YESAB, the board itself, transboundary and non-settled First Nations, NGOs and industry organizations all coming together. This didn't necessarily happen in the past — and if it did, it wasn't on a regular basis.

The Yukon Forum — I have to say, a lot of that reconciliation, a lot of that advancing of conduits of communication — I give credit to Grand Chief Peter Johnston and his good work at the CYFN and the public servants there. I give credit to the chiefs who are willing to take a look at a new approach from this government and work forward. It takes time; it absolutely takes time.

We recognize the value and necessity of industry engagement. I completely understand the members opposite wanting the industry to be more engaged. I understand that. But again, we have a process. We're working with two other levels of government, and we're continuing through that oversight group to offer to meet directly with industry over the coming months.

The members opposite talked about an agenda that was somehow given and then taken off — agenda items that were taken off. I would like to see, from the members opposite, exactly what — if they could provide — and I'm sure if they can, they will — provide a copy of that agenda that had industry that recommended something and then that was taken off the agenda. I don't think that's really what happened. I think there were two different — we'll just leave it at that.

Again, that's what we were being asked about the other day. I understand the members opposite — because they want to see — I know the Yukon Party supports mining, and they want to see mining happening. The good news is, Victoria Gold did open up the largest gold mine in Yukon history. We're having conversations with some amazing junior and senior companies right across the Yukon, and we're continuing to support them — whether it be through geoscience or investment tours or trying to drum up business.

One of the big concerns from industry was with the legalization of cannabis — investors who normally went toward mining industries and certain plays — a lot of that money kind of went to a whole other industry because there were some gains to be made there, so they were happy to see not only the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, but me as well going on these investment tours to talk about the bounty here, to talk about the renewed relationships with First Nation governments, to talk about the MOUs — memorandums of understanding — and whether that be with the mining regulation improvement process or the reset of YESAA. It was trying our best to reduce the red tape, but again, we weren't necessarily given the best starting position to start those negotiations. That is why it's so important that we give credit to the chiefs whose traditional territories are being affected and also to the CYFN and the leadership of the Grand Chief there.

Mr. Kent: That response from the Premier solicits a number of additional questions. My question was pretty focused on what has been accomplished to ensure a strong environmental assessment process without unnecessary duplication of effort. The Premier identified a number of impacts, but did not really relate them to how they would deal with the unnecessary duplication of effort with the EA, but maybe we will dig in here to a couple of things that the Premier talked about in that response.

We have talked about this a number of times with respect to the collaborative framework that was announced in March 2017 by the Premier talking about working with industry and First Nations dealing with timelines and reassessments. Those are the two important aspects important to industry — they have been and continue to be important to industry. As we have asked questions over the past number of Sittings with respect to that particular issue, I think the Premier mentioned the YESAA reset MOU. Then I think that morphed into what was held this week, which was a YESAA forum. I think he mentioned 60 individuals from varying backgrounds, including industry organizations. It has come to our attention from industry organizations that timelines and reassessments were not on the agenda yesterday. Obviously, we are taking them at their word on that. If the Premier wants to provide the House

with the agenda of the meetings from earlier this week, that would be great. It would settle it once and for all if he has some knowledge of that agenda that suggests that timelines and reassessments were on the agenda, because that is not what we are hearing from the industry participants who were there.

So, I have just a simple question for the Premier, then: Is he aware that the industry organizations that were at that forum — you know, stayed through the welcoming remarks and the introductions, but then, since timelines and reassessments weren't on the agenda, they left the forum. Is the Premier aware of that?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I wasn't at the meeting, but I do know that the individuals whom the member opposite is talking about — the industry — did leave before the agenda-setting part of the meeting.

Again, if the members opposite have an agenda with certain items, I would like to know which ones they are talking about — that were then taken off the agenda. I am not clear what particular agenda item fell off the agenda. If the member opposite can let me know which particular agenda item fell off the agenda — I looked into it. The member opposite asked the question in Question Period, so we did look into it. I did ask, "Is there any truth to this — that there was an item that was taken off the agenda?"

What I heard, from my department at least, was that the industry representatives that the member opposite is speaking about did leave before the agenda-setting part of the meeting. If that is not true or if something else happened, then please — if the member opposite can let me know which agenda items were taken off.

Mr. Kent: We have heard from folks in industry that there was to be no discussion of timelines and reassessments. Those are the two important issues for them that started, obviously, with the collaborative framework through the YESAA reset MOU and to the YESAA forum. I am assuming that there was an agenda circulated before the meeting — if the Premier can provide us with a copy of that agenda. Yes, our understanding is that it was those two issues that didn't make the initial agenda — timelines and reassessments.

Hon. Mr. Silver: These are government-to-government conversations and in those government-to-government conversations — like I said, those conversations are currently government-to-government. The members opposite have been asking these questions for a while now, and the minister has been very clear — if the members opposite would like to listen to the answer to the question — that we need to make sure that the governments meet together, and we need to make sure that the governments in that room — plural — are comfortable on when and where to engage with industry.

Now, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources — I don't think there is anybody more excited to share more information with the industry, because he knows how important these topics are to the industry, but we must respect that process.

The members opposite would have us not respect that process, not respect those First Nation governments that are in that room as well and share —

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible)

Deputy Chair's statement

Deputy Chair: Order. I'm having a little difficulty hearing with the off-mic stuff going on here. I'm a little older than you guys, so please give me a break — okay? Keep it down just a bit so I can hear what the person who has the floor is saying.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you very much. Again, this is an ongoing conversation. I'm not trying to frustrate the members opposite. I do respect their desire for industry to have more engagement and conversation with this now that they're in opposition. It's a good question to ask of a government — to push us, to make sure that we try our best to engage industry in those conversations, but currently these conversations are happening government-to-government. They are happening that way for a reason. We had to spend an awful lot of time repairing a lot of damage.

Mr. Kent: Can the Premier clarify for us, then — he said that the meeting that took place earlier this week was government-to-government, but industry organizations were invited to attend. There were no proponents invited to attend. Nobody who had actually gone through the YESA process was invited to attend, but industry organizations were invited to attend. To me, that suggests that the two governments were inviting industry into this meeting and into this discussion, but they wouldn't put timelines and reassessments on the agenda.

Maybe the Premier can clarify for me what exactly he meant when he said that this was government-to-government but, when industry was there, then their issues weren't on the agenda. I understand very respectfully that they decided to no longer participate once the initial agenda was sent around. It didn't have the two big concerns for them on it.

The Premier has mentioned that it was government-to-government somehow. Maybe he needs to clarify it for me here, but I'm not understanding why he said it was government-to-government but industry was in the room.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I'm happy to clarify. Again, this isn't the first time that the members opposite have been pushing for more information for industry on this particular topic. My comments are — the government-to-government conversations are ongoing.

The specific meeting that the member opposite is talking about — what I will do to clarify is that we will endeavour to get back to him, because I wasn't there at that meeting. I can't speak on behalf of the department because I wasn't there. But we will get for the member opposite some clarity from a statement that we can talk about in the Legislative Assembly as to who was invited at what point, what conversations were public — because I don't know right now. I don't know the answer to that specific question.

The member opposite, when he asked the question in Question Period, made it seem like he saw some kind of agenda. The question that he asked — and we can look at the Blues again — was: Why did we take these items off an agenda? I don't think that is how it happened, Mr. Deputy

Chair. It might be a dispute among members. It's not my department, but we will clarify. We will find out exactly who was invited, what the actual protocol was and what the day plan was, and we will give him as much information as we possibly can share.

The members opposite have been asking us to make an announcement on the floor about progress when, interestingly enough — if we could announce more, we would definitely be announcing it right now.

Mr. Kent: Can the Premier also let us know then — we went around and around this last year in the Fall Sitting about geoscience and the collaborative framework. The minister of the day or the Premier said that we were confusing the collaborative framework with the YESAA reset MOU, but it sounds like the collaborative framework has morphed into the YESAA reset MOU, which morphed into the YESAA forum earlier this week, which the Premier characterized as a government-to-government meeting.

I guess my question is pretty straightforward: Will the Premier invite industry — not only the organizations, but proponents that have actually been through the process — to a meeting with these two items on the agenda?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Deputy Chair, I will happily pass that question on to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Again, we are not trying to confuse things. The member opposite might be, as far as the responsibilities therein, but those mining regulatory process improvements under the guise of Energy, Mines and Resources were a herculean effort, untangling an awful lot of knots, so that would be their responsibility, especially when it comes to those specific topics.

We are sitting down and talking with industry on a regular basis. We will be doing so at the Geoscience Forum as well. If there is a mining company, a proponent, who has a specific ask, they are not shy in asking us at these meetings. I know that the minister has sat down with CEOs and board members of a multitude of different junior and major corporations on exactly these issues. If the member opposite has a particular mining company that he wants us to talk to, we are happy to talk to all of the different individuals or corporations, but to that extent, we have an open dialogue with all of the mining companies to date already.

Mr. Kent: I'm sure that the Premier is not just hearing this as fresh news on the floor of the Assembly. Every time we brought it up, I'm certain that companies and industry associations and others have talked to him about the problems that they're having with our assessment process. Obviously, I think some of them have talked to him about the problems with timelines and reassessments specifically, and I think it has gotten to the point that this is the focus that they would like to see at a meeting.

I'm just curious — the Premier said that he would ask the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources — I believe those were his words previously — with respect to scheduling a meeting with industry proponents, industry associations, First Nations, and whoever else the Premier believes is important to have at that meeting, but will he direct the minister to do that, or is he just going to ask the minister to do that?

The Premier, you know — he's in charge. We need him to direct the minister to do that.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you to the member opposite for clarifying my role in this government.

What I am saying is if there is a specific company that has come to the member opposite and said that we're not having those conversations, then please let us know, because, again, we are having those conversations. I know that the members opposite are on the outside looking in now when it comes to those conversations, but to make it sound like industry has not approached the minister on these particular issues, that's not true — they have.

Again, those conversations are happening, so I'm happy to report that I don't have to instruct my minister to have these meetings, because they're already ongoing.

If there is a particular mining company that feels that we didn't have that meeting about those conversations, by all means — the minister doesn't need to be instructed — he was all ears. He is tirelessly working on exactly this file, because it is extremely important not only to him personally and not only to our government personally — or the roles of the ministry or my own ministry — but it's important to Yukoners. This is an extremely important file. For the members opposite to make it seem like the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources is not having these conversations, that's just not true. He is having these conversations.

I do believe that, as he said, the First Nation governments, they're definitely extremely important in these conversations. I hope he agrees with that as well, but I'm a little confused as to what particular mining company or what particular industry is the —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Silver: I think the Leader of the Official Opposition wants to ask me a question here. He's talking off-mic.

Again, I'm at a loss. Those conversations are ongoing, whether it be YESAA reset oversight under my purview in the Executive Council Office or the mining regulatory process improvements under the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources — always looking to improve the systems and always looking to improve the climate for mining companies as well. We believe that the mineral development strategy is a great opportunity for industry to share their thoughts. I hope the member opposite agrees with me on that, because those conversations are ongoing.

If I could get the member opposite to clarify which particular mining companies — of course, I will go back and I will talk with the minister specifically about whether those meetings have already happened or to maybe give an outline to the member opposite about the mineral development strategy and the opportunities for industry therein.

Mr. Kent: Clearly, the Premier wasn't listening to the question, because I have said, of course, that I am sure he understands how frustrated industry is. I'm sure he doesn't hear about it, nor would his minister only hear about it on the floor of this Assembly.

I guess the very simple question for the minister is: When was the last meeting with industry on timelines and reassessments? When is the next meeting with industry on timelines and reassessments?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you for the clarification. To the member opposite, yes, I have personally had conversations and meetings with industry a lot about opportunities, but also frustrations of systems. In my role, I have had such a great opportunity to be able to talk to not only industry in Yukon, but also industry — Canadian companies that work all over the world or even international communities that work here in Yukon.

What a great opportunity it is to take a look at best practices in different areas. I heard from a lot of companies that have worked not only here, but also in Ontario, about some frustrations in areas such as the ring of fire in Ottawa. That play and the way that the system is set up there compared to how it's set up here — it's not all bad here in the Yukon. The members opposite know that as well, and they can compare it to other jurisdictions. I remember the former Premier bragging about the one-stop shop here in Yukon, because imagine having an environmental process and a water licence process and having to work not only with just a one-stop shop, but with several different First Nation groups in different capacities and organizations.

There are frustrations about some of the processes here, but there are also some great comments about the system itself. The system itself works well, but we always have to do better with it. That's what we're doing. That's what the minister is doing — having those conversations.

I will endeavour to get back to the member opposite as far as the latest and most specific meetings with the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and particular companies — no problem.

Mr. Kent: I look forward to getting that response or following up in the balance of this Fall Sitting and as we get into the geoscience week next week and toward the tail end of the Fall Sitting.

In an earlier response, in a lengthy response, the Premier mentioned the Yukon Minerals Advisory Board report and the fact that, when he was in opposition, he used it. We tabled it in May of each year as soon as it was made available to us, and often, when our roles were reversed and I was in Cabinet and he was in opposition, he would often ask questions from that report in the spring so we could kind of get a sense of what was happening in the upcoming mining season.

His current Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has departed from that practice of tabling the YMAB report in the Spring Sitting. Will he direct him to table the YMAB report in the Spring Sitting going forward?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Yes, as the member opposite does correctly cite, we have changed a lot of past practices from the former government. I will talk with my Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and get a sense of his current plan when it comes to the tabling of such a document.

Mr. Kent: I'm going to cede the floor to my colleague, the Member for Lake Laberge, but I anticipate that we'll

continue EMR discussions as we continue with general debate on the supplementary estimates going forward this fall. I thank the Premier for the conversations today. Once the Blues are available, I'll share the conversations with a list of mining proponents and mining organizations that I regularly interact with — what was said on the floor of the Legislative Assembly. I look forward to their response, and then perhaps their response will inform questions as we move forward in debate.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair, and I thank the Premier and the official for the conversations this afternoon.

Mr. Cathers: I am pleased to rise here this afternoon in continuing debate. As my colleague noted, I will also be asking questions primarily about Energy, Mines and Resources. As the House will recall, the Member for Copperbelt South and I share the responsibilities for the Energy, Mines and Resources portfolio — he being responsible for most areas of that, but my responsibilities cover the sustainable resources area.

To that end, one area I want to begin asking some questions about is forestry. In that area, we have had discussions here in the Legislative Assembly on several occasions about the issue of looking at forest management and harvesting through the lens of wildfire risk mitigation. As the Premier will recall, in the House both this spring and last fall, the discussion about this occurred between the Minister of Community Services and me, as well as — I believe there was some discussion with the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources — recognizing that, of course, wildfire fighting is a Community Services responsibility, and when it comes to a question of harvesting trees to mitigate the risk, that, of course, is the responsibility of Energy, Mines and Resources.

At that time, just to recap, in the spring, one of the things that I noted in the Assembly, in responding to a ministerial statement made by the government, was that Yukoners are growing increasingly aware of the importance of wildfire risk mitigation due to the efforts of groups including FireSmart Whitehorse and Yukon Wood Products Association and other Yukon citizens who are raising awareness of the importance of reducing wildfire risk in and around communities. Just for the reference of Hansard, I am partially quoting and partially paraphrasing from April 18 on page 4508.

At the time, I noted that Yukoners are growing increasingly aware of the importance of this issue. Due to these efforts, as well as seeing the effects of serious wildfires in areas including Telegraph Creek, Lower Post, Fort McMurray, the Paradise fire in California, and other wildfires in BC — and that has resulted in increased public awareness about the risk.

I noted at the time, and I am going to note again this afternoon, that while the beauty of the boreal forest here in the Yukon is a big part of what many of us appreciate about the territory and what we love about the Yukon, from a wildfire risk perspective, people are growing increasingly aware of the fact that, especially when it is older growth boreal forest in and around communities, there is also a wildfire risk associated with that.

In the event of the wrong weather conditions such as a dry summer and a forest fire coupled with a wind from the wrong direction, there is a serious risk in certain areas of Whitehorse

where we would not be able to effectively fight the fire and would be dealing with it from the perspective of trying to minimize the loss and help people get out in time to save themselves and their families. The risk also exists in other communities.

I know that my colleague, the Member for Kluane, has had recent discussions with constituents about the situation around Haines Junction. There is part of the Quill Creek forest management plan that is ongoing. We have also seen the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes forest management plan out, but it does seem that the issue of wildfire risk mitigation doesn't seem to be front and centre in those areas.

As I noted several times in the Assembly, I would encourage the government to work with municipalities and affected First Nations, as well as groups including the Yukon Wood Products Association and FireSmart Whitehorse, to take a look and come up with a targeted harvesting plan that is really primarily starting through the lens of looking at where the risks are in and around communities pertaining to wildfires and looking at cost-effective ways of dealing with it — not just looking at it the way government tends to do now through the FireSmart program — which, though a valuable program, is simply not enough and is not as cost-effective a solution as is coming up with a way to involve the private sector and give them the opportunity — instead of wood at the end of FireSmart programs, which is typically left for people to collect. We have heard from the Yukon Wood Products Association — as I'm sure the Premier and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources have as well — that they believe that if they were given the opportunity to harvest and keep that wood, it would reduce the costs of doing that harvesting work.

With that introduction, I would just ask the Premier a couple of things — or perhaps the minister may wish to respond — and that would be: What is the government doing on the issue of doing that planning work for wildfire risk mitigation? What recent conversations have they had — if any — with other levels of government or groups, including the ones I mentioned? Are they dealing with this as a priority matter, or is this something that has been relegated to the back burner or the side burner?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I have a couple of responses — and thank you to the member opposite for the question on an extremely important topic. Again, as the member opposite knows, Community Services is up for debate if we get out of general debate, and he will have ample opportunity to ask questions of the Minister of Community Services as far as the good work that Damien Burns and the team at Wildland Fire Management and others — I shouldn't just name one; there is a plethora of amazing people, both past and present, in that department. I am amazed at the leadership of Mr. Dennis Berry as well. We have so many good people in government right now who are working on extremely prioritized parts of Community Services. There is no back burner in this government. A lot has changed since the member opposite has been in these positions.

But again, what I can do — the member opposite started by saying that he is going to ask some questions on the Energy, Mines and Resources side of this — so what I will do is keep

my comments to the forest management planning that pertains to the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, because that department doesn't have a supplementary budget, so it will not be up to debate a budget. Community Services does have a budget, and again, the majority of the small supplementary budgets that we are here and supposed to be debating is exactly Wildland Fire Management.

It is a huge responsibility and a huge priority, because this is one of the most — you know, when I think about the public servants who are involved in this, whether they are the individuals who are out fighting fires — and from my community of Dawson, I can think of so many individuals who have made this their career right across the Yukon — let alone the partnerships with the First Nation crews and the good work that Ben Asquith is doing with the First Nation crews and training. There is the Beat the Heat program, which is a fantastic endeavour. I really appreciate being involved with that every year and being able to see the young recruits — getting a really good start at a really excellent economic opportunity in their communities — not even an economic opportunity, but an opportunity to serve their communities. It is awe-inspiring to see the work that this government is doing — whether it be through Energy, Mines and Resources or the Department of Environment or the Department of Community Services — but again, partnering with First Nation organizations and governments as well. It's amazing.

The forestry resource management plans — they provide certainty. That's what it's all about, Mr. Deputy Chair. They're providing certainty for the Yukon land base. They identify sustainable forest management practices and they foster economic opportunities for all Yukoners. Like I mentioned in the past, we have very positive relationships with First Nations in planning on how we manage our forests and have collaborated on plans for the Haines Junction, the Dawson, and the Teslin regions in that pursuit. We've asked Yukoners with an interest in forest management in the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes areas to provide their views on the recommended plan this summer — the summer that we just went through — and that information that we collected — that's absolutely going to help us make decisions on a recommended plan. We're very close in a lot of these areas.

They are sectioned into different areas of the Yukon, so I might go through a few of those. I know that Energy, Mines and Resources is working toward a new forest plan for the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes areas. That work is coming close to fruition. That's in partnership with the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and the Carcross/Tagish First Nation. We have a long history of working with the Kaska toward a forestry resource management plan for southeast Yukon. We have recently been in conversations with Liard First Nation on forest management in the region as well and we're hoping to continue discussions to find a pathway forward.

The member opposite spoke specifically about the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes area. There was work that was done by the joint planning committee — I believe that was May of this year — the Government of Yukon with our partners — it was May 10.

The Government of Yukon, with our First Nation partners, initiated consultation on the recommended plan on June 18, 2019 and consultation closed September 30, 2019. The Taku River Tlingit First Nation — they raised some concerns and made sure that we were considering climate impact specifically to caribou habitat.

I know that the Forest Management branch worked diligently with Aboriginal Relations in my department, Executive Council Office, to respond to questions about the plan and met with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation representatives early on this fall in that pursuit. I know that consultations had been concluded with Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Teslin Tlingit Council, and Little Carmacks First Nation, as well as Carcross/Tagish Renewable Resources Council and I believe also the Laberge Renewable Resources Council.

I know that public consultation meetings and events were held throughout the region, and letters were sent to interested groups and stakeholders, including the Yukon Wood Products Association that the member opposite mentioned. I know that also, following the consultation — the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources has been working with First Nation partners to review consultation feedback and determine what, if any, changes are required — lots of good work.

You can see from all these conversations, when it comes to forest management planning — high priority in the minister's department — really good work being done here working with a whole bunch of partners and a whole bunch of stakeholders. I know that, within 120 days of that consultation process closing, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources must accept, vary, or reject portions of the plan that apply to public lands and must provide written reasons for that decision. The member opposite obviously knows that from his experience in this department.

The planning committee addressed the main values identified by the public, with recommendations on things like mitigating wildfire risks to the community — as the member opposite mentioned, wondering if that was a priority. Obviously, the planning committee would have addressed that. We're in a new climate. We have forest fires burning longer in the season.

I had an opportunity this summer to do a flyover with Wildland Fire Management, looking at some of the northern fires. Here's what is a real priority for the Department of Community Services — I hope I'm not speaking out of turn here, because the minister will be up and he will probably want to spend some equal time or more time going on about this particular department. The care that this department takes on assets that are being surrounded by forest fires — it is awe-inspiring to see the effort and to see the commitment to making sure that assets — whether it be in the placer industry or cabins and traplines.

The member opposite talks about priorities. This is a priority for this department. It is unbelievable to see — you fly over a cabin or a placer mine, and you see forest fires on both sides of the creek, both sides of the mountain, and there is this cabin by the creek, completely saved.

A lot of times in my community of Dawson, there are an awful lot of small mom-and-pop placer operations that are not making a lot of money. They rely on these cabins. They rely on the assets that they have and to know that the department has that understanding and the people of Yukon's best interests in mind when they are fighting these fires. I tell you, we are very lucky to live where we live, and we are very lucky to have the expertise that we do have within Community Services and Energy, Mines and Resources as well when it comes to management planning with Energy, Mines and Resources and the saving of assets through the Wildland Fire Management branch.

So, again, the committee, as I said, has to address the main values identified by the public when mitigating the fire risks to the community. Providing access to fuel wood is another recommendation that they need to identify — maintaining caribou habitat, managing access, and respecting the traditional use of those forests as well — extremely important.

There is considerable overlap. When it comes between the areas of risk of wildfire and the Southern Lakes caribou herd's winter range, this is complicated. This is extremely important. Considerations need to be made in this area. The Southern Lakes caribou is listed as a species of special concern under the federal species at risk legislation. Governments have worked together for many, many years to recover caribou in that region. The departments of Environment and of Community Services, and Wildland Fire Management will continue to play a key role in implementing the plan and have very closely engaged on this key priority to the department.

Again, when it comes to the specific question on the Yukon Wood Products Association, they have had an opportunity to participate in the development of the plan and have also indicated support for the recommended plan as well.

There are other areas I could speak to — but I will take my seat — whether it be southeast Yukon forest management planning, the southwest Yukon — which is Haines Junction — forest management planning — or Teslin as well — and there is also the Dawson region — but the member didn't ask specifically about those regions, so what I'll do is cede the floor to my colleague on the other side and see if he has any more specific questions in the forest management planning conversation.

Mr. Cathers: I do appreciate that the Premier provided some information in answer to my question. That concern that I have — and I would suggest that perhaps the Premier could get back to me with legislative returns, since he doesn't appear to have the specifics here today. The rather long list of things that the Premier read off seems to have lost the focus on the need to do targeted harvesting. I'm not for a moment dismissing the many other forest resource issues that come into play, but recognizing the risk and recognizing the growing public sense that, as a society, we have been a little bit — what's the right word for it — more casual about the risk of wildfires than we should have been, and there's a need to deal with it in a manner that is well-thought-out but so that it is also dealt with as a priority action item.

It seemed to be just one item in a rather long list of priorities listed by the Premier, as it pertains to forest management, and my concern is that, if it gets tied up in protracted planning processes, the work isn't going to happen on the ground. As the Premier knows, as we saw this year, high fire seasons or fires in a specific area don't tell us when they're going to occur, and we will never really know when there might be a fire in the Whitehorse area, the Haines Junction area, the Watson Lake area, or near any other community until the problem is right there.

While I do appreciate the work done by Community Services, the part that seems to be falling out of focus a bit, at least in the answers that the Premier provided, is the importance of looking at wildfire risk mitigation by harvesting trees — being a short-term priority action item that is looked at as a priority, not bogged down in discussions about a long, varied list of priorities, all of which have their own value.

I am not sure that I am going to get much more in terms of answers from the Premier in this area this afternoon, but I would appreciate a legislative return. I also would just note that — when talking about how it seems to me that the government hasn't really been focused on this area of targeted wildfire risk reduction, I note that the throne speech, on page 19, talks about the costs of dealing with the wildfire season. It talks about those expenditures. But it doesn't talk about harvesting trees in and near communities to reduce wildfire risk. That seems to have fallen off the table, at least as a specific focus. I will just leave that part there.

I do have some questions on behalf of my colleague. The Member for Kluane had asked me to ask a couple of specific questions related to one of the communities he represents. These, I believe, were prompted by what he has heard from constituents. What work is forest resources doing to address fire mitigation in communities including Haines Junction? Also, the Quill Creek forest management plan is underway, so how much is fire mitigation taken into consideration in these plans and is it a specific focus as a priority? As well, what work has been done with the forest management branch and the Village of Haines Junction and the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations with respect to community fire mitigation? Also, has the Yukon government been working with Parks Canada, which is also a key player in this?

On a related matter — since it relates to what the Yukon Wood Products Association has been asking for and pitching as part of arguing that there are upsides to targeted harvesting — there is the opportunity for developing more biomass, taking the wood that has been harvested in and near communities and then using that to ultimately burn and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. Is there a government policy or directive that requires upgrading Yukon government buildings' heat sources to use green energy options like biomass? Other than in Teslin, is the government looking at other communities for biomass? If so, can they provide some specific examples?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I have to take a little bit of issue with how the member opposite is trying to make it seem like we somehow aren't prioritizing Wildland Fire Management in general debate here when — if the member opposite wants to

get to very comprehensive questions and answers about Community Services, that's one of the two or three departments that does have a line item here in the supplementary budget, and that one line item is Wildland Fire Management. It's forest fires.

So, for him to say that somehow it's not a priority — because (1) during House Leaders, the members opposite said they wanted to talk about Energy, Mines and Resources today, so I'm happy to talk about Energy, Mines and Resources today, and (2) the member opposite knows that, if he really does want to — if it is a priority to him, then he has ample opportunity to spend as much time as he wants with the Minister of Community Services on exactly this topic, if we can be set free from general debate at some time.

It's just such an interesting — it's too bad, because I think it just demeans the conversation here when the member opposite makes it seem like he's being genuine in his desire to have a thorough conversation on Wildland Fire Management when he knows exactly how to do that. If the general policy — what we have usually done is general debate, and I have been very happy to talk about those departments that aren't in a line item in this bill that we're supposedly debating, and then once general debate is done, then the member opposite has so much time — depending on, I mean, if we can get there. I can see maybe they don't want to get to Community Services, because — well, I'll challenge — the department is doing an awful lot of work and a lot of change, change that hadn't been done in the past, actually.

I know that my Minister of Community Services is champing at the bit — I know that for a fact — to have this conversation, and the member opposite knows exactly how to do that. So, what I will do is continue to answer the questions, based upon House Leaders' direction today, when it comes to Energy, Mines and Resources' component about forest management and forest planning.

The member opposite asked me to go on a bit more about some of the specific other regions, so I will. I'll take this opportunity to do that, and I thank the member opposite for the ability for me to speak on the Energy, Mines and Resources side of the forest management planning process.

But again — for the record for Hansard — my attempt here is not to somehow belittle or not prioritize Wildland Fire Management as a department or as an issue. My goodness, it's a huge issue — it absolutely is. We will definitely do our best to answer all of the questions that the member opposite has because the good news is that Community Services is here in this particular *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* schedule A. Community Services has a supplementary of \$19 million and it's very, very specific to Wildland Fire Management. There's a certain amount of dollars to that. There's a certain amount of dollars dedicated to infrastructure. I hope I don't get accused because I'm not talking about infrastructure in this answer — that somehow that's not a priority either — but the member opposite knows exactly how to get to there.

What I could do — maybe I'll start with the biomass strategies that the member opposite talked about and then I'll get back to the forest management in general.

As you know, Mr. Deputy Chair, our government continues to support the use of wood for heat and electricity and to develop local sources of renewable energy to meet our growing energy needs and to move the territory toward a sustainable and self-reliant energy future. When we're working with First Nation and municipal governments, Yukon businesses, and individual Yukoners to develop local opportunities related to the use of biomass, we have to rely on industry professionals who we have — and we have many of them here in the Yukon. This will reduce our collective greenhouse gas emissions and provide the means to diversify economies of Yukon communities. It's fantastic work, really. The Government of Yukon is working with the indigenous forestry initiative through NRCan to provide \$1.4 million in funding support of the exploration of biomass related to opportunities for First Nation governments. My goodness, we have an awful lot of very active First Nation communities and development corporations that are working on this file.

We're also working to support the uptake of biomass heating systems through an inclusion of heating system improvements, including the installation of biomass boilers. The \$17 million in the good energy commercial rebate program is a great example. Also to that end, the 2016 Yukon biomass energy strategy provides direction to the Government of Yukon for that continuing development of a sustainable forestry industry, reducing consumption of fossil fuels, the diversification of Yukon's economy — as I mentioned — but also the regulation of particulate emissions.

In addition to reducing the greenhouse gas emissions and also providing local economic development, the use of biomass for heat or electricity also supports job creation. It supports infrastructure renewal, improving local resilience to the impacts of climate change and to wealth retention in Yukon communities. There is great work going on by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources to accomplish some really neat projects here, working in partnership with First Nations as well.

I would note that, over the last three years, the Government of Yukon has worked with nine First Nation governments and one First Nation development corporation to undertake and complete 20 different projects, Mr. Deputy Chair, including community development planning, feasibility studies, and the installation of three biomass boilers in their communities. That is a lot of work. That is exponential growth compared to where we used to be in this particular department.

These initiatives include examples like the refurbishment of existing biomass district heating systems — owned and operated by the Kluane First Nation, for example — and also the installation of smaller boiler systems by the Carcross/Tagish First Nation, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, and the Ta'an Kwäch'an' development corporation as well — Da Daghay.

There is lots of work going on here, and I don't have a lot of time to go into it, because I know the member opposite wants me to speak about the forest management plans in general in different jurisdictions in the Yukon. I want to say as well that, in April of this year, the Government of Yukon co-hosted the first Alaska-Yukon Wood Energy Conference in Fairbanks,

Alaska — the first, and what a great partnership with a massive partner and a massive neighbour beside us.

It is interesting — I had a great conversation down in Watson Lake with an individual, Derek Loots, who is no stranger to the forestry industry. What amazing partnerships we have with First Nation groups that are transboundary. They don't see a line between a smaller investment in our forestry with a bigger investment that transcends Yukon and BC but is all within the traditional territory of certain transboundary First Nations. It is so great to see the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources moving on so many files, whether it be with our partners in Alaska, our transboundary First Nations, or associations here in Yukon.

The Government of Yukon has organized and led a tour of nine biomass operations in Yukon and Alaska by five Yukon First Nations, Government of Yukon staff, Government of Canada, and also private sector members. That is some fantastic work that is happening in the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources these days.

The Government of Yukon is also currently working with CanmetENERGY — that is the Government of Canada — the Alaska Energy Authority, and the Southeast Conference in Alaska and also just to organize a second Alaska-Yukon wood energy conference in 2021 — not a one-off. This is important work and we have to keep moving on this.

Just one more thing on the biomass strategy — and I could go on, because there is so much work going on in this department. Thank you to the public servants who are leading these files — it is such great work.

We are also, through Energy, Mines and Resources, working with Hvactech to explore the development of a market for combined heat and power by the private sector in Whitehorse — just fantastic. You know, as we look at more mines coming on line, a booming economy, a need for us to think outside the box — how important is this work? It is unbelievably important.

The member opposite talks about priorities. Finally, we are working on these things because these are priorities for this government. It is amazing work, and I want to again send out my appreciation to the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources not only for the work that they do as a government, but it is one thing coming in with a mandate for a whole-of-government approach, but to be countered by that on a public servant who says, "Yes, not only internally to government, but we want to see that whole-of-government approach to our partners in different governments and to our partners in the industry" — and to watch the public servants take this lead and run with it, it is fantastic to watch, and it is a humbling experience to be the Premier with such an amazingly dedicated team of public servants.

The member opposite was talking about specifically — I went on to talk about the good work in the Whitehorse-Southern Lakes area, but I will continue with the forest management planning, as he asked for, in the other jurisdictions.

With Dawson, there were a lot of collaborative efforts with the Dawson forest management planning team to implement a

forest management program. That is ongoing work right now within the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources — and that is the Government of Yukon, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, and the Dawson Renewable Resources Council. They did complete a timber supply analysis which will support the annual allowable-cut determination. That's some good, ongoing work.

When it comes to specifically the southeast Yukon, the Yukon government was engaged with Kaska representatives on a review of the draft plan in 2016, with funding provided under the framework agreement planning. The planning there stalled when parties began developing a work plan to outline steps and timelines to conclude a recommended plan, but the Government of Yukon concluded that it is not possible to continue with the existing process. There was an internal analysis, and that determined that it was unlikely that the draft plan would qualify, pursuant to section 14 of the *Forest Resources Act*, as it does not meet the consultation requirements or the common-law duty to consult with other First Nations or with transboundary First Nations within the planning boundary.

The preferred approach is to establish a new planning area for the purpose of developing a forest resources management plan under the act. More recently, though, the forest management branch has been in discussions with the Liard First Nation on a range of forestry issues, including concerns regarding past practices, potential impacts of timber harvesting — fuel abatement, for example — the pursuit of biomass heat, and participation in the *Forest Resources Act* reviewing process.

The Liard First Nation indicated their interest in establishing a forestry table to address these concerns at the government-to-government level — so good work happening there. The Liard First Nation, with Chief Morgan, indicated that it is seeking to move forward with forest management planning and also timber harvesting in a manner that respects community interests, and not only respecting community interests, but also making sure that it's environmentally responsible and also maintains — and this is of utmost importance — Kaska aboriginal rights and title.

The Government of Yukon and also the Liard First Nation are working toward establishing a funding agreement that supports participation in the *Forest Resources Act* review, forest management planning, and estimates of a forest table. A licence to harvest timber burned at Cache Creek was issued to the first Kaska development corporation, and that was this summer, in August.

The member opposite asked about Haines Junction when it comes to forest management planning. To note, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations and the Government of Yukon did sign a renewed forestry implementation agreement in April 2018. This agreement provides a forward-looking long-term focus for collaborative forest management within the traditional territory and builds on many successes that have been achieved in the region to date.

The Yukon government, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, and also the Alsek Renewable Resources Council are working together on implementing priorities on initiating the

annual allowable cut decisions, developing a monitoring program, and fuel abatement planning as well.

A timber supply analysis has been completed and the department — they met with Champagne and Aishihik First Nations to confirm the shared work plan priorities and to plan for this fall. That's some of the good work there and a little bit of an update for the member opposite.

Last but not least, when it comes to the forest management planning and an update for the member opposite — because I know he's interested in this file — the Teslin Tlingit Council is moving forward with a community biomass heating project that requires the implementation of that 2007 forestry resource management plan to secure a sustainable wood supply. On that, our government is working with the Teslin Tlingit Council to develop a timber harvest plan and to advance other forestry resource management plan implementation activities such as the monitoring program and the public consultation of the timber harvest plan. That ended June 17, 2019.

Again, to reiterate, it's great to see the good work being done by forest management planning through the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources — not to say that Wildland Fire Management has not also been a priority when we're talking about planning for our forests. But again, the member opposite has an opportunity when Community Services does appear here in Committee of the Whole on the *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — and of course, because there's no extra funding needed for the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, they're not up for debate in the Legislative Assembly at this time. But I'm happy to continue to answer questions on behalf of the department here in general debate.

Mr. Cathers: It's unfortunate — from the way the Premier began his response to my last question and the way he finished it — it seems that he really was not getting what I was saying. I will simplify it for him.

I am asking about harvesting the trees in a targeted manner so that they don't burn. That is primarily an Energy, Mines and Resources responsibility — not to take away from the good work done by Community Services' Wildland Fire Management branch, but if it gets to that stage, you already have a problem — you already have a fire.

We're talking about proactive work and an opportunity for the private sector as well as First Nation development corporations to do targeted harvesting of timber in and near communities based on a prioritized plan and then to use that for things, including biomass heating.

I'm going to move on to other topics, just in light of the time. I do have to point out that talking about talk and conferences and photo opportunities, and tours doesn't actually result in action on the ground, and we do need to get to the point of action happening. I would also note — so just moving on to other questions here that colleagues have asked.

The St. Elias school had, I believe, an RFQ put out a few years ago for biomass to heat the school. Nothing appears to have happened in that area, but now there's a tender out for a propane furnace to heat the school. Have they abandoned the idea of going with biomass, and if so, why? The same with regard to Watson Lake — I believe it was an RFQ or an RFP

type of process looking at biomass heating there that was out at one point and seems to have gone by the wayside. Has that been abandoned, or is the government proceeding with that?

I would just note that we have heard from the Yukon Wood Products Association contractors that they are frustrated by the lack of action in the area of biomass. I just have to point out that, while the Premier spent a fair bit of time talking about forest management plans, et cetera — and various matters covered by it — in looking at the plans that I have seen so far, there doesn't seem to be the focus that really should be there in terms of targeted harvesting for wildfire risk mitigation — not that there's no mention of it, but it just does not seem to be doing enough or moving quickly enough.

I will just leave that there, moving on to other areas. I'm just going to ask the Premier again for an update on more planning work in other areas of EMR that seem to be largely stalled. I'm going to begin in my riding with the Shallow Bay zoning discussions about potentially allowing subdivisions.

As the Premier probably knows and the minister will certainly know, there was a survey done in the tail-end of the time that we were in office asking property owners if they wanted to see rural residential lots be able to be subdivided. There was an extremely high participation rate from property owners. If memory serves, I believe it was around 79 percent who responded. There was clear interest. The majority wanted the ability to subdivide. While there were people who did not favour it, it was also quite clear from the results that the majority of property owners wanted subdivision of rural residential land — similar to what has occurred in the adjacent Mayo Road area, the Hot Springs Road area, as well as areas south of town and in the Ibex Valley area.

I am hearing frustration from constituents that it seems like that process has largely stalled. At the beginning of the summer, a letter was sent out to residents indicating that the land planner who was on it wouldn't be working on the file there, and they were not providing clarity about what would happen regarding the process. Can the Premier provide an update of what the status is of that process, when people will see some tangible results — including a proposal coming out of the committee that has been developed — and also when or if the government actually plans to amend the regulations?

The other one I would ask about is the Fox Lake local area plan. The planning process started, I believe, seven years ago. At the last public meeting I attended, there was very little sign of any actual progress. There was a discussion about what the area meant to people. I'm not saying that this had no value, but it didn't seem to be having any tangible results in that area — so if the Premier could provide an update on what the status of that is.

In recognizing, Mr. Deputy Chair, that our time is relatively short here this afternoon and in the interest of getting to questions that perhaps the Premier can reply and provide answers to — the sheep and goat control order is an area that — while noting that I recognize, as do my colleagues, and appreciate the importance of keeping our wild populations of sheep and goats disease-free and recognizing in particular the concerns around Movi — one concern that I've heard from

constituents, which is even acknowledged in the government's own documents regarding that, is that people feel that there wasn't a lot of consultation in developing the control order.

The control order provided a lot of power to the government, and then the details of that — the fencing requirements that people are being forced to pay for have been downloaded to them with a requirement that they have it in place by the beginning of this upcoming January, which effectively means, of course, that if you need to put in fenceposts, your deadline for installing those new fences is whenever the ground freezes hard in the fall. It may not be impossible, but it is certainly not practical to put in fenceposts after that. Recognizing that the government has paid for some of the costs of installing the fencing, what they haven't done is pay for the labour costs and people's time, which in some cases — as I have heard from constituents and others, including constituents of the Minister of Community Services — has posed a concern for people about their ability to actually comply with the order.

I'm just quoting from the government's own document — this being their "what we heard" document, which was actually after-the-fact consultation. They had issued the order and then they consulted. That "what we heard" document said on page 7: "We also heard that some groups felt frustrated by not being consulted in developing the control order or examining options before the control order was decided on as the approach. Some groups were surprised by the announcement of the control order and were worried about the lack of detail initially provided about how certain elements of the order would be implemented." Again, that is page 7 of the "what we heard" document that the government issued on, I believe, the engageyukon website, entitled "What we heard: Control order for domestic sheep and goats". Again, that stakeholder engagement was actually after the decision had been made, which is unfortunately becoming far too common with this government.

My question with that is: What have the impacts of that been? I know that I have heard from constituents and others who were concerned that they might not be able to comply with the order by the hard deadline set of January 1. They are concerned about the costs of the order, concerned about the requirements in the order — that if they weren't prepared to do the fencing — again, the fencing requirements themselves have not been clearly defined in the order. They are being decided by Energy, Mines and Resources.

We have seen a situation here where this order, signed and implemented by two ministers and, of course, completely up to the government to change or modify the order, including either extending its date or modifying certain provisions of it — the question is: How many farms have been impacted by this control order? How many have applied for funding and received funding?

How many farms, at the current time, are looking like they will not be able to comply with the fencing requirements of the control order and thus may be forced to destroy animals to comply with the control order on January 1? Does the Premier have an estimate of how many animals are likely to be killed if

the government doesn't modify the control order? To that end, as well, if there are animals that the owners are going to have to destroy because of the wording of the control order, is the government prepared to modify that control order to give them more time to comply with the provisions of it and not result in them having to destroy stock?

Mr. Deputy Chair, just noting the time that we're at, I would just add two final questions regarding that. I have heard concerns about the lack of flexibility of veterinarians working for government in attending people's farms to do testing, including people who have advised me that they have had to take time off work to comply with the testing requirements and the staff not being able or permitted to go out after-hours, apparently. I would also ask the Premier: Have there been any animals that have been destroyed as a result of the control order already that government has paid compensation for or will pay compensation for?

With that, Mr. Deputy Chair, seeing the time, I move that you report progress.

Deputy Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Cathers that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

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

Deputy Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Streicker that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Adel: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

The time being 5:32 p.m., this House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday.

The House adjourned at 5:32 p.m.

The following sessional paper was tabled November 7, 2019:

34-3-18

Yukon Heritage Resources Board Annual Report April 1, 2018 - March 31, 2019 (Dendys)

The following legislative return was tabled November 7, 2019:

34-3-8

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Mr. Istchenko related to a Ministerial Statement re Cannabis Yukon retail store closure (Streicker)

The following document was filed November 7, 2019:

34-3-21

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy, letter re (dated November 5, 2019) from Porter Creek Secondary School Gender and Sexuality Alliance to Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee, Minister of Education (White)



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 21

3rd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Tuesday, November 12, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
Don Hutton	Mayo-Tatchun

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King
Liz Hanson	Whitehorse Centre

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Dan Cable
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Tuesday, November 12, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I would like to ask my colleagues to help me in welcoming Sheri Blaker and Shauna Clare, both from the Department of Justice, who are joining us here today for the tribute.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any tributes?

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Make a Will Month

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government and the Third Party to pay tribute to Make a Will Month here in the Yukon Territory. Make a Will Month is an annual effort every November that encourages Yukoners to create a legally valid will. It is sponsored initially by the Department of Justice, and many of our officials work with the community on this effort during the month of November.

Dying without a will creates additional stress and confusion during a difficult time for our family and friends. Dying without a will is known as dying “intestate” and creates the need for government involvement in that process.

There are many reasons why having a will is very important, Mr. Speaker. Having a will helps your family and your friends understand your wishes and your preferences for funeral or service arrangements. It can also address who you want to take care of your surviving children, who will run your business, who gets your house or your property — and even plans for your pets — all so that disputes and confusion can be avoided. Leaving this information in your will lets your loved ones know your plans and your wishes.

The best way to consider a will is to ask yourself, “What do I want my family and friends to know?” When we are young, most of us do not think too much about our own mortality, but know that, no matter your age, people have complex lives — involving children, property, and other personal belongings — that are best served by having a will.

Thinking about how to distribute your worldly goods is easier than you think, and Make a Will Month — November — is an ideal time to start. Armed with good legal information, you can be well on your way to creating a will that is legally valid here in the territory. There are workshops happening in Whitehorse this month to help Yukoners gain important

information about making a will. These workshops will provide information on why you need a will, the will drafting process and costs, common myths about wills, and preparing wills, enduring powers of attorney, and advanced directives.

These workshops will be held on Wednesday, November 20, Friday, November 22, and Tuesday, November 26, all at the Whitehorse Public Library. There is no cost.

Yukon’s *Wills Act*, Mr. Speaker, has not been amended since it came into force in 1954. It is even older than me.

A review of the act revealed that there are some provisions which should be updated to reflect the needs of modern society and to keep pace with changes to legislation in other Canadian jurisdictions. Based on the review, our government is considering amendments and has launched a public engagement initiative.

We are seeking input on topics such as revising the formal requirements of wills to align with legislation in other Canadian jurisdictions; adding provisions related to common-law spouses, divorce, and separation; enabling courts to correct errors that save failed gifts when there is sufficient evidence that doing so would follow the testator’s intentions; and continuing to accept handwritten wills — all very important topics.

To get information and feedback on proposed amendments designed to modernize the *Wills Act*, an online survey will be available on engageyukon.ca until December 23, 2019. We invite and encourage all Yukoners to give their comments and feedback to the survey, which will be followed by a “what we heard” document. Other places where there is information about wills include the Department of Justice website and the Yukon Public Legal Education Association website known as ylea.com.

Planning for the future includes making a will, and Make a Will Month is designed to remind you and to help you get there.

Mr. Cathers: I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to recognize November as Make a Will Month, which was started in 2015 in an effort to make Yukoners aware of the value of the will and the difficulties that might arise for family members if someone dies without a will in place. This annual event promotes pre-planning in life to provide certainty and assurance after one’s passing.

A will is a written document that defines how you would like your assets dealt with after you have died and may address matters such as the guardianship of children and preferences around burial or cremation. The creation of a will may not be on the mind of every Yukoner, but it should be if you have not already dealt with this matter. It could mean peace of mind for your loved ones after you are gone and an easier transition at a difficult time. So write the will. Have a clear idea of what you would like to have done with your assets, how to deal with any debts, and what your family situation might look like.

As the minister noted, there is a standard acceptable format for wills in the Yukon, and there are resources available — as she outlined in her tribute — to help Yukoners develop a will for themselves. It is important to educate yourself on what that

should look like to avoid problems with the validity of your will.

I would like to thank all those taking time this month to educate Yukoners on the importance of making a will and helping them to get started and those who have taken the initiative to make their own.

In closing, I would just note that the recognition of this month and the promotion of making a will originated from an issue raised with me by a constituent several years ago, and I would like to thank the current and former staff at the Department of Justice, including those in this Chamber, for fleshing out the details of this idea and for making Make a Will Month something that happened then and here in this month, November 2019.

In recognition of Movember

Mr. Adel: I rise today on behalf of all MLAs and parties in the Chamber to pay tribute to Movember. This will be the third year that I have risen in the House to pay tribute to this very important cause. Movember started with a couple of friends in Australia. It has grown to be a worldwide movement supported by all genders to help encourage discussions around men's health.

It is great to see that we have local businesses finding ways to participate and support this cause. On my drive to work this morning, I was listening to *Game Time* on CKRW and it was great to hear Movember-themed questions.

I know that Coast Mountain has been issuing challenges to several local businesses on their Facebook page. They are selling Mo'staches for \$5 for the entire month of November, with all proceeds going to the Movember Foundation. They're encouraging people to participate by sharing pictures with the hashtag #BuyAMoSaveABro. It has been great to see the photos popping up on social media and see people of all ages and all genders participating in this movement to support men's health.

Last year, I participated in the Movember Make Your Move challenge. This challenge included walking 60 kilometres over the course of a month, which signifies the 60 men we lose to suicide each hour, every hour.

Movember has funded over 1,200 men's health projects throughout the world in the last 15 years. I hope that this tribute and this initiative helps to encourage men to talk openly about their health and to seek the appropriate care.

As I have shared with this House before, my father was a survivor of prostate cancer due to early detection, so this initiative is particularly important to me. It's one of the reasons I fundraise for Movember every year and why I participate also in the Ride for Dad.

Causes like Movember give us as parents the ability to start a dialogue with our kids about men's health issues — all health issues, really. It has encouraged me to have these very important discussions with my sons. I challenge everyone here to get involved and participate. There are many ways you can support the cause. You can find a friend who has a page on the movember.ca website and donate to their campaign or you can stop by Coast Mountain Sports and purchase a Mo'stache. I

have a spot myself where I have set a limit, and if I reach it, this luxurious mustache is leaving.

It's also great to share your support on social media using a #Movember hashtag to help spread the word. I encourage people to take time to check out all of the amazing work that this foundation has accomplished. You can visit their website, movember.ca, to learn more about this cause and how you can get involved.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Ms. Frost: I have for tabling the following document: the annual report and consolidated financial statements for the Yukon Hospital Corporation.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?
Petitions.

PETITIONS

Petition No. 1 — response

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am rising this afternoon in response to Petition No. 1.

The Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services Society is a legal entity separate and apart from its directors and members. So long as the society exists, so too do its debts and obligations, regardless of who makes up the board of directors and who the members are.

When a new board of directors of a society assumes office, it takes on the task of addressing the society's debts and obligations, but the new board members do not normally become personally liable for expenses incurred under the prior board. We recognize the challenge new board members face when coming forward to get a not-for-profit society back on its feet and we acknowledge and thank them for their commitment and efforts.

We encourage any new directors stepping into such a role to review past files and practices to understand the history, seek advice from legal counsel, and determine actions that lead toward a path forward.

For those who were directly involved in management of finances at the time, given potential creditor action available through the courts, it is always a good idea for those past directors to consult independent legal counsel to understand and further clarify any concerns related to personal liability.

Regarding funding agreements, Health and Social Services is doing its due diligence as the funder and continues to consider — with the assistance of legal counsel — the appropriate next steps regarding questions of past financial management.

We recognize and appreciate the important role that Many Rivers has played in the lives of Yukoners for many years. The Yukon government did attempt to assist Many Rivers in

returning to compliance with the *Societies Act*, including providing several additional months to submit audited financial statements and paying outstanding rent owing on Many Rivers' office spaces in three communities. We have met with Many Rivers to discuss their concerns and interests several times and we are willing to meet again.

Access to counselling services in the Yukon is vitally important. Following an expression of interest for outpatient counselling in Whitehorse, which included Many Rivers, we have provided funding for services through the Canadian Mental Health Association's Yukon division, as well as All Genders Yukon Society.

Health and Social Services has also expanded services through Mental Wellness and Substance Use in community hubs, as well as in Whitehorse. There are now 22 Yukon government positions supporting mental wellness and substance use in the territory. For contrast, there were two positions in 2016.

We look forward to seeing new supportive relationships and connections grow between Yukoners and the mental wellness supports that are being established. Each day, we strive toward our first priority of providing access to mental wellness supports and services that Yukoners need to live happy, healthy lives, while ensuring that we work in as transparent and accountable manner as possible.

Speaker: Are there any petitions to be introduced?
Are there any bills to be introduced?

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL

Bill No. 301: *Act to Amend the Taxpayer Protection Act* — Introduction and First Reading

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, I move that a bill entitled *Act to Amend the Taxpayer Protection Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Member for Lake Laberge that a bill entitled *Act to Amend the Taxpayer Protection Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 301 agreed to

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

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Mr. Adel: I rise today in the House to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House congratulates the Government of Yukon on the opening of the first Housing First project in the Yukon.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?
Is there a statement by a minister?
This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Yukon Water Board wetlands hearing

Mr. Kent: The CBC has obtained and released a letter from October 7 from the chair of the Water Board to the Premier. The letter indicates that the Yukon Water Board will be holding public hearings on wetlands. I quote from the letter: "The Board believes that there is a genuine interest in or concern about mining in wetlands and that the issue requires an examination of both individual and societal interests."

The mining community is concerned by the uncertainty that this creates. They wonder if this is a step down a road of even further limited mining activity.

These concerns are of particular concern in the Indian River valley, where placer miners are finding themselves overcome with an ever-growing sea of rules and regulations.

My question for the Premier, Mr. Speaker, is: Will this hearing interfere with the issuance of and conditions placed on water licences?

Hon. Mr. Silver: The Water Board did issue a letter to me on October 7, 2019, stating their intent to hold a public interest hearing on wetlands. There are five projects, I believe, currently for the Indian River wetlands that are currently in the water licensing process — also worth noting at this time. The letter did raise concerns from industry and current applications, as it is being interpreted as a request for the Yukon government to utilize its authority under the *Waters Act* to issue policy direction to the Yukon Water Board and for that direction to somehow halt the issuance of water licences in wetlands.

To be very clear, the Government of Yukon will not be issuing direction to the Yukon Water Board to halt or to freeze applications, nor will the Yukon government make orders that prohibit any applicants relating to the Indian River wetlands.

Mr. Kent: As I have said, we have heard from a significant portion of the mining community who is concerned about the growing uncertainty under this government. The requests for public hearings on all Yukon wetlands came from interventions on specific water licence applications.

Instead of saying that this is out of the scope of these specific water licence reviews, the Water Board has stated that it will start public hearings that could have negative impacts on the mining industry. The mining community, again, is concerned about the precedent that is being set by the Water Board starting to set policy direction on wetland use.

As the Premier mentioned, section 11 of the Yukon *Waters Act* allows the minister to give written and binding direction to the Water Board. We know that the Premier and his chief of staff had a private meeting with the chair of the Water Board on the evening of October 28. Did they discuss this issue and a path forward to end this uncertainty?

Hon. Mr. Silver: So, again, the board chair has confirmed to me and also to YG officials that the letter was not asking Yukon government to act or to issue direction to the board. In that, it is worth expanding that this government has issued a memorandum of understanding that clarifies the roles not only of me, but also of the chair, the board, and the secretariat to really help that process, to make sure that the reporting mechanisms are in place and that we are working

together in an obviously important — making the acknowledgment that again this is a quasi-judicial board that has its own rules and procedures — again, a good check-in with the chair to see that there's an opportunity for us to work more hand in glove in these processes.

The member opposite is making it look like a hearing is going to be something negative. I see it as a positive; I see it as a positive. Again, what the Yukon Water Board — well within their rules and procedures to do. Any opportunity for individuals to come together for clarity — whether that be technical or to clear the record when that record is being muddied — it's a good opportunity.

Mr. Kent: In that response, the Premier referenced the MOU that was signed with the Yukon Water Board on November 27, 2018, and again how that will bring certainty to the industry by clarifying the roles of the Water Board and the government.

I would ask the Premier to expand on how the MOU with the Water Board is helping to alleviate industry concerns over the announcement by the board that they will be holding public hearings on the use of wetlands.

Hon. Mr. Silver: What's important to note at this time is the integrity of the Water Board and the chair and the process in which we are making sure that water is being protected and used not only today, but for future generations as well. I do want to commend the Water Board for a really close working relationship with this government.

Again, in previous practices with previous governments, it seemed like a quasi-judicial situation was kind of — it really didn't necessarily help proponents get to that ability to open up mines, whereas what we have is an opportunity here to clarify roles, to make sure that the secretariat lives in that balance of being government employees but also being in that position to work with the chair, with the board and maintain that quasi-judicial nature.

Again, the Yukon government encourages the current applicants to work with the board and to provide information as required to ensure that applications continue to be deliberated and processed. Again, at this time, we do not have any intention of delaying the issuing of water licences and note that, in their letter, the Water Board intends to continue its deliberations on current applications as it has a statutory responsibility to do so.

Question re: Yukon Water Board wetlands hearing

Mr. Cathers: It is disturbing to hear the Premier's words here in the House. We have heard that the Water Board's October 7 letter to the Premier caught government and the industry off guard. We know that placer miners, including the Premier's own constituents, were definitely caught off guard and unhappy with this letter. Given that the government's MOU with the Water Board was meant to improve communication, this seems odd.

Can the Premier confirm if this letter caught the government off guard or if they knew it was coming in advance?

Hon. Mr. Silver: When we got the letter, we received the letter.

Mr. Cathers: The letter also states that interventions on specific applications requesting public hearings contain more than just requests for public hearings. They also requested that the board not issue any licences or placer projects in undisturbed Indian River wetlands until a hearing was held. I know that the placer miners were very unhappy with this letter.

Although the board does not have the authority to follow through with the request, they note in their letter that they can give a recommendation to the minister, and they did that. They recommended that the minister consider the government powers under section 32 of the act, which allow the government to put prohibitions in place for land use in specific wetlands and banning the issuance of water licences in certain areas. Presumably, the board is recommending this so that the government can prevent the issuance of licences until the hearing is complete. The Premier has a record of saying one thing to one audience and something contradictory to another.

I will ask him again: Will he unequivocally rule out the government using its powers under section 32 of the *Waters Act* to prohibit placer mining while the Water Board hearing is underway?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would urge the member opposite to listen to his colleague and listen to the answers that were given to the previous question. We are being asked the same question twice here, and we answered that question here on the floor of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, we have an amazing relationship with the Klondike Placer Miners' Association. We worked with them immediately when they had the concerns. I think that the big concern was the wording of the letter itself and just making sure that we clarified who had the roles, and I believe that this was worked out. I believe that there were meetings not only with me but also with the Water Board to clarify that. If the members opposite want to muddy those waters, that's up to them, but the concerns that were raised were alleviated at that time.

The Water Board — I really appreciate them passing on the information that other parties were copied on — the October 7 letter as well — and that includes Yukon First Nations and also the Yukon Conservation Society. Again, no muddied water — except from the Yukon Party.

On the topic of developing the Indian River watershed, the Yukon Water Board received an intervention from the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in that suggested that the board refrain from issuing licences to placer operations in undisturbed wetlands, and that's where the story started.

Mr. Cathers: Well, Mr. Speaker, unhappy placers miners who are worried about how they're going to feed their families are going to be surprised to hear the Premier standing up in this House and indicating that they're happy with this letter. The letter from the Water Board finishes by saying that "Additional information related to date, location and scope will be provided at a later date." This letter has created a lot of uncertainty and nervousness in the placer mining sector.

The Yukon placer mining community is worried that this hearing will be held in the middle of winter when a lot of their industry members may be out of the territory. Does the Premier have insight into when and where this hearing will be held and

what the scope of it will be? Has the government given any input into the scope of the hearing? Finally, why does the Premier support this letter, considering the fact that it has created uncertainty within the placer mining sector, including his own constituents?

Hon. Mr. Silver: That's a pretty weak narrative at best from the Member for Lake Laberge — again, putting words in my mouth. It's just despicable, really, to say that I said that the industry was happy with this letter. I didn't say that. Of course, they will go back and spread that, I guess. But again, we were very, very clear that, upon receiving the letter and the conversations — we were very thorough. We're having the exact same conversation here that I had with the placer mining association on the topic of developing the Indian River wetlands. We were very clear. The Yukon government does not intend to issue any orders prohibiting activities in the Indian River wetlands, nor does the Yukon government plan to issue any order to halt or to freeze current or future applications related to the Indian River wetlands.

The only misconceptions would probably be coming from the Yukon Party, which wants to split my community down the centre here for some kind of political gain.

Question re: Dental health care

Ms. White: When Tommy Douglas first proposed a universal health care program for all Canadians, dental care was included. We know that poor dental care can have serious long-term impacts on a person's health and well-being. Poor dental care can lead to the obvious cavities and gum disease, but it has also been linked to heart disease, cancer, and diabetes.

If a Yukon community does not have a resident dentist, coverage is provided to students up to grade 12 through a contracted dentist who makes visits to those communities. In Whitehorse, a student is only able to access dental care, from kindergarten through grade 8. After that it becomes the responsibility of the caregiver. For anyone without a dental plan, even a simple cleaning and checkup can easily cost hundreds of dollars. Dental fillings cost even more.

Never mind complicated dental needs — what are families without access to a dental plan supposed to do for simple things like cleanings and checkups?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to thank the member opposite for the great question. Oftentimes, as we look at the services that are provided to rural Yukon communities, dental care is one of the ones that is seen as a key priority — and certainly challenging, of course. We have had previously the dental therapy program that provided pre-kindergarten-type services and, in some communities, services to students who were older, of course — just because of limitations of direct access to a dentist. So that certainly is something that we are looking at when we look at collaborative care models in our communities and we look at the initiatives of dental care. We will continue to look to our health care providers to ensure that we bring the necessary care to our Yukon communities — certainly a priority for us — and we will continue to do that work.

Ms. White: I would like to point out that it is not just Yukon communities, but it includes Whitehorse — it is anyone who doesn't meet those current requirements.

Between grade 8 and turning 65, many Yukoners are left with no dental coverage. Governments and some employers are able to offer dental programs to their employees — and that is fantastic — but for those working in the service industry, the self-employed, those working at part-time jobs, and the working poor, without that additional coverage, there are no options.

The dental professionals recognize this need, with one local clinic offering free dental work once a year. People line up for this service hours in advance. The clinic is able to provide care for many individuals; unfortunately, many are turned away.

Mr. Speaker, when will this government look at the evidence and make the decision — an evidence-based decision, one could say — that all Yukoners should have access to universal dental care?

Hon. Ms. Frost: We are, of course, experiencing some capacity challenges — as noted by the member opposite — when we look at providing dental services throughout the Yukon and particularly looking at the needs of vulnerable community members. But we also look at the services that we provide to children from kindergarten to grade 8 in Whitehorse, and then of course, as I indicated earlier, throughout our communities to those who are in the higher grades.

When we look at services that we provide to Yukoners, we obviously take into consideration the specialized services that are lacking — and this is not new, Mr. Speaker. This has been in existence for quite some time. We will continue to work with the health care professionals. We will work with the dental association. We will work with our health care team to address the challenges.

At this point in time, I don't have the specific details because we are looking at a collaborative model. We are looking at our health care review. These are things that we will essentially make some adjustments on to better accommodate and align with service needs of Yukoners.

Ms. White: It is unfortunate that the government continues to act as if teeth are luxury bones and not critical to overall health. Seniors in the Yukon are eligible for a set of dentures once every five years or up to \$1,400 every two years for regular dental care. We know that maintaining your own teeth is the better option. For a person requiring a root canal and a crown these days, that will easily cost over \$3,000. I am sure that the \$1,400 is a welcome subsidy for seniors, but it still leaves many of them unable to afford the required dental care. For many, there are no other options.

Mr. Speaker, what are Yukoners without access to dental coverage supposed to do? Or should I ask: What are Yukoners without dental coverage supposed to do without in order to pay for the procedures?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Those are really great questions. I can attest to the fact that services are much needed in the Yukon — in particular, in my community. It is very difficult when the

services through NIHP provided to the clients who access that program are often challenged and compromised.

We look at consistency with what we deliver to Yukon through our health care coverage program. We look at the services provided for seniors. We have had a comprehensive review and discussion with seniors on what they would like to see changes on. We will work through the review process, recognizing that there are challenges. Granted, it will take some time, and I do acknowledge that. There are many challenges that we have before us when we look at collaborative care and comprehensive care for Yukoners. We will certainly take that under advisement and continue the good work.

Question re: YESAA and Yukon Water Board processes

Mr. Kent: On November 7 during debate in the Committee of the Whole, I asked the Premier about eliminating duplication between the YESAA and the Water Board processes. In response, the Premier said — and I quote: “What a great opportunity to take a look at trying to modernize an approach and a process to reduce red tape...” He went on later to say — and I quote again: “We are working as much as we possibly can to reduce red tape.”

Can the Premier tell us what red tape the Liberals have reduced over the last three years when it comes to the YESAA and Water Board processes?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, we have done much in this field, whether it be the MOU that we talked about with the Water Board or the mining regulatory process improvements — recognizing that a healthy and active mining sector is extremely important and is the major driver of our economy.

The Government of Yukon continues to strive to ensure mineral exploration and mining projects are permitted in a process that’s timely — and also ensuring that high environmental standards align with Yukon First Nations’ and Yukoners’ interests.

Part of that conversation we had on November 7 as well was — a lot of talk about the herculean task that my Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources had in front of him with a stalled process and with litigation. Dealing with that litigation — trying to get things back on track, re-establishing the Yukon Forum — there have been lots of processes that we’ve done to make sure that we repaired the damage that was created — in doing so, protecting the environment, but also making sure that we have an economy.

Mr. Kent: What I was looking for was for the Premier to tell us specifics about what he has done to reduce — over the last three years — the red tape when it comes to YESAA and the Water Board processes.

He referenced the MOU with the Water Board. Can the Premier explain how that MOU has reduced the amount of red tape for industry? Has it reduced any amount of paperwork or processes that they have to go through? Have approvals or inspections been streamlined — timelines going more quickly? Has it reduced their costs? I’m just hoping that the Premier can clarify how exactly that Water Board MOU has reduced any red tape for industry.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you to the member opposite for the question.

Again, having a better relationship in general and clarifying the roles of not only the secretariat but the board, the chair, and also the Premier has really allowed us to think outside of the box. We could talk specifically about the Victoria Gold process and the technical tables that were created at that time — to make sure that a lot of the conversations that are technical in nature had a place where folks can get together and talk about that. Then again, when the upcoming hearings come, the conversations are a little smaller. That will be one example where, in the past, a hearing table would have been considered to be quite an onerous task for a lot of proponents — again, something that might not be a great place for the technical conversations to be had — again, just being able to clarify that we have this technical table ability and thinking outside the box.

Another one — the public interest in the hearing that is coming up for wetlands — another great opportunity that maybe the opposition when they were in government never thought about or never thought was important. But getting people in the room to talk and to fully participate in the Yukon Water Board’s upcoming public interest hearing — that’s extremely important. That’s another example of more conversations creating less timely processes. That public hearing — it’s timely, it’s welcome, and we’re prepared to seek Yukoners’ views on that.

Mr. Kent: Hopefully in the Premier’s final response, he can tell us exactly what red tape has been reduced as a result of the Water Board MOU that he referenced in his first response.

Again, during debate on November 7, the Premier stated that his government has developed a new interpretation of the *Waters Act* and waters regulations. He suggested that this work to reinterpret the act and the regulations was done in coordination with the chair of the Water Board. His quote was that the chair coordinated — and I quote: “... the people who are in place now, including the secretariat, including the board, the good folks in the Executive Council Office — all working together on a new interpretation — a new interpretation of very solid regulations and legislation.”

Can the Premier tell us when this process began? Is there anything publicly available with respect to this new interpretation of the act and regulations? What has changed as a result of the Liberal government reinterpreting the *Waters Act* and the associated regulations?

Hon. Mr. Silver: It is no reinterpretation.

Mr. Speaker, what we can point to is the fact that we have the largest gold mine in Yukon history opening their doors under this government and with the work of the Water Board — again, in a process that helped to streamline the process. I don’t know if we would be here right now if the Yukon Party was in place with their old interpretations of what it meant to be quasi-judicial. I have heard the member opposite on the floor of the Legislative Assembly in the past talk about that old structure.

We are so happy that we are increasing the conduits of communication so that we actually have this ability to create

things like technical tables by working with the Water Board and following their lead in an extremely quasi-judicial role. Having that ability to redefine the roles and responsibilities allows this government and the Water Board and the whole process — that one-stop-shop process — to work with industry and to make sure that we did what the previous government didn't necessarily do, which was to be able to go through that process, amend that water licence, and have that first gold pour happening and, at the same time, the environment being protected.

Question re: Alaska Highway corridor upgrades

Mr. Hassard: I have some questions for the Minister of Highways and Public Works with regard to the government's plans for upgrades to the Alaska Highway corridor through Whitehorse.

At a briefing with the department, the Official Opposition was provided with updated maps for the work through the Hillcrest subdivision. On these maps, it shows that the government's current design plan is for a road to go through the existing Airport Chalet building. This would suggest that the government will have to expropriate this land and property.

Can the minister tell us if the government is currently in discussions with the owner of the Airport Chalet to discuss options for this property?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Yes, I can confirm that we are in discussions with the owner of the Airport Chalet.

Mr. Hassard: It is a rare opportunity that we see this minister provide us with an actual answer, so we appreciate it.

Moving down the Alaska Highway to in front of Super A in Porter Creek — the intersection there is very dangerous due to highway and local traffic, and almost every day, there are close calls between motorists and pedestrians at this section. Currently, the crosswalks are unlit and they do not signal when people want to cross the road. They are also damaged and as a result they are not properly marked. Further, the lack of a turning lane at this intersection results in many motorists passing vehicles on the right at high rates of speed. As a result, there is no safe way to cross the highway at this particular spot.

The Official Opposition has been calling for safety upgrades to this spot since 2017. So will the government agree to upgrade the crosswalk and add a turning lane at this portion of the Alaska Highway next summer?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I appreciate the question this afternoon on improvements to the Alaska Highway. When this government took office, we inherited a twinning project, Mr. Speaker, that was worth hundreds of millions of dollars and was going to go for 40 kilometres from the south Klondike Highway all the way to the north Klondike Highway.

We had heard the public opposition to that plan and we stopped it. That means that there is no longer a twinning project going ahead. So, we have moved now to safety improvements along the Alaska Highway. We have just done Range Road. We have a crosswalk in place there that is going to assist residents in that region who are trying to get down to the Black Street stairs and others.

We are also going to improve the highway from that area right through to the Beringia Centre, and that is another big project. We plan to begin that next year. We have some exciting announcements with the community about that and I am very excited about that as well.

Beyond that, Mr. Speaker, we have safety improvements along the entire Alaska Highway that will have to be addressed. We are going to do those in a thoughtful manner, using traffic data and money.

As soon as we have those things prioritized, we will do them.

Mr. Hassard: I was quite excited there — I thought maybe we will get two answers out of this minister — but darn. Oh, well.

I would, however, Mr. Speaker, encourage the minister to actually read the report that he was just talking about.

But another dangerous section of the Alaska Highway corridor through Whitehorse which requires work is the section just south of the south access near Yukon Yamaha where the Standard buses turn in and out. This area currently has no turning lane for the buses, but with the growing traffic pressures in that area, it means that this section of the road is becoming very dangerous as motorists try to pass the buses on the right as traffic backs up. We have asked the government in the past to install a turning lane on this stretch of road. So far, the government has resisted. So, I'm wondering if the minister would commit to upgrades to this section of the Alaska Highway next summer.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I thank the member opposite for his question and also for his really interesting word choice. I think he actually put in a time — next summer, I think he said — will you please do the Robert Service Way intersection next year?

Well, Mr. Speaker — again, there are an awful lot of safety improvements that need to be done along the Alaska Highway. There are an awful lot of access points to the highway that really shouldn't be there that have been long-ignored — material in the right-of-way that has long been ignored. We're dealing with all of these issues with a thoughtful and methodical approach. We will continue to address them. We will do them based on the data that we have and the budget that we have to make sure that these are done so that the travelling public along the Alaska Highway corridor have a safe road — because it is one of the busiest highways anywhere in northern Canada, and we want to make sure it's safe. We are going to continue that work over the coming years, Mr. Speaker, just as we have in the last three.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

Notice of government private members' business

Hon. Ms. McPhee: 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, November 13, 2019. They are Motion No. 60, standing in the name of the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, and Motion No. 27, standing in the name of the Member for Copperbelt North.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 5: *Liquor Act* — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 5, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Streicker.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I move that Bill No. 5, entitled *Liquor Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation that Bill No. 5, entitled *Liquor Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am pleased to speak to Bill No. 5, the *Liquor Act*, at third reading. As we discussed at second reading and in Committee of the Whole debate, the overarching principle we want to bring to the new act — as we were also directed to do so by citizens — was to recognize and incorporate a social responsibility mandate.

Yukon citizens were clear in telling us that economic opportunities are important and that we must also be mindful of the need to reduce alcohol-related harms and to support at-risk individuals. We believe the new act has achieved an important focus on both.

I will reiterate some of the social responsibility elements in the new act. They include: moving from a permissive consumptive model to a prohibitive, no-public-drinking model; defining social responsibility for the Liquor Corporation; requiring all individuals who sell or serve liquor to take mandatory server training; continuing clear enforcement provisions and penalties — for example, pertaining to selling or serving liquor to minors; providing greater flexibility around how intoxicated individuals are supported, which includes working with our partner departments, governments, and organizations on how we can help to remedy the landscape; requiring the Yukon Liquor Corporation to actively support public awareness initiatives pertaining to responsible liquor consumption and the legal distribution and sale of liquor; insisting that advertising and marketing methods must comply within specific advertising parameters such as those outlined by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission; and entrenching relevant considerations and further regulation-making authorities that will help to refine how the board and president can determine how and where liquor service is provided.

Besides incorporating stronger elements of social responsibility measures, the new bill: has a transparent structure that echoes the *Cannabis Control and Regulation Act*; clarifies roles and responsibilities for the board, corporation, and enforcement bodies; establishes an independent liquor licensing board which is arm's length from the corporation; and updates the laws around the legal importation, distribution, manufacturing, possession, consumption, and sale of liquor.

The bill also supports local businesses, licensees, and our clients by: streamlining similar business models under a single

licence type and enhancing the number of years for a licence; introducing a reduced number of license classes, from 13 to five classes; providing new event-type permits from two classes to five classes that reflect the needs of Yukon citizens; formalizing one permit type for industrial and scientific purposes; strengthening licensing renewal and permitting processes; and recognizing enforcement needs and practices of the industry.

During second reading debate in Committee of the Whole, I provided an overview of the public and advisory group engagement that supported the development of this act, starting almost two years ago. We believe that this thorough engagement process provided individuals, organizations, businesses, and governments across the territory with the opportunity to voice issues important to them and helped direct us as to how they wanted the liquor regime to be improved. We are confident that the information and ideas brought to the table have been incorporated wherever possible and strengthen the bill in front of us.

In conclusion, the government is pleased to bring forward the proposed *Liquor Act*. We believe that the new act reflects what Yukoners told us during the public and stakeholder engagement process. We also believe that the legislation responds to Yukoners' requests for establishing a stronger social responsibility role in helping to reduce alcohol-related harms and also provide economic opportunities for local businesses.

I would like to sincerely thank all Members of the Legislative Assembly for their input on the new *Liquor Act*. As we finalize drafting the regulations, I am confident that the new regime will take us forward as a society by contributing to our economic growth and will do so in a socially responsible manner.

Mr. Istchenko: I rise to speak to third reading of Bill No. 5, the *Liquor Act*. Mr. Speaker, we have spoken about a number of concerns raised within the body of this legislation.

I want to raise a question about something that the Minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation said during the reading — and I quote: “The bill moves much of what is in regulations under the previous act into new legislation, resulting in a more robust permitting and licensing regime.” He goes on to say, “The bill provides clear enforcement guidelines and realigns the legislation to meet the needs of enforcement bodies and current practices. These changes also incorporate various methods of enforcement and compliances such as the ability to create escalating penalties for offences and to issue telewarrants and tickets with a clear appeal process for licensees.”

I have two issues to raise with respect to this statement. First, peace officers or inspectors do not issue telewarrants as an escalating penalty. Telewarrants are tools for those engaged in the enforcement of this act to gain judicial authorization — for example, to gain entry into a private dwelling. A warrant or a telewarrant is definitely not a punitive sanction, as the minister alluded to. Then, to continue with the minister's statement, he also said — and I quote: “New enforcement

processes within the bill will also benefit both the public and licensees. Licensees will be able to allow an individual who is intoxicated but not engaging in disorderly or violent conduct to remain in a licensed premise if it mitigates risk to the individual's health or safety. In simpler terms, this means letting the customer sober up with a cup of coffee if, for example, it's cold outside." To this statement, I want to point out that, after doing a little research, the scientific and health literature has proven that coffee does not sober someone up. Coffee is factually known as a stimulant, so when a person drinks coffee after drinking alcohol or liquor to intoxication, it can trick the body. This can make people feel like they are closer to being sober than they really are because the coffee covers up the alcohol intoxication. I hope that the act is going to be easily read and understood by those required to read and understand it. As I mentioned, the minister's interpretation and reiteration of certain areas of the act have left Yukoners with a number of additional questions.

Those who are to be relaying information to the public should stick to the information contained within the act and not try to simplify it into plain language. In this case, it appears that trying to explain has led to some problematic statements.

Another statement made by the minister during second reading is this — and I quote: "A comprehensive list of relevant considerations is clearly noted, which includes the character and fit of not only the licence applicant but also the proposed management of the licensed premises." In the interpretation of Bill No. 5, relevant considerations in relation to an applicant or a licensee — it speaks to the extent to which the applicant and the directing mind of the applicant are: "(i) financially responsible, and (ii) otherwise of good character and fit to keep and operate the premises and to be a licensee or a directing mind of a licensee..."

I would argue that the terms "financially responsible" and "good character and fit" must either be defined in the act or defined definitely in the subsequent regulations. I would also encourage the minister to consult the public on the regulations — I think this is really important — and also to ensure that he provides direction to those involved in the process of drafting regulations to make the regulations airtight so that they are not open to abuse and to ensure clear definitions are made when they are required.

Thank you to all those who worked on this legislation. As the minister said, there was a lot of work on this. It is no easy job and there have been some good additions and clarifications made. A few areas remain within question, and I have highlighted those. So I hope that the changes contained here end up improving life for Yukoners and Yukon businesses in the long run. I am in no place to say whether issues will arise from the concerns that we have raised here in the House, but my hope is that, if they do, they will be quickly fixed by the government.

So, once again, thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to speak to this, and I will sit down.

Ms. Hanson: In rising to speak to the third reading of Bill No. 5, the *Liquor Act* — at the outset, I would just like to

say that I thank the minister for engaging in fairly thorough conversation during the second reading of this and his officials, of course, for supporting him during that.

The NDP will support the passage of this bill, but we will put on record our continuing concern about a number of elements that are contained in both the legislation and the assumptions inherent in the comments made by the minister at third reading.

The first is that we questioned at quite a bit of length, as this bill was being debated, the whole notion of social responsibility. I will say it again: It is one thing to use the language of social responsibility, but it is very difficult to see, in this legislation, exactly how that gets carried forward in any real way. When we pressed on that with respect to the sections of the act that speak to social responsibility — again, nothing that could clearly say, "This is what social responsibility means" — other than a bit of funding going toward some activities, ancillary to what the rest of government is doing. The issue with respect to social responsibility clearly goes to the kind of enabling language that opens up the sale of alcohol from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m., as opposed to saying, in a socially responsible way, "Would a society be saying that is how we demonstrate social responsibility?" — in terms of more opportunities for — and we raised this in the context, Mr. Speaker, as you will recall — when the government had a choice with respect to the governing of the times of sale of cannabis, for example — another intoxicant — they chose to put certain parameters around it — but chose not to with alcohol.

So, it seems to me that the emphasis is not on social responsibility in this context. It is more on the private market to generate more wealth for certain sectors of the society.

The other part of the legislation that we will continue to put emphasis on — and we will be expecting to see a demonstration of difference as opposed to a continuation of the same — is, as we debated last week or discussed last week — our surprise to see — notwithstanding the discussion about the incidents that arose in 2008 and then in 2010 with Dr. Beaton and Chief James Allen's report on the acutely intoxicated persons at risk report — the notion that still is contained in this legislation that criminalizes people for being acutely intoxicated or intoxicated to the point where they are taken into custody as opposed to being offered options with respect to detoxifying — their being placed in an arrest processing unit which is part of the correctional facility and part of the correctional system. Beaton and Allen were absolutely clear about that. It was something the previous government fell into one camp on, and this government is still falling into that camp, that those people — and as Beaton and Allen — and I read it out — they talked about people who are most vulnerable ending up in the APU and they are probably not you or me — because you could probably get a call and get a ride home and I could do that too — so it's a real concern for us.

We do not see how the provisions of this legislation have changed that direction or that path in terms of — and we talked in this Chamber as well about options. There are other legislative models that have been chosen around this world,

including in Canada, in terms of how we deal with people who are intoxicated as opposed to involvement with the legal system — pointing out, yet again, that just because somebody is drunk, that doesn't mean they are a criminal — because that would probably make criminals of most Yukoners.

The other part of the legislation that we still would — and we will look to the regulations and there is so much that, as with most of the legislation — all of the legislation — so much that has been brought forward to date, so much has been hoisted over into regulations, and the challenge that we face is that there is no timeline for regulations to give effect to this legislation. We would be urging the government to bring those forward.

The other part is the open-ended parameters with respect to privatization of alcohol sales in this territory. The legislation clearly is leaning that way, but saying, “But not under this minister...” — well, that's great, but that's not what the legislation says. This minister may have certain views about privatization and is not leaning that way, and you can make choices as government to indicate where your political and philosophical leanings are. I would say that the emphasis here — as we've heard in this Legislative Assembly before from government members opposite and ministers opposite — is that the private sector should be moving in a number of current public service areas that are offered by the public sector for the benefit of the public.

We will be looking very carefully at the timelines and the process of developing the regulations and then, over time, to see whether or not the minister's interpretation with respect to social responsibility — absent any clear mention in the legislation with respect to how government is operating to address the decriminalization or non-criminalization of people because they're intoxicated in terms of what this legislation provides for — as well, the issues with respect to increased trends toward privatization by government.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on third reading of Bill No. 5?

If the member now speaks, he will close debate.

Does any other member wish to be heard?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would like to thank the Member for Kluane and the Member for Whitehorse Centre for their very specific comments here at third reading.

First of all, I thank them as well for their constructive dialogue during second reading and Committee of the Whole. I will try to provide a few responses to the comments that I heard, but overall, let me say that I respect the concerns as they were raised and I will do my best to address them.

First of all, I thank the Member for Kluane for talking about plain language or a thing that's accessible for Yukoners. I have given that direction to the Liquor Corporation — that, to accompany this work as we move along, we definitely want to make sure that it's accessible for not only our licensees but the public as well so that they can understand what's going on generally at a high level in the act.

I also agree that we will want to consult with the public on regulations, and we have already begun that work. We started it already with the advisory group, and we will continue.

To the Member for Whitehorse Centre and her interest in seeing this move forward — I don't want to say “quickly”, but with intention and as soon as possible. I completely agree. We have begun that work already.

If I gave the impression — I don't ever want to come across as a medical expert; I am not. I will look back at the words that I used when I was speaking about someone who may be intoxicated but is acting calmly — not asking them to leave. I think that the thing that helps people to sober up is time, so that's how I understand it. I am not trying to suggest that coffee neutralizes the effects of alcohol. That is not what I intended to say — so my apologies if I did. I do want to say that, if there is someone and we can help give them the time to sober up, we want to allow our licensees to support them in doing so.

When I talked about telewarrants, et cetera, I don't think that I was talking there about the escalation of responses starting from a warning. I can point to clauses 52 and 53. That is where we have the escalations, so you could start off with a variation on the conditions of the licence. You could move to a monetary penalty and then go to a suspension of the licence for a period of time. That is where we are talking about the escalation.

I thank the Member for Whitehorse Centre for talking again about the importance of social responsibility and where we are going to see some of that. I did try to give examples — when we get to regulations — where some of that will be. I just want to emphasize the point — there was a reference again to people who are intoxicated. First of all, there's nothing in here that talks about intoxication as being anything criminal.

We do talk about — and I am just getting the language here, Mr. Speaker. If someone is intoxicated and also has the potential to cause injury to themselves or others and is a danger or disturbance to others, then they can be taken into custody, but it is not criminalizing it.

Again, I agree that the comments that were made during Committee of the Whole — that custody, at times, has that effect, and that is why we will continue to work with the Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Social Services to find an approach that is reflective of the spirit that was there in the Beaton report.

Again, I agree with all members here when they say that they are supportive of the act, but still have questions and want to see how these issues unfold. I remain open to being in dialogue with not only the members of the opposition, but the Yukon public as this bill moves forward and once we get into regulations.

Again, I thank all members for their helpful comments as we work through the act.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 18 yeas, nil nays.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.

Motion for third reading of Bill No. 5 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 5 has passed this House.

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Mr. Hutton): Order, please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Motion re appearance of witness**Committee of the Whole Motion No. 1**

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move:

THAT from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 12, 2019, Maxwell Harvey, Chief Electoral Officer, appear as a witness before Committee of the Whole to discuss matters relating to Bill No. 4, *Act to Amend the Elections Act*.

Chair: It is moved by Ms. McPhee that from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 12, 2019, Maxwell Harvey, Chief Electoral Officer, appear as a witness before Committee of the Whole to discuss matters relating to Bill No. 4, *Act to Amend the Elections Act*.

Mr. Cathers: While we do agree with the value of having the Chief Electoral Officer come into the Legislative Assembly, recognizing the fact that, for many of the independent officers, there has been an interest in increased accountability to the Legislative Assembly, to simply limit that to the *Elections Act* would leave out several other important matters related to the conduct of that office. So, we will be moving an amendment to the motion that is just in the process of being reviewed by the Clerks right now — since the government, of course, as the minister knows, did not share a copy of their motion with us beforehand.

The areas that I would suggest — that our caucus would suggest — should also have consideration related to the ability of the Elections Office to be ready for the next election, including the financial needs of that office, as members will be aware — but until we have passed a motion expanding the review of this, I may be somewhat limited in talking about matters that occur in Members' Services Board. I will simply say that, as members know, there is a request from Elections Yukon for resources for the upcoming fiscal year and that members of this House have some questions related to those financial needs — so recognizing the importance, of course, of financial accountability, but also of wanting to be sure that we are in a situation where the Elections Office is fully ready to run the next election. That is something that is, of course, important to all members regardless of the differences that we may have on other matters or the vision of how to get to that point.

That includes as well the resources required to update the register of electors. As members know, under the current *Elections Act*, there are provisions of that act relating to the list of electors that are not currently being followed as envisioned by that act. The act envisioned, in section 49.10, Mr. Chair — if members will just bear with me, I'll make reference to the specific section.

Under section 49.10 of the current *Elections Act*, which is found on page 37 of that bill, there's a requirement for the Chief Electoral Officer to provide elections lists to each registered political party and to each Member of the Legislative Assembly. As envisioned in that section and outlined in that section, there's a very specific requirement that those political parties and Members of the Legislative Assembly receive a copy of that list within 30 days after the second anniversary of the return to writ for the general election and at least once before each of the third, fourth, and fifth anniversary. That, of course, is section 49.10(1)(e), recognizing that undoubtedly there are reasons why the vision outlined in that section of the law has not been followed. I do think that it's very important that the Legislative Assembly — if we're hearing from the Chief Electoral Officer — has the opportunity to discuss that area, to discuss why it has not been possible to share the lists as envisioned by that section of the act with each registered political party and each Member of the Legislative Assembly — and, again, Members of the Legislative Assembly, under that section of the act, were to receive only the list of electors for their electoral district, not for the entire territory.

Because of that, I think that matter in particular is one where we do require some discussion and where it warrants the Members of the Legislative Assembly asking the Chief Electoral Officer for an explanation of why the vision outlined in that section has not been followed and to understand what steps are being taken to ensure that they are complied with in the future as well as to understand, as it relates to the financial resources of his office — considering that there's an outstanding request from the Chief Electoral Officer for budgetary resources for the next fiscal year, which is currently within the process.

If the financial resources are having an impact on the ability of the office to fulfill the vision outlined in that section of the act, I think that is something that is important for all Members of the Legislative Assembly to understand so that we can understand it — both in the Assembly and in discussions with Members' Services Board — and so that we are informed by that information from the Chief Electoral Officer, because otherwise, we potentially have a catch-22 situation where the Chief Electoral Officer may be requesting increased resources to achieve the vision that is outlined in the law, and potentially the financial resources could be the issue at hand.

As well, there are other matters related to what the office might be requested to do, depending on decisions of the government and the Legislative Assembly, that warrant further discussion.

So, with the assistance of the Clerks — and I thank them for that help as we respond to a motion that we just learned of when the Government House Leader read it — or just learned of the specific wording of it, I should say, when the Government House Leader read it.

Amendment proposed

Mr. Cathers: I move:

THAT Committee of the Whole Motion No. 1 be amended by inserting “: (1)” after the phrase “relating to” and inserting after the words “*Elections Act*” the following:

- “(2) financial needs of Elections Yukon;
- “(3) resources required to update the register of electors;
- “(4) compliance with the *Elections Act*; and
- “(5) public consultation regarding significant changes to the *Elections Act*.”

I will send that in to the Table now. I am sure that copies are in the process of being developed, and I would just beg the indulgence of the House, since we were not provided a copy of the Government House Leader's motion until she read it, to allow a few moments for those copies to be distributed.

Chair: The amendment is in order.

It has been moved by Mr. Cathers:

THAT Committee of the Whole Motion No. 1 be amended by inserting “: (1)” after the phrase “relating to” and inserting after the words “*Elections Act*” the following:

- “(2) financial needs of Elections Yukon;
- “(3) resources required to update the register of electors;
- “(4) compliance with the *Elections Act*; and

“(5) public consultation regarding significant changes to the *Elections Act*.”

Mr. Cathers, you have 12 minutes and 26 seconds remaining.

Mr. Cathers: I don't intend to use it. I would just like to thank the Clerks for their assistance in doing this amendment to the motion on the fly since we were responding to a motion from the government that we had not seen a copy of before this.

I would just like to note that, as I outlined, the issues that we would also like to ask the Chief Electoral Officer about include those financial needs of Elections Yukon outlined in my proposed amendment. Again, without compromising Members' Services Board discussions and their confidentiality, members will be aware that there is a budgetary request this year, as there is every year, from Elections Yukon. There were some additional resources requested by Elections Yukon that, I think it's fair to say, some Members of the Legislative Assembly have some questions about, and we might benefit from hearing an explanation from the Chief Electoral Officer of what resources he sees as necessary for the upcoming fiscal year and why he believes those resources are required.

This also included the request to broaden the motion to discuss the resources that may be required by Elections Yukon to ensure that they are able to update the register of electors as well as the matter related to compliance with the *Elections Act* itself.

As I noted in my introduction, the vision that was outlined in the current *Elections Act* under section 49.10 includes a requirement for a list of electors to be given to “... each registered political party...” for each electoral district in the territory, as well as to “... each member of the Legislative Assembly, the list of electors for their electoral district...”, and that was required to be provided with — the legislated timelines are 30 days after the second anniversary of the return to the writ for a general election — which in layman's terms is the date when the election is certified just after election day — so it's just after the second anniversary of the election of government. Of course, the last territorial election was in 2016. So, the vision outlined in section 49.10 does speak to Members of the Legislative Assembly and each political party receiving copies of the list of the electors shortly after the second anniversary of the last election, which was in November 2018, and we still have not received that list. As well, we should have received an update to that list, according to section 49.10(1)(e), before the third anniversary of the last territorial election, which of course just occurred.

Recognizing that there may be a reason why that vision has not been fully complied with and recognizing that another section speaks to how, if there have not been changes to the list, a new list doesn't have to be provided, we simply believe that it is important to ask for a fulsome explanation from the Chief Electoral Officer about what prevented the vision from being achieved and what resources may be required in the next fiscal year to ensure that the vision is achieved.

With that, Mr. Chair, I will conclude my comments and hope to have support for this from all Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Ms. Hanson: In speaking to this proposed amendment, I have a couple of comments. One is that I think that, if there is an intention to request something other than asking an Officer of the Legislative Assembly to speak to this Assembly on a matter other than the *Elections Act* — which is what we anticipated when there were, as I understand it, discussions among members — between parties — about the idea of having a more productive conversation about legislation that emanates from an independent office of the Legislature, not promoting or perpetuating the notion that the *Elections Act* is a government bill.

This is not supposed to be a government bill. It is supposed to be a bill that has been developed in conjunction with all parties and brought forward to this House. What we have said before is that this Legislative Assembly is clearly struggling with understanding and evolving toward mature committee structures. I don't see this as a mature motion, quite frankly. I think that it is disrespectful of the Chief Electoral Officer to ask him to come and speak on matters other than the *Elections Act*. There are substantive matters to be dealt with, with respect to both the amendments that are being proposed as well as the many amendments that the Chief Electoral Officer has put before the respective committee and that need to be dealt with. As I said in speaking to this the other day, there are some substantive matters that we need to find a way to move forward on with the Chief Electoral Officer. I find it kind of surprising that members of Members' Services Board — which I am not a member of — I am aware that there are weird discussions that go on in that venue and that they are somewhat arbitrary with respect to reviewing the budgets of offices. Whether you think that you would have that more mature, more balanced, more nuanced, or more objective discussion on those budget matters in here — I rather doubt it. I don't think that this is place to have it.

I do think that there needs to be a full, objective consideration of the budgets and the needs of our independent officers of this Legislative Assembly to fulfill the objectives that they have under their legislation and their mandate, but I thought the purpose of the event this afternoon, of the appearance before this Legislative Assembly, was to ask the Chief Electoral Officer to speak to the *Elections Act* amendments that are being put forward to us this Sitting and to outline for us those that we should anticipate coming at us fairly quickly. That, of course, does not obviate the need for discussion in another venue about the financial requirements for that office to fulfill its obligations to the citizens of Yukon, to ensure that the *Elections Act* is the most robust that it can possibly be, to ensure that our democracy is functioning under the rules that we have established as a Legislative Assembly — not as the Government of Yukon, but as the Legislative Assembly.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I certainly echo some of the comments made by the Member for Whitehorse Centre. These are important issues being brought up by the Member for Lake

Laberge, but they're not issues that can be addressed today. It has been very clear in the conversations that the Chief Electoral Officer would be invited to the floor of the Legislative Assembly to answer questions in relation to his recommendations regarding the *Elections Act*, which is Bill No. 4. Frankly, I think that it would be unfair and irresponsible for us as members of this Legislative Assembly to expect him, with less than one-hour's notice, to come here and basically prepare to speak to what is by virtue of the amendments to this motion, literally questions that are essentially everything about everything that he is required to do in his role. That is simply not what he was invited here to do. I think these are valid questions. They are probably all questions that many of us have — topics that many of us have questions about, but to do this when it was not the intention today is simply unfair to one of the House Officers here.

I will be extremely careful with respect to the issues on the budgetary comments made by the Member for Lake Laberge. I think he has classified them as "outstanding financial resource issues". I happen to be a member of the committee he's discussing — as is he. I'm pretty sure his memory will serve him that this matter was very recently discussed and voted on by the members of this Legislative Assembly who are given the responsibilities to do that at Members' Services Board. Frankly, having that added as one of the items on the list here as an amendment to this motion is — I would say, Mr. Chair, is trying to do through the back door maybe what you couldn't do through the front door. As we all know, that's not on — it is the responsibility of Members' Services Board and the all-party committee to discuss those items. I'm not saying there aren't valid questions about them; they're just not here in relation to this motion.

The conversations between House Leaders and the three parties that are represented in this Legislative Assembly were that he would be invited for the purposes of talking about the recommendations that he has made to the *Elections Act*, which, of course, come through a conversation with Members' Services Board. They are introduced here as part of a bill by the government because government introduced the bills, not because they are not supported by all parties through a process before it gets here. It is certainly open for debate once it is here on the floor of this House, which it is. All in all, as a result of the changes that are suggested, the scope of what the Chief Electoral Officer has been asked to prepare for today and, frankly, the questions regarding his recommendations to changes to the *Elections Act* are captured in the original motion. As a result, we won't be supporting the amendments made on the floor of the House.

Mr. Cathers: It's unfortunate that both the —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Chair: Mr. Streicker, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I just want to be clear that, if Mr. Cathers gets up, this will be the last speaker on the amendment.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Streicker: No? We're in Committee of the Whole — understood.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Cathers: I would just note, with regard to the comments made by the Government House Leader as well as the Member for Whitehorse Centre, it's unfortunate that there has been some personalization of debate in here. The suggestion that somehow the amendment that we're bringing forward is disrespectful to the Chief Electoral Officer — well, Mr. Chair, nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, we're proposing providing an opportunity for the Chief Electoral Officer to talk about other requirements related to his office, including the financial request from Elections Yukon for the next year. To suggest, as the Government House Leader did, that we're somehow unfairly putting the Chief Electoral Officer on the spot, I would remind the member respectfully that the Chief Electoral Officer knows what was submitted in his budget request. I'm sure he understands what was contained in the budget request and can speak to the items that are in there — perhaps not in as much detail as he could with, say, three weeks' notice of an appearance, but I'm sure that he is quite capable of speaking to the budget request that he signed off on, which has not been concluded in terms of its detail since, as the Government House Leader knows, until Management Board approves the budget for the year and until the budget is tabled in the Legislative Assembly, that budget could still be subject to change.

For members to suggest that amending the motion to allow the Chief Electoral Officer to elaborate on the financial needs of Elections Yukon and to elaborate on what resources he and his office may require to update the register of electors — I am trying to think of a polite and parliamentary term, Mr. Chair, but I would say that it is quite hard to believe that the Chief Electoral Officer would not be fully capable of discussing, in some detail, a budgetary request that he had made and of describing — at least in general terms — the requirements that he would foresee for the upcoming year.

As members know, there has been discussion of other matters which could potentially impact the operations of Elections Yukon discussed here in this Assembly, and gaining the Chief Electoral Officer's thoughts on that would have some benefit.

I should note, last but not least, the fact that the vision currently outlined in the law — in section 49.10 of the *Elections Act* — that envisions providing Members of the Legislative Assembly and political parties with a list of electors just after the second anniversary of the last election and at least once before the third anniversary — since that vision has not been followed — I again want to make it clear that, because of another provision in there that speaks to — if the list is not changed, a new list doesn't have to be provided. I am not saying that the office is not in compliance with the law, but it is not in compliance with the vision that was outlined in the *Elections Act*. I think that for us to understand why this has occurred and what is required to provide the Elections Yukon office with sufficient resources to achieve the vision outlined in the

Elections Act is indeed a topic worthy of conversation. Since it relates to budgetary needs, I would assume, Mr. Chair, that the connection between that and the budget request made by Elections Yukon would indeed allow the officer to elaborate on that.

I also, just want to, in closing, remind members that they seem to be selectively remembering history in talking about the process for developing the *Elections Act* and appearances here. In the past — in fact, the last time that the *Elections Act* was changed — the Chief Electoral Officer did not appear as a witness, but appeared as a resource beside the minister introducing the bill. That was the case the previous time that the legislation was changed as well. While we see value in bringing the officer in to potentially answer questions directly and not through the minister, I do just have to correct the revisionist history that seemed to be provided by members of the Assembly.

With that, I will encourage members to err on the side of transparency and remind them that democracy dies in the dark. To suggest that somehow we would be compromising the office or that volcanoes would destroy the Earth if we were to talk about the matters outlined in the amendment to the motion is really not doing service to the public. The members, if they choose to vote against this, will be erring on the side of secrecy instead of on the side of openness.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I don't know how we got talking about volcanoes.

What happened here, Mr. Chair, was that there was a great suggestion from the Third Party that this would be a good idea to not only invite the Chief Electoral Officer to sit beside the minister as the bill was debated in Committee of the Whole but, even before that, to welcome the Chief Electoral Officer here as a witness so that all parties could ask questions in a much more independent fashion. That proposal was raised at the House Leaders' meeting last week. It was discussed. I went and approached the Chief Electoral Officer to ask him if he would be willing and able to come across. That was agreed to. I then turned back to the House Leaders' meeting again last week to discuss the timing on it. As far as I understood it — we don't take formal votes, but I didn't hear any concerns raised at that point. Today again, I thanked the Clerk's office for developing this motion, but I thought, through the conversation at the House Leaders' meeting, that we were all agreed on the process. If I was mistaken, I will go back, but when I spoke to the Chief Electoral Officer to say that we were seeking to have him come here today, it was to speak as a witness on Bill No. 4.

If there are other things — so far, I'm not convinced to vote for this amendment. But I will never stand up and talk about this as secrecy. What I will do is I will just offer — and if not myself, then in the role of Acting House Leader, then the House Leader — that if there are other suggestions about trying to welcome the Chief Electoral Officer into this House, let's have that conversation at House Leaders where we started this.

Again, thanks to the Third Party for their suggestion. I appreciate that there are other questions that the Member for Lake Laberge would like to get to. We didn't arrange that with

the Chief Electoral Officer for today, so we're not supportive of the amendment that he is proposing.

Mr. Cathers: I just want to briefly respond to what the Minister of Community Services has suggested. I would note that, if the government in fact has a change of heart and agrees to vote in favour of transparency and openness instead of in favour of secrecy by supporting this amendment to the motion — if — as some members of the government have suggested — the Chief Electoral Officer is not prepared to answer all of the questions outlined in this amendment, I would note that in fact the Official Opposition would be happy to accept the Chief Electoral Officer saying, "I don't have an answer to that question at this point. I will have to get back to the member" or some similar response if a question is asked for information that is not at the Chief Electoral Officer's fingertips. To suggest that we're somehow putting the Chief Electoral Officer in an untenable position, I think, is an incorrect suggestion. Again, as I noted, if any of those matters and any of the questions we've prepared regarding matters outlined in the amendment — if the Chief Electoral Officer doesn't have that information at his fingertips, we would certainly be happy with a commitment by that officer to provide that information at a later date.

Chair: Is there any further debate on the amendment to Committee of the Whole Motion No. 1?

Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Count.

Count

Chair: A count has been called.

Bells

Chair: All those in favour of the amendment to Committee of the Whole Motion No. 1 please rise.

Members rise

Chair: All those opposed please rise.

Members rise

Chair: The results are six yea, 11 nay.

Amendment to Committee of the Whole Motion No. 1 negatived

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

Committee of the Whole Motion No. 1 agreed to

Chair: The matter now before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 200: *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Is there any further general debate?

Hon. Mr. Silver: We left off last time in general debate with the Member for Lake Laberge asking some questions. I do have some responses for him at this time.

I'll start with the Shallow Bay zoning amendment process. Before I get into it, I want to thank Chris Mahar for being here today from the Department of Finance, my deputy minister.

The question I was asked about Shallow Bay zoning — and I quote from the Member for Lake Laberge: "Can the Premier provide an update of what the status is of that process, when people will see some tangible results — including a proposal coming out of the committee that has been developed — and also when or if the government actually plans to amend the regulations?"

Mr. Chair, we are committing to working with the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and local residents on a potential zoning change affecting the Shallow Bay area to find solutions that work for this unique area. While the committee has met regularly over the past year, we recognize that the committee has required additional time to reach consensus on draft zoning concepts before presenting the options to the community for consideration.

This past summer, the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council conducted targeted engagement with its citizens to ensure that proposed zoning options carefully consider First Nation interests.

The committee met on September 30, 2019, and is meeting again tomorrow, November 13 of this year. We expect that the committee will be ready to solicit community input on draft zone concepts following the November meeting.

If there is alignment within the community on the proposed options, we will work with the committee to begin drafting regulations.

The member opposite went on to ask questions specific to the Fox Lake local area planning process. The first question asked in this pursuit was — and I quote: "... if the Premier could provide an update on what the status of that is." Of course, he was referring to the Fox Lake local area planning process.

Mr. Chair, since April 2012, the Government of Yukon, the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, and Kwanlin Dün First Nation have been working collaboratively to develop a local area plan for the Fox Lake area. Last year, the steering committee prepared a community visitation report to inform the development of planned policies. The committee hosted a public meeting on October 4, 2018, to provide an update to the community on planning processes. The government met on January 9, 2019, to prepare for the next phase of work, which includes development and review of land use concepts, policies, and drafting the local area plan.

We hope to bring the committee back together in the new year to initiate the next phase of planning. The planning area covers 525 square kilometres and encompasses land along Fox

Lake and the northwest shore of Lake Laberge. A small portion of the planning area falls within the traditional territories of both Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation and Champagne and Aishihik First Nations. Government of Yukon officials are working to ensure that First Nation expectations on participating in the Fox Lake local area planning process are met.

The member opposite then asked some rapid-fire questions on wild and domestic sheep and goat separation control orders. The first question from the Member for Lake Laberge was: Stakeholder engagement occurred after the decision was made to impose the control order. “What have the impacts of that been?”

The stakeholder engagement confirmed the strongly held and opposing opinions of stakeholder groups, confirming that the control order reflected a balanced approach on this issue.

Advocates for wild sheep and goats expressed concerns that the controls were not sufficient and rather that specific, stringent fencing requirements should be within the control order and that exclusion zones should be expanded. Members from the agricultural community expressed that the control order is an unfair limitation on the industry and that voluntary measures would be sufficient. The control order was modified to allow microchips for animal identification and to remove requirements for export permits for sheep and goats. The language of the control order remains flexible to ensure discretion in the design of fences to meet the outcome of containment and also to reduce risk of direct contact and to still respond to the unique features of individual farms in the Yukon. Similarly, the testing requirements are not prescriptive in the control order. This allows flexibility to adapt to emerging knowledge about the disease risk.

Another question that was asked by the member opposite was — and I quote: “How many farms have been impacted by this control order?” Mr. Chair, to date, 36 farms have begun having their animals tested, 31 farms have completed testing, and 16 premises have begun developing a fencing plan and have applied for fencing funds. There are completed premises as well.

Three farms have indicated that they do not wish to be compliant with the control order and have opted to depopulate by sale or slaughter of their sheep and goats.

The third question asks, specific to the wild and domestic sheep and goat separation control order — how many farmers have applied for funding and received funding? Again, these quotes are all from the Member for Lake Laberge. Mr. Chair, as of October 31, 2019, there has been \$160,611 of funding provided for containment for 24 projects. There are projects ongoing that are being processed.

The fourth question specific to this topic — and I quote: “How many farms, at the current time, are looking like they will not be able to comply with fencing requirements of the control order and thus may be forced to destroy animals to comply with the control order on January 1?”

Mr. Chair, three farms have opted to depopulate their sheep or goats by sale or slaughter, as mentioned. Rather than comply with the control orders, farmers are encouraged to sell

their animals rather than slaughter in order to retain the genetic diversity of sheep and goats in the Yukon. Funding provides the equivalent of compensation value for sheep or goats that are sold or slaughtered in these instances.

Another question specific to wild and domestic sheep and goat separation control orders — I quote: “Does the Premier have an estimate of how many animals are likely to be killed if the government doesn’t modify the control order?”

Mr. Chair, to date, 33 animals have been slaughtered by farmers who chose not to comply with the control order. Meat is salvaged from slaughtered animals so that the life was not wasted. It is possible that more farmers will come forward, but given that 36 farmers are actively involved in meeting the testing and fencing requirements in contrast to the three individuals who chose not to comply, we don’t anticipate many more additional animals being destroyed due to the requirement for fencing.

The last question on the wild and domestic sheep and goat separation control order from the Member for Lake Laberge — I quote: “To that end, as well, if there are animals that the owners are going to have to destroy because of the wording of the control order, is the government prepared to modify that control order to give them more time to comply with the provisions of it and not result in them having to destroy stock?”

Mr. Chair, assistance is available for anyone affected by complying with the order, including covering costs for inspections and animal testing. There is also financial support available until January 1, 2020, when the control order comes into force for improvements to fencing and compensation for damages or losses incurred. The language of the control order remains flexible to respond to the unique features of individual farms in Yukon while meeting the objectives to reduce the risk of direct contact. The control order also allows flexibility around testing requirements to allow the Government of Yukon’s approach to adapt to emerging knowledge about this disease risk.

At that time, the time had run out, so I didn’t have a chance to respond at the time. I’m happy that we got back in a timely fashion to answer the member opposite’s questions. At this time, I will cede the floor to members opposite for further general debate questions.

Mr. Istchenko: I don’t see that we have much time here, but I guess I’ll get on the record today that I want to ask the Premier about campgrounds.

With respect to the government’s proposed fee increase for campgrounds — a jump from \$12 to \$20 per night or \$50 to \$200 per season — that’s no small increase. I would like to see if the Premier could please outline how the government came up with these increases — where those numbers came from.

My other question is: Is the Premier considering having a fee for seniors — Yukon residents who are seniors — to use the government campgrounds? The other one is: When the results of the survey come back and you look at the results, will the government consider scaling back these big campground fee increases if the results say to do that?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I have a little bit of time here, but what I would like to say as far as Yukon park strategies and

regulations is that we have shared a draft Yukon Parks strategy this fall for comment, and we will be incorporating feedback into a final strategy this winter.

I want to thank everyone who has participated so far in our engagement on parks and campgrounds. It's very clear that they are an extremely popular subject matter with Yukoners. As the demand and the expectations grow and evolve, it is definitely a good time to take a more long-term look — a strategic look — at the system of territorial parks and campgrounds in the Yukon.

Proposed actions would include building a new campground near Whitehorse, testing a reservation system for selected sites in some campgrounds, and also encouraging more year-round use of parks and campgrounds.

Again, the purpose of the strategy is to provide guidance on how to sustain and improve our world-class system of territorial parks and campgrounds. The member opposite talked about some very specific initiatives. Again, I would urge him and any other Yukoner to find out more about these engagements that are ongoing as we speak and also the results too on engageyukon.ca.

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

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Silver that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for two minutes to allow a witness to appear.

Recess

Chair: Order, please.

Appearance of witness

Chair: The Chair would like to welcome, on behalf of the Committee, the Chief Electoral Officer, Mr. Maxwell Harvey. Mr. Harvey is here to discuss matters related to Bill No. 4, *Act to Amend the Elections Act*, pursuant to Committee of the Whole Motion No. 1 adopted on this day.

I would ask all members to remember to refer their remarks through the Chair when addressing the witness, and I would also ask the witness to refer his answers through the Chair when he is responding to the members of the Committee.

Please begin your remarks.

Witness introduced

Hon. Mr. Silver: I will be very brief. I would like to also introduce and thank the Chief Electoral Officer here, Mr. Maxwell Harvey, for being in the Legislative Assembly today.

This Sitting, we are debating Bill No. 4, entitled *Act to Amend the Elections Act*. In his role as Chief Electoral Officer, Mr. Harvey has been very much involved in getting us to this point. I understand that there was a request from the Leader of the Third Party to have Mr. Harvey appear to answer questions related to Bill No. 4 and we are extremely happy to accommodate that request.

I will note that representatives from the Hospital Corporation and the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board will appear later this Sitting, as they do each and every year.

We are pleased to be bringing forward a number of amendments to the *Elections Act* which have been recommended by the Chief Electoral Officer as part of the ongoing work by Elections Yukon to update and manage the elections process. These amendments are focused on removing data-sharing barriers between Elections Yukon and other public agencies and creating systems needed to better implement the permanent register of Yukon voters, which was established in 2015.

Finally, the changes also include improvements to the registration and voting process. Yukoners will have access to clearer, more flexible and convenient options — a key change that will expand the options to vote by special ballot to all Yukoners, which will provide more flexibility and convenience.

With that, again, thank you very much to Mr. Harvey for being here today.

Chair: Mr. Harvey, you may begin your remarks.

Mr. Harvey: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

First of all, I very much appreciate the opportunity to speak before you, and I would like to acknowledge the insight and support of the many stakeholders that got us to this stage. It has been very positive. It has been exciting and of course interesting.

A few introductory remarks, if I may, to provide some context and perspective on the proposed changes contemplated by Bill No. 4 concerning the register, the revision process, and special ballots. Part of my mandate as an independent and non-partisan House Officer of the Legislative Assembly is to make recommendations to the House, as we know. The last Chief Electoral Officer recommendations were in 2015, where significant changes were introduced to support a move from a paper-based list of electors to the permanent register, to eliminate the proxy vote, and to expand special ballot access. There were a number of other initiatives as well. These changes before us today build on those initiatives. Since then — since 2015 — there is much new information. Required technology to implement those changes have been identified and the process alignment is better understood to further evolve our processes.

The Elections Yukon strategic —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Chair: Ms. White, on a point of order.

Ms. White: I apologize — it just appears that we're working on the microphone and getting it turned on. If we could just take a quick second.

Chair's ruling

Chair: I believe they are trying to address the issue.

Mr. Harvey: Mr. Chair, thank you very much. Again, I thank you. I appreciate the opportunity to speak before the House. I would also like to acknowledge the insights and support of the many stakeholders that were needed to get to this stage. It has been positive, exciting, and interesting.

A few introductory remarks provide some context and perspective on the proposed changes contemplated by Bill No. 4 — the register revision and special ballot. Part of my mandate as an independent and non-partisan officer of the Legislative Assembly is to make recommendations to the House. The last CEO recommendations were in 2015, where significant changes were introduced to support a move from a paper-based list with a permanent register, to eliminate the proxy vote, and to expand special ballot access.

There were also a number of other initiatives in 2015. The changes before us today build on those initiatives. Since then — since 2015 — there is much new information. Required technology to implement the register has been identified and the process alignment needed is better understood.

The EY or Elections Yukon strategic plan is about the journey to further evolve to a modern, convenient, and trusted electoral process. We wish to inspire 100-percent turnout. The mission is institutional readiness, voter-centric focus, and delivery of fair, impartial, and compliant elections that foster public trust and promote participation. To that end, our work at Elections Yukon aligns with and is measured against, four strategic pillars: those of integrity, access, modernization, and readiness. Each has many components to consider, but at the end of the day, I wish to put my hand over my heart and know that we have done all that we can to ensure the integrity of the vote — that a qualified electorate gets a ballot that is kept secret, that is counted as intended, that the results are accepted, and that we have taken measures to ensure the compliance and transparency of that process while remaining vigilant to the risk of potential or perceived irregularities.

Our focus is also to remove barriers and facilitate access, registration, information, and turnout where there are under-represented groups, physical barriers, awareness barriers, and process barriers. To that larger plan, we operate under three overlapping horizons: (1) to address gaps in our current processes; (2) to further mature as an electoral institution in transitioning from an event-driven process to one where they are process-driven events; (3) to look beyond to the next election to improve processes; and (4) to respond to growing expectations. It is a major undertaking. Our approach is to be proactive, realistic, and very mindful of fiscal stewardship and its link to capacity and allocated resources. Integral to that is ensuring that the Legislative Assembly is aware of our activities and any opportunities and risks that we consider appropriate for your consideration. We want to keep you informed.

With that, a kind of overview or summary of the changes and what they mean — first of all, the permanent register. The challenge is that a permanent and continuously updated register is based on data sharing. It is needed for the complete and accurate information needed to create lists. Right now, the current requirement is for individual written consent given or

provided to the Chief Electoral Officer to allow public bodies to share this information. We are the only jurisdiction in Canada to have an opt-in process for data sharing. Without the data sharing from public bodies and others, the lists will not improve dramatically, as data collection in an opt-in process is ineffective, labour intensive, expensive, and complicated. We wish to align with best practices and produce a meaningful list of electors.

Also, in the permanent register, there is no provision to allow First Nations to share information. We wish to provide that information to Elections Yukon to ensure that their First Nation electors — their citizens — are on the list. I have had discussions with a number of First Nation leaders to discuss electoral participation for their communities and their citizens as being under-represented in participation. Like we do for youth, we want to make sure that we support full participation. Being on the register is a very important aspect, as you get a personalized voter information card, you know the processes, you get information, and therefore you're more likely to vote.

So, data sharing — and I would like to make this clear: The purpose of data sharing with public bodies is to allow us to update our data. It is not to automatically add every Yukoner onto a list of electors. Obviously, there are many in the data — we do not know their residency; we don't know if they're Canadians and such.

Our list begins with the electors we have from the enumeration process of 2016. That hasn't changed. That, right now, is our list. We are getting information now from Elections Canada to incorporate into that list. We will use the registered personnel on the enumerated list from 2016 plus what we get from Elections Canada to build our list. We will only use the data we get for the people who are registered and on the list. If you're not on the list, people will still have to register to vote.

The legislation is to remove individual consent requirements for data for electoral purposes. This will require public bodies to share data. An MOU — a memorandum of understanding — and information sharing agreements have already been discussed with the principle agencies. So, we want to share with public bodies and we also wish for electoral authorities to include First Nations to allow, on mutual agreement, exchange of elector information. The provision would remain — as it is currently — that people can be removed from the list of electors. That is unchanged.

The outcome of this permanent register is integrity — the right people get the ballot, we know who they are, and we have the right information so we can track the processes. There is transparency and accountability.

We all know how close the votes are in the Yukon and how the weight of all the votes — 15 of 19 district MLAs were determined by less than 100 votes, so we want to make sure the right people get their votes.

Also, there is access and greater engagement by being on the list. We expect a list that is more meaningful and more complete. Obviously, the more accurate the list — it also supports political parties and candidates to get their information and platforms to the electorate and to support their “get out to vote” efforts. We know that 5,800 of those registered did not

vote. Many, we believe, did not know they were registered or did not receive the information. Obviously, registration supports democracy and is a standard process.

The revision process is the second big change. We looked to align the dates of revision with the production of a list of the electors. The challenge was that the enumerated list was very outdated and inaccurate. It was incomplete. There were many errors and duplicates. There were many homes that the enumerators could not get into. Tracking was very problematic. Candidates — when they went to doors — after the enumeration, they knocked on doors and asked, “Are you registered?” “I don’t know.” “Here, fill out this form. I will register on your behalf.” So, they were getting lots of information about electors which were double and triple entries.

The other aspect of revisions is that, if they didn’t make the revision which went to day 19, they could have an opportunity during the special revision which went for eight days minus one day at different hours where they could just add their name. They could not make any corrections. So, after day 19, full revision was done. People could be added. That was it.

What we look to do with this change is to extend the revision period from 19 days to 21 days — full revision. The second aspect is — because after the full revision, you have the advance polls, you have the special ballots, and you have ordinary polling day. There is lots of opportunity to update the full revision — add, correct, remove electors. The special revision period — which was problematic and had all these dates and was very limited in scope — is not required. Electors can update their electoral data right up to the 28th day and then again at the polls.

The revision looks to create four lists — very important for our election officials and for candidates. The preliminary list — which will be the list of electors at close of nominations — revised. This is the one updated from all the revisions, which will be used at the advance polls. We will do an official list which will capture all the changes that have taken place since the advance poll — all the advance poll information — all the special ballot information — will create an official list which will be used for polling day. That list will close on day 28. On day 28, that list will be complete, unchanged, and when we hand it to the poll officials, it is as accurate as can be.

The proposal we look to do is to extend poll registration to day 21 from day 19 — as I said, for advance poll readiness — in special revision — as unnecessary and confusing — and after day 21, continue full registration — still possible when they apply at the different voting opportunities, special ballots, advance poll, and ordinary poll.

I will note that they can update their registration online, so we hope to get a lot that we missed captured into our database.

The outcome — a clearer, more concise, and efficient process. The integrity supports the list accuracy because — right now — you had lists being produced that were given to poll officials while voting was still ongoing at the returning office as special ballots. The lists, as soon as they were produced, were inaccurate because you couldn’t trust them as being correct because of this activity going on behind, which is

an important integrity issue — so the access and more opportunity to register, update, and correct the information.

The third was special ballots. Special ballots had some dramatic changes, even in 2015. Despite that, to expand the categories of special ballots, they were still considered restrictive in use, with multiple dates and timelines, which makes them difficult to follow.

There was also an integrity issue, as special ballots were allowed up to a year before the polling day — and even during polling day with special ballots. This was a change which was not in effect in 2011 but was made in 2015.

You had five or so different application timelines and six or seven categories, but notwithstanding all the categories and timelines, if you declared yourself an absent elector, you had a potential voting window that lasted a whole year and right up to the close of polls to get a ballot as an absent elector. An absent elector was someone who was reasonably believed not to be available to vote at advance or special polls, or advance or ordinary polls.

We felt that this needed tweaking to make the process clearer and fairer and to provide greater access and to, most importantly, not compromise electoral integrity. The special ballot process takes longer. There are forms, envelopes, and signatures, so we are aware of the workloads on ROs, especially near the opening of the polls during an election, the opportunity cost at critical times, and the expectations that, with the more open process, there will be more electors who use special ballots as a convenience or just because they want to be sure that they get their vote in and not have to declare that they were part of a special condition.

So, the actual elements — we would remove the categories — special ballots — just another way to vote. You don’t have to give a reason to do that.

There were two types of special ballots — one normally handled at the RO offices for local, which is unchanged, and another that we were modifying and tweaking a bit as interjurisdictional ballots, which we would move from the RO’s responsibility to Election Yukon’s responsibility. This made it easier if someone applied online. Elections Yukon would send it out, and they would send their ballot back to Elections Yukon to count that special ballot without having to go to the RO office.

Right now, in the old process — the current process, I should say — if you wanted an interjurisdictional, you went in there and you were not allowed to take your ballot out. You had to do it there and you couldn’t reflect, and then the RO was responsible to make the notations and get it to whatever district in whatever part of the territory it is to make it in time. It was very problematic and put a burden on the ROs for the tracking, the accountability, and the continuity of the votes. We want to take that away. We will do that in the elections headquarters, and we will provide a statement of the vote to those returning officers as part of their statement of their vote for their count. They will still give all the results. We give no results of that vote; that goes to the RO, but we would handle that. We have a different coloured envelope for that.

Voting by incarcerated voters is another change. Just to be clear, incarcerated voters could only vote by special ballot. They couldn't go to the polls.

Clarified special ballot rules for communities with less than 25 electors — there was no measure. The rule said that, if there were 25 electors or fewer, you must vote by special ballot. Well, what does 25 or fewer electors mean? I have to do a survey. I have to ask people coming in and out who is coming and who is going. We just said that we will make them registered voters so that, if they are registered, at least we have a measure and we can say, "You are required to vote by special ballot." That isn't a change other than just to identify that count. There are three communities that are subject to that clause right now: Eagle Plains, Keno City, and Stewart Crossing. I have met with the Bureau of Statistics to see if there are more or any on the verge to make sure that there is a ramping up on that, but they could not vote at advance polls or at ordinary polls in their electoral district right now, according to the legislation. That is unchanged. It may be something for another day.

The end of special ballot applications was for all special ballot applications to be moved to day 28, because we had day 17, day 24, and day 31. We made them all the same as day 28.

The absent elector provision previously allowed you to go — just absent electors — to day 31 — close the polls. This was for absent electors. We felt that, on polling day, if you are there to get an application, you're not absent; you should vote. As a matter of fact, in 2015, the 2011 special ballot application said that you could not get a ballot on polling day when the polls opened. We kept that, and we've moved it to day 28 so that, on day 28 when the final ballots are done, we produce a list that is absolutely pristine. We know exactly what it is, and the voters can use that. They still have until the close of polls to return their special ballot to the RO or to elections headquarters as appropriate.

The other element of that was the pre-writ period issue of the special ballot which, in the legislation, said that, after the fourth anniversary of the previous election, people could be issued — and vote by special ballot.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Harvey: Yes, this we asked you to do to repeal, and the special ballot would only be issued after the writ. That was to simplify the special ballots and make them more convenient, and it expanded access. I know that there were concerns raised in the Legislature last week, which I'm very prepared to address, but this summarizes our concerns, our approach and rationale for how we can best administer elections and serve the electorate.

Thank you. I look forward to your comments and questions.

Mr. Cathers: I would like to thank the Chief Electoral Officer for appearing to answer questions here today.

I do have a number of questions related to this legislation, particularly with regard to the changes around the development of the registry and the changes that are proposed here in the legislation to deal with that. I understand, of course, that the legislation, after coming into effect in 2015 — and the actual experience that Elections Yukon had with it — may not have

aligned with what was anticipated at the time of drafting, thus leading to changes being developed.

Around information sharing, I would ask two questions related to that. First of all, can the Chief Electoral Officer confirm that, prior to this bill coming into force, Elections Yukon was still able to receive information from Elections Canada related to voters lists to enable an update? Can he please elaborate on how frequently Elections Canada provides list updates to Elections Yukon?

Secondly, related to that, when there are updates provided by Elections Canada to Elections Yukon, what is the process for error checking the lists received from Elections Canada?

Mr. Harvey: First of all, we do have a data-sharing arrangement with Elections Canada. We have been providing them with data. We only recently asked Elections Canada for some downloads as we look to implement our permanent register — because previously, no election data was shared with Yukon. All of our list of electors was done by enumeration.

We don't have all those processes down. We can get data from Elections Canada and we can get it on request when it's available. Normally, they need a month or so lead time.

I'll just say that Elections Canada's data is good. They have good coverage. There are concerns across all jurisdictions about the quality of that data. One of the things to remember is that Elections Canada looks at Yukon as one big district. So, some of the address issues they have — the serious address issues — are not fully addressed. There are lots of errors in addresses — to put electors in the right electoral district. That's something that we're working on right now to try to do that so we can prepare lists to issue to the political parties and the MLAs. We're not there yet. We're still getting the framework. We're still trying to do that.

So, errors — how errors are looked at — when we get a download from, say, Elections Canada — if that's going to be our primary source — we will cross-check that information with public body data. That is the whole secret — that is the magic of shared data. People who change addresses, change their names, move in, move out — then we get that data in the right district in the right time — so it's accurate and it's complete in that regard.

It would be very problematic just to use Elections Canada data and say, "Elections Canada, we don't need to collect any information. We'll just use your data." That would be very problematic for the addresses and the eligibility of electors because we don't — theirs is different — and making sure that things were correct. So that would speak to Elections Canada being an important source but not the only source of electoral data that we use.

That cleansing that you asked about — how do we clean that data? It's done by the technology of this system that we've just recently acquired and are working to implement. That does all the comparisons — pop up conflicts — and we will examine each of those conflicts. We will also engage returning officers to help make sure that this is correct as well.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate that information. If the Chief Electoral Officer could just explain to me as well — the changes in the act, as I understand it, and please correct me if I

have missed something in this — in Bill No. 4, some of those changes relate to requiring disclosure from public bodies, including municipalities and Yukon government departments that, in the current act, are allowed for, but require consent on the part of the elector before that information can be shared. Elections Yukon identified that as problematic. Since we were previously, as I understand it, able to receive the data from Elections Canada — and that was envisioned at the time of the act being passed in 2015 — is it because of needing to error-check that data and not being able to without compelling the Yukon government public bodies to disclose information that has prevented us from seeing updates to the current list based on the data from Elections Canada, even if that was the only data we had?

Mr. Harvey: Mr. Chair, the Elections Canada data is good. It is problematic. So, it is something that we obviously have to compare to validate and confirm. Mobility in Yukon is fairly high in certain populations — in transients. We need that data. Elections Canada will not have data. Elections Canada will say, “The best people for your data is the actual jurisdiction that owns those people who are there.” They want our data, because they know that their data isn’t the be-all and end-all. It’s good, but it is not where we need to be. We need that collaborating, validating, and confirming data to produce the best list of electors as possible.

Mr. Cathers: Thank you. I appreciate that. On the same topic — going forward, with these changes outlined in the *Elections Act* — assuming that Bill No. 4 passes in its current wording, could the Chief Electoral Officer elaborate on — once those provisions on data sharing are in place and when it comes to error-checking — just how does that process work?

I am just going to give an illustrative example of where there may be challenges between looking at the Elections Canada data and looking at the territorial data, and then — pardon me; I should distinguish. Let me start that again, since I think I didn’t frame that in the clearest way.

If you are looking at compiling various data sources, there is data from Elections Canada, there is the existing permanent register of voters — based on the last territorial election — and as well, information coming from public bodies, including Yukon government departments. Breaking this down to the human level where it affects individual voters — looking at it, say — for example, I will use the example of my riding in the Ibex Valley in the last election. The Yukon government had just recently finished civic addressing in Ibex Valley. Not everyone had converted over to that. Some people had the election register from the last election — including constituents of mine in Ibex Valley who were enumerated using different types of address identification. So, there are people on the current list of electors, based on the 2016 election, who put down their lot number. Other people put down their mileage number on a road or their kilometre number on a road, and some used their civic address.

So, in terms of somebody trying to understand how those fit together — that is very confusing for somebody who doesn’t know the area, but I would imagine — and please correct me if I am wrong on this — that it may pose a challenge in trying to

track the change when people have moved within the Yukon and potentially having different addresses for the same individual contained within the Elections Canada information — depending on whatever information it has for the people there — and in Elections Yukon — potentially having them either by their lot number, their civic address number, mileage or kilometrage — and then government department data which might have them down on any one of those bases, contained with the Elections Yukon list — and then realizing that people move from place to place.

How does the process look to error check and determine if Joseph Smith, who is on the list in Ibex Valley, has actually moved to Copper Ridge to a different address or moved elsewhere in Ibex Valley? How do you make that identification and determine which — whether you’re unintentionally merging all these datasets and potentially either dropping people off the list who are entitled to be on it or adding somebody to the list more than one time, as the Minister of Highways and Public Works was talking about in terms of another government information system last week — what’s the process for going through that — those potentially competing sources of data — and determining when you are dealing with new people who weren’t on the list and when you’re dealing with duplicate addresses or a different address referring to the same person?

Mr. Harvey: Geomatics, geography, and addressing is a huge concern of all electoral authorities. This is what makes the permanent register so valuable. It is because we use that data from the different sources. We’re saying Elections Canada, but I also would say, potentially, municipalities, First Nations, and public bodies. We do targeted revision. We’ll have some other information. We’ll have electors doing updates on that. We’ll have online updates. We take that information.

How the actual technology works is that we will update our register from the information we get. We will download information that we get securely from the public bodies and from Elections Canada. That will all go into the VoterView DataFix processing technology. This company does the same electoral management for six provinces, and they have done hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of municipal elections controlling this data. I visited them while I was on leave in Toronto to get those assurances as well.

They will take all that data, and they will see address XYZ Main Street. They will have all 10 electors that come up at XYZ Main Street. They will say, “We have this name. One is Billy Bob; one is Bob Billy; one is Robert.” They can look at that and say that this is a conflict. It’s an unresolved elector. They will have all the data matches. It’s easy. This is a confirmed elector. It’s updated. If things don’t go in line, then it has to be manually checked to ask if it is right. From that check, we say, “The same name is at milepost 104, box number 208, and at lot 7.” That individual look to get that clarity is there. One of the things about that sharing is that we will get the last date of update, so we’ll know the most recent date.

There are still big problems in the geography. People have civic addresses and don’t want to use them. We’re working

with EMS, and we're working with geomatics and the Yukon government to try to resolve those.

There is technology to automatically cleanse the data. They will do data matching and such, and there is also the Elections Yukon interface to make sure that they align so that, if someone is on the list of electors, we have confidence that it is the best information that we have.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the response.

The Chief Electoral Officer, in his opening remarks, made reference to ensuring that the right people get the ballot. Particularly when we are talking about the potential — if things don't go according to plan, I am recognizing the explanation that the witness provided as far as how they try to get the list clean. All systems are imperfect for doing that. There is always the potential that, despite best intentions, there is a mistake made due to things, including people, moving around the territory, leaving the territory, and so on and so forth. That leaves me with a few questions, including whether there are changes to the requirements for identification that are outlined either in this legislation or that are being contemplated by Elections Yukon. The federal government — Elections Canada, I should say — requires identification to vote. Does the Chief Electoral Officer see, through this legislation being implemented, a change to the information that people have to acquire to be able to cast a ballot? Simplifying that question down, are you going to have to, when you show up at the polls, like you do federally, provide some proof of identification or simply say, "I am who I say I am"? If there isn't a requirement around identification such as the federal government has, does the Chief Electoral Officer think that we should be looking at one, and if not, why not?

Mr. Harvey: Identification is always an important aspect because you want to make sure that you give a ballot to the person who is entitled to receive that ballot.

There are two process for identification. One is that you use ID when you register, and then you don't show your ID — you just say who you are at the poll and vote, which is the Yukon experience. The check is that, if the scrutineer says that they are not sure you are a resident in this district, then they make a declaration.

The other aspect, as you say, is that — with Elections Canada and many jurisdictions — you can register as Mickey Mouse, they will register you, but when you go to the poll, you show ID that says you are Mickey Mouse before you get your ballot.

For our purposes, there is no look to change the identification requirements or the process for the front-end identification as opposed to an at-the-poll identification.

If anything, what I would look to is to expand identification potentially to allow voter information cards or a letter from a notary to expand it if somebody didn't have the right ID, but I will say no changes to ID requirements at this time.

Mr. Cathers: If the Chief Electoral Officer could confirm, that means that effectively the provision for ensuring that somebody doesn't vote fraudulently is left to the scrutineers, which would also potentially — if somebody is swearing in at the polls — create a potential problem, would it

not? Someone could live in Whistle Bend and show up and vote in that polling district and subsequently go to Riverdale South, hypothetically, and also swear in at the polls. What is the process for really tracking that or determining whether John Brown, let's say, attempts to do that? How is that then caught either at the time or after the fact?

Mr. Harvey: Voter integrity is obviously very critical. There is a certain honour system requirement, and what the legislation needs to do is make sure that they minimize the risk of potential or perceived fraud or voter irregularities.

The way with the new register, which is a huge improvement over where we were, is that, because of the processes, all the returning officers will have their list of electors electronically, and they will be able to update when they get special ballots. They will be marked off as being issued as a special ballot, which means that they have voted. The advance polls will also be marked, so they will not be eligible for a ballot.

Somebody still can declare that somebody voted in my place and that there is a potential imposter, and you can vote. If your name is crossed off, you can have that declaration.

The move to instantaneous "You voted, you're checked off and everybody knows it, and it's on every list" is something that the technology — when I talked about looking forward — is something that we can aspire to and work toward. Some of the things that we look toward is — one was basically kind of a vote-anywhere system where, as soon as you vote, somebody on a computer says that you voted and then everybody knows that you voted.

There is no gap between "You vote here and I write you in my book" and then you go with another ID and say, "I'm voting in this district." We still don't have every potential, but the overall integrity is improved with the lists that are more accurate in their establishment and more accurate in their updating about who has voted, who has not voted, and who is entitled to vote.

Mr. Cathers: I do appreciate the information provided by the Chief Electoral Officer.

When it comes down to potentially — as he touched on in his answer related to someone — if they were to vote fraudulently, that someone else could complain that somebody else voted for them — one question I would have is: What happens if there are issues in voter turnout and someone, for example, doesn't know that someone voted on their behalf? It is the question of the checks and balances. If someone is away and someone else knows that they are away and chooses to fraudulently show up and claim to be their next-door neighbour — (a) what are the checks and balances to actually catch that, and (b) what would the fines be in that area for that type of breach of the *Elections Act*? Are there any changes in this act that increase the fines or penalties either for voters who vote fraudulently or candidates who violate the *Elections Act* — as we saw with one candidate for the Liberal Party in the last territorial election?

Mr. Harvey: Obviously, voter integrity is critical. If somebody is believed to have voted fraudulently, then obviously that would be raised by the scrutineer or by the

returning officer — or whatever — and an investigation would happen. That would be the process. If that was material, a judge would have to potentially decide what the outcome would be of that potentially fraudulent vote.

This act does not contemplate any change to the overall process. It is limited to the register, the revision period, and the process for special ballots.

Mr. Cathers: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the information.

So, the Chief Electoral Officer — I believe it was in his opening remarks — made reference to wanting to see 100-percent voter turnout. Of course, that is a goal that many of us would like to see — increased voter turnout.

While I personally don't think it will ever get to 100 percent — and in fact we have good voter turnout compared to other parts of the country — I do agree with providing more opportunity for people to cast a ballot.

To that end, we see changes in this legislation that remove the ability to cast a special ballot before the writ dropped, and functionally, because of the coming into force date of the bill passed in 2015, I believe it was roughly three months prior to the last election that people were able to cast a ballot — that the specific wording in the current bill, as the Chief Electoral Officer made reference to, refers to being after the fourth — that section currently refers to the ability to obtain a special ballot under the section — an elector must apply "... (a) to the returning officer for the electoral district, within the first 31 days of the election period; or (b) to the chief electoral officer, at any time that is (i) after the fourth anniversary of the most recent general election before that time, and (ii) not in an election period."

So, that of course is the current section 98 of the *Elections Act* which this bill seeks to amend. The potential impact is that we know that 206 electors — according to information provided to us by Elections Yukon — did choose to exercise that new opportunity for early voting in the last territorial election. We don't know of course how many of those voters would have voted during the election and how many would have been unable to cast a ballot — 206 votes of course is more than enough to potentially materially change the impact of an election, depending of course on who those votes were cast for — which again is something that none of us do know. But the margin of victory of course in territorial elections would see — I believe it was a total of 10 seats where a change of 60 votes or less could change who is sitting in them.

Any changes that potentially disenfranchise someone or reduce an opportunity to vote is something that we are concerned with. I understand certainly the philosophical debate which may occur on whether someone should cast a ballot before the writ or not. In discussions that I have heard — and I am not going to ascribe them to any members particularly — but I have heard the suggestion made that the reason to get rid of it is that you should know who you are voting for. The current provisions — as I understand it in the *Elections Act* — correct me if I'm wrong, but I don't believe they are being changed by this bill — result in nomination day being, I believe, day 10 of the election period. So, until the close of

nominations has occurred, anyone who votes by special ballot during the writ period or before the writ period — if they are writing in the name of either a candidate or a political party — to have their vote counted as valid, there is the potential that the candidates to choose from change a third of the way through the election period. I would hope that no one is suggesting not issuing special ballots until nomination day, which would cut another 10 days off the opportunity to vote by special ballot.

The first question I have regarding these changes is — the provisions that are in the current act were recommended by the previous Chief Electoral Officer. At the time, they were unanimously supported by the Assembly. I looked through my notes to see the copy of the legislation that we took to discuss with the Members' Services Board and confirmed that the information we provided did clearly include the current wording of the *Elections Act*, where it gives the Chief Electoral Officer the ability, after the fourth anniversary of the most recent general election, to issue a special ballot — which, functionally — because of it coming into force three months before the last territorial election, special ballots were issued and 206 people cast a ballot that way.

My question with that is: In leading up to the changes in this current bill, did anyone express concern with the current provisions in the *Elections Act* during consultation with political parties and stakeholders? If so, who outlined those concerns and what were those concerns?

Mr. Harvey: One of my aims in coming here was to impress upon the House the Elections Yukon commitment to integrity and access.

In 2015, when the *Elections Act* was changed — which introduced this one-year period before the polling day — when we looked at that, we said that it set off alarm bells for Elections Yukon. This is why. It wasn't to deny access to people who wanted to vote up to a year early. It had to do with integrity and access.

Let me just say that the integrity concerns are that, if you can vote a year before polling day, here are some concerns. First of all: When is polling day? We don't have a fixed election date — and even if we did, polling day could be before or after that fixed election date. So, what that could mean is that somebody, a year in advance, could say, "I'm voting for — as an absent elector, I want my right before the writ to vote. Here it is." You vote, and two months later, an election is called, and you're not an eligible elector because you aren't here for one year on polling day. You might be there a year — if it's at the fixed election date, you're not an eligible elector. Your vote would not count, and I — as Chief Electoral Officer — would not support that.

The second element of that — which speaks to integrity — is a year in advance, you say, "Hmm, I think I will vote now. I live in district X. Now, I'm moving next month to district Y. Where shall I vote?" There is a question of residency a year and a half before your vote when the legislation says that you vote at your place of residence on polling day. So, you could strategically move or not move to be in a different district. You could even vote and the next week move to Ontario and be a

citizen or resident of Ontario a year before the election is held and have your vote count.

So, when I looked at the integrity of the long lead times with no fixed election date and the residency concerns — that needed to be fixed. It wasn't to deny — man, if you could vote a year — I'll just add that the reason that it was only three and a half months or so before the writ period — that 206 was only 206 and not the three-month period before — is because, when the legislation was passed in December 2015, there was a six-month implementation period. So, you weren't allowed to get your votes even though your one year was ticking. So you only got that chance in July, three months before. But, man, if you could vote a year in advance and not be constrained by residency or qualification as an elector — a lot of people would take it just for the convenience. So those were some of the reasons why we were concerned about that.

The other thing that weighed on us, and me, was that, in Newfoundland, the Supreme Court heard a case of a candidate in 2011, who lost by 10 votes. This candidate went to court and said, "If it wasn't for early special ballot voting, before even any candidates were named, I would have won that election." She went through the court processes. The Supreme Court of Newfoundland determined that it was an infringement on her *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* to be fully considered, and although they didn't overturn the election — because it was just a few years ago — it was found that it was unconstitutional against the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

As a result of that ruling, Newfoundland elections were required to only issue special ballots — as the member mentioned earlier — after the close of nominations. So, to accommodate the mailing times and such, they had to shorten the nomination period to give an extra couple of days to allow special ballots. That was a concern, that this was a trend — watching special ballots — not to open it up further and further. The trend is to be mostly within the writ period. So, it wasn't to deny — it would be very convenient to say, "I'm absent. I'm going to school. I want to vote a year in advance." But for integrity purposes, it could not be supported.

Then, if you say, "Well, why just absent electors? Why not every elector, then?" Because I could be absent — it could be that every single elector could vote up to a year early, and then your whole electoral process — I don't know what happens to it, but something will happen to your whole sense of democracy and process if you have these extraordinarily long lead times to be able to vote — regardless of the convenience, and people would like to do it — so that was the concern.

Those were the driving factors for us to correct that integrity potential for that voting option and to support voting within — with the online special ballots — we looked to make a very fast turnaround by centralizing it in election headquarters instead of the returning office, to get those ballots out and get them back so that people can have their vote count. They have 31 days to do it.

We believe that the systems are there and the processes are there to allow it and to support that, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the concerns expressed by the Chief Electoral Officer. I do have to note, as well, that we are

seeing what appears to be philosophical differences between the previous holder of the office and the current holder. I am not in any way, shape, or form trying to diminish the Chief Electoral Officer's concerns. Our concern, of course, is that the changes here — functionally speaking, there's a medium ground between potentially a year before the election and landing on what the status quo was in 2016, which was that people could and did vote three months before the election because of the coming-into-force date. That certainly would be another alternative.

But one concern we have is the question of when the public gets to express their views on it. I don't think that any one of us in this Assembly — whether elected or appointed as an officer — knows the circumstances of those 206 voters from 2016 and how many of them would have voted through another mechanism or would not have been able to vote through another mechanism. I know that, in some cases — from people who I am aware of and cast a ballot early — included people travelling on vacation across Canada and students who were going back to school who found it convenient to do that before they left for university.

The question I have around there is public consultation. Recognizing that Elections Yukon is very focused on being election-ready for whenever the writ might drop — however, because of the wording of that section of the legislation — if the current government decided to drop the writ sometime next year — let's say in September, hypothetically — if that were to occur — because the legislation doesn't allow special ballots to be issued until after the fourth anniversary of the last elections past — if the election is held next fall, there would be no pre-writ special ballots. They would simply not exist.

That leaves me with the question as to why it would not be possible — and appropriate, in my view — to, if the Legislative Assembly, once we get into line-by-line debate on this legislation, were to decide to drop the provisions of this bill that abolish voting by special ballot before the writ is dropped and were to decide to go out to public consultation on those provisions to ask those 206 people and others what their views on special ballots are and whether special ballots should only be issued on the day the writ is dropped, whether they should be issued three months prior to the election like they were in 2016 or some other variation. If those provisions were put to the side and public consultation occurred either as part of the electoral reform process or directly under the control of Elections Yukon or through some other form of consultation — my point is that it would seem to me that there is no urgency to pass that specific section of the bill.

I recognize that there are other parts of the bill that, based on the information Elections Yukon has provided, you wish to have in place by early next summer so that you can make changes around lists and so on. The changes around special ballot voting only become an issue if the government passes the fourth anniversary of the last election. Otherwise, it becomes a moot point. It would seem to me that, from a public consultation standpoint, if the Legislative Assembly were to either ask Elections Yukon or ask a commission to consult with Yukoners on whether they thought pre-writ voting by special

ballot should be eliminated, restricted, or changed in some way, it shouldn't prevent that legislation coming back either during the Spring Sitting or in the Fall Sitting of 2020 if the public supported the changes that are proposed in this bill.

I would just ask if there is something that I'm missing on that. If Elections Yukon were asked to do public consultation on this specific provision, what sort of resources and time would be required to consult with the public on whether to eliminate pre-writ voting by special ballot, restrict it, or do something different with it than is either in the current *Elections Act* or proposed within Bill No. 4?

Mr. Harvey: I'll go back to integrity. My recommendations as they pertain to this *Elections Act* are not to change that kind of range. Mine are to abolish it, and I would say to abolish that pre-writ option to vote completely. That would be my view, and it is to correct integrity issues, and it is as flat as that.

I would say that the 206 voters, to their credit, wanted to vote and they were anxious to vote. They voted, so that is very good. I would also point out that, if you count the people who did not vote and the people who are not registered and not included, there could be, depending on how you count it, 8,000, 9,000, or 10,000 people whom we did not capture. That has been a big focus of where we want to go with this registration, the revision, and those other elements of special ballots.

I will make one point here. When we look at the voter turnout in the Yukon for territorial elections, we kind of boast that we were 76.4 percent and that we were second in the country. When you look at that in terms of how that is calculated for Yukon, it is calculated on how many voted over how many were registered. We have probably the lowest registration rate in the country. If you up the registration, which we hope to do, that percentage may drop unless we can get that turnout. That is a big focus of where we are. We want to make sure that we get those people to vote, but there is a large constituency that we want to attract to make sure that they are registered and that they have the information they need to vote, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Cathers: I do appreciate the Chief Electoral Officer's perspective on it. I am just noting, with all due respect, that it differs from the philosophical perspective of the previous Chief Electoral Officer.

What we are left asking is: When changes are being made that could potentially have a significant impact on how hundreds of Yukoners vote — more than enough people to potentially change the results of the last election — what I don't see is the harm in asking the public about this. I am just noting that I want to make it clear to the Chief Electoral Officer that I know that, in terms of the normal process for legislative development, that office is not usually expected to go out and consult with the public on it. I am just asking — and it is a question that I also pose to all Members of the Legislative Assembly — if this change is being brought forward, what is the harm in asking the public for their input on it? Considering the fact that the legislative amendment itself is quite minor, it would be completely possible to bring back the identical

legislative provisions in the Spring Sitting or next fall if the public supports what is being proposed.

But the question, with all due respect to everyone in the Legislative Assembly, is whether the public has a right to be consulted before bureaucrats and politicians decide to reduce their opportunities to vote. Since none of us really know how many of those 206 voters would have cast a ballot or not cast a ballot last time, depending on if the current act had been changed to reflect what is in Bill No. 4, it does leave us in an area where people, I think, genuinely — based on their philosophical views — are talking about changes to the *Elections Act*, but we are potentially limiting the ability for people to vote in the same way that they did in 2016. I would argue that, in my view, ultimately this legislation and Yukon democracy don't belong to any one of us more than they do to all Yukoners. I believe that this bill, the democratic structure that we have, and the Legislative Assembly itself are all institutions that are jointly owned by Yukon citizens.

So, recognizing and respecting that we may have a philosophical difference on this — and I do want to make it clear that I respect the Chief Electoral Officer's comments and perspectives on concerns about integrity of the process. I would also personally agree that, when it comes down to the potential for votes being cast a year before an election — instead of just three months like they were last time — issues around integrity of the election and people's eligibility to vote would certainly dramatically be increased if pre-writ voting was a year ahead, not three months ahead.

Since three months, a month, or a week are also potential options — again, I am left with the question — I don't see the harm in asking Yukoners what their views are on that specific part of the act. Since that portion of the law is only triggered on the fourth anniversary of the last general election, there would be plenty of time to bring back an identical change in the spring or the fall if the public supports it — or a modified change if Yukoners say, "You know what, with all due respect to Elections Yukon and to our elected representatives, we have a different view on this. We would like to see a different option."

I just want to make it clear to the Chief Electoral Officer that I am not trying to have a long philosophical debate about the merits or downsides of pre-writ voting. At this point, I am just asking for clarification. If — noting that he would recommend against it — the Legislative Assembly were to decide that they were going out to public consultation about this topic — either through an electoral reform committee, an all-party committee, or through Elections Yukon directly — how much time would be required to do public consultation and what would the rough cost implications be for that?

Also, another question that I want to add, Mr. Chair, on a different topic related to the data-sharing provisions: Was the Information and Privacy Commissioner consulted before these changes were brought forward? Has she or her office seen the text of the bill and does that office have any concerns with the legislation because of the provisions around either explicit consent or implicit consent — ones that, regarding other legislation, the Information and Privacy Commissioner has expressed some fairly strong views in the past? I would just

wonder whether that has been shared with her and what her thoughts on that are.

Under this legislation, the changes we see — I see that there hasn't been a change made to the section that requires Elections Yukon to provide MLAs and political parties with lists of electors on certain dates. Again, it is mentioned that it is just after the second anniversary of the previous territorial election and before each of the third, fourth, and fifth anniversaries — recognizing that if there is no change to the list, another clause says that the update is not required. The vision of the act certainly was that there would be updated lists available two years after the territorial election and before the third, fourth, and fifth anniversaries and that those would go to registered political parties and to each Member of the Legislative Assembly.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Chair: Ms. White, on a point of order.

Ms. White: Sorry, Mr. Chair. I have read through the *Elections Act* and the amendments a couple of times. I believe that what the Member for Lake Laberge is speaking to is Standing Order 19(b) — speaking to matters other than those under discussion. I believe that it is not included under the proposed amendments to Bill No. 4.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Chair's ruling

Chair: Thank you. I think I have heard enough, Mr. Cathers, on the point of order. I would ask that you direct your questions to the witness and not engage in debate.

There is no point of order. Carry on, Mr. Cathers.

Mr. Cathers: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

What I am asking here is — in this section of the legislation — does Bill No. 4 provide the ability to Elections Yukon to then fulfill the vision that was outlined in section 49.10 of the *Elections Act*? If more is required — whether it be financial resources or something else — could the Chief Electoral Officer just indicate what else is needed and when he anticipates that lists will be provided to MLAs, as envisioned in that section of the current law?

Chair's ruling

Chair: Before you go on, I would like to correct the record, please.

I said that there was no point of order. My intent was that there was a valid point of order and I allow you to continue, but with some specific direction.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Chair, in regard to the member opposite asking the Chief Electoral Officer to speculate on some future that may or may not happen or some kind of — that is not the intent of the Chief Electoral Officer being here today. The intent is for Mr. Maxwell Harvey to speak to the actual amendments of the *Elections Act*. So, to save everybody time, there are a few questions in there that were pertinent to the actual amendments that we are speaking to. There was an awful lot of talk about speculating on some kind of future where

— after public engagement happened, what would/may happen or what it would cost.

I would say that there is no need for the Chief Electoral Officer to have to try to entertain answering those types of questions.

Chair: Mr. Harvey, would you like to answer some questions?

Mr. Harvey: While I would like to stay in my lane, I would just say that, for the issue of special ballots, the recommendation that we put in Bill No. 4 totally stands. It is the process that is used by Elections Canada and most other jurisdictions. The election period affords ample opportunity for everyone to vote —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Chair: Ms. White, on a point of order.

Ms. White: Point of order, Mr. Chair. Pardon me, but it appears that the microphone is not working. Can I move? Can we move the Chief Electoral Officer here? I will move all of my stuff out of the way.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for five minutes. Maybe we'll be able to sort this out.

Recess

Chair: Order, please.

Mr. Harvey, please.

Mr. Harvey: As I was saying, Elections Yukon stands by the recommendations that there is no change as per special ballots pre-writ. We would follow what Elections Canada and most all other jurisdictions follow.

We believe that, within the election period — the 31 days — there are ample opportunities for personnel to vote, and we would stand by that recommendation.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the comments from the witness. I had asked a specific question that perhaps he will answer at a later date around resourcing requirements — if the decision was made otherwise.

I do just want to note that I do appreciate the recommendation by the Chief Electoral Officer. Contrary to the spin that the Premier was attempting to put on this, we're asking questions on behalf of Yukoners, and we're asking questions about public involvement in elections. In doing that, we may have differences of opinion, and where we have differences of opinion, I would hope that we could respectfully have those differences of opinion. I do want to note, especially if the Chief Electoral Officer at all felt otherwise, that I certainly absolutely do respect his opinion, but that also doesn't mean that, when we have questions, we won't ask those questions. Perhaps we will still have a different view after the answers are provided. I do appreciate the work that was done in preparing this legislation.

One question that I had asked was about the involvement of the Information and Privacy Commissioner. I don't disagree with the provisions here in the legislation that provide for increased information sharing by other public bodies to

Elections Yukon. My only question was whether the Information and Privacy Commissioner had any concerns with those provisions. Perhaps the Chief Electoral Officer could provide that clarification. I know as well that the mic problem certainly caused everyone to lose their train of thought until it was resolved. I would just ask if he's able to provide that information.

Following that, I would then turn it over to the Third Party pursuant to agreement to provide them with time to ask questions regarding this legislation, and I would just thank the Chief Electoral Officer for the answers that he has provided here this afternoon.

Mr. Harvey: I did consult with the Information and Privacy Commissioner several times. Her philosophical approach is that she doesn't like to share any information — I won't say "any", but that she did support the changes.

We are working with her office and with her staff to make sure that we have the right privacy and security procedures in place. As a matter of fact, her staff is going to be doing some training for us in support of the legislation that we have put forward. She has been consulted, she has supported the changes, and we are working together to make sure that privacy and security are enforced.

Ms. Hanson: I also join in welcoming the Chief Electoral Officer here today.

I just wanted to go back to a couple of the points. It is my understanding from notes that I have taken previously — Mr. Harvey pointed out the fact that we had about a 76.4 percent turnout, with 18,840 who voted out of 24,000 who are on our list, but the Yukon Bureau of Statistics says that we have a population of 32,600 who are 18 and over.

I have two questions here. In terms of reaching that largest threshold of that potential 32,000 — I am not sure when exactly that date was for that population of 18 and over. I have a note that, of that number, 800 were 16 to 17, so I am curious as to what process you have in mind for refreshing that population going forward for 16-year-olds, because currently, as I understand it, the *Elections Act* provides that 16-year-olds are registered to vote. Is that dependent on this data sharing with the Bureau of Statistics, Yukon Health and Social Services, or the federal government? If you could just elaborate a bit more on how you anticipate us updating that portion of it in particular?

Mr. Harvey: As you say, there are about 800 16- to 17-year-olds in the territory. We know the communities that they live in. The *Elections Act* in 2015 allowed us to register those electors. They are not really registered. They would follow the same process as all others. We would have the data, but we would still be required to actually register them, so they would still have to fill out some forms. One of the things that we will be doing is outreaching in the schools. I have already talked to a number of school officials in different schools and associations to be able to go to that outreach.

We will know who is in those brackets, but they will not be on any list of electors. They will be potential electors. So, it is about outreach and getting them to sign up to be part of the registration.

Ms. Hanson: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Chief Electoral Officer for his response.

It strikes me that, if we are talking about — that is a significant difference in terms of being able to up the numbers of people who are eligible to vote in this territory. So, that rather renders moot the discussion about 206 votes when we are looking at adding another almost 10,000 people to our potential voters list.

It is important, as the Chief Electoral Officer had pointed out to us, that over 15 seats — 591 votes — could have made a difference in terms of the outcome of a majority government or not. So, we will always be mindful of the importance of every single vote, but it is also important to make sure that we have a robust list, as mentioned.

One of the issues around the question of special ballot that I wanted to clarify with you, Mr. Harvey, is the special ballot provisions — the intention to introduce more specific processes with respect to what we call "inter-district" or "out-of-territory" special ballots. So, when I look at — I think it is section 98, but I need to clarify that — of the act that talks about — it basically says that if you are a student or a Government of Yukon employee — it is not section 98. Hopefully the Chief Electoral Officer can clarify for me — absent electors — it is 98 — no, it is not that. Interjurisdictional — I will ask Mr. Harvey to clarify which section it is — but when I read that, I see that it is confined to a Yukon government employee or a student. I use the example that we have many people — not many, but quite a number of people — in this territory who are employees of the federal government. I would use my own example. In a previous life, I was on a federal interchange for a period of a year or so. I was still considered a Yukon resident, and if I am working for the federal government in a federal election, I can cast a vote, but under these special ballot provisions, I wouldn't be able to cast a vote. At that time, I could cast a proxy vote, but I can't cast a ballot now.

So, I am wondering if there is any special underlying intention there, or if there is potential for being able to open it to — more broadly government — in the sense of not just the federal or territorial government. I am wondering why it was restricted to Yukon government employees and students as opposed to enabling those people who actually are resident — intend to be resident and have been resident for many years — but on behalf of the government — it just happens to be a different kind of government — are elsewhere.

Mr. Harvey: In our research for that provision — obviously there are a number of students who study outside the territory. My understanding is that there is only one territorial person who was employed in Ottawa. That position is no longer filled, so there was no eligible territorial government employee.

The question of opening it up to federal or potentially other levels of government is not something we have explored. We haven't explored it. It may be something for future consideration. It may be that, as far as territorially, you must be a territorial government employee. I have no opinion on that per se, other than it is something we can look at in the future. Right now, it is territorial Yukon government employees, as per the legislation. I will find that for you.

Ms. Hanson: The reason I raise it is because it seems to me that it is a provision — if I understand you correctly, Mr. Harvey, this provision has been tracked over from the time when we had proxies, but we no longer have proxies. We have reverted and said — and I agree wholeheartedly with the notion of special ballots, but it seems to me that we weren't intending, in making that transition, to disenfranchising someone because of who their employer is. So, I am asking if this is an oversight in the drafting of the previous legislation as we made the move from saying that we were going to use proxies and that the last election was the last time we were using proxies — we are not doing enumerations, as we are doing the new process now — but we may have missed something. That is a question.

Mr. Harvey: The section is 10(1), where it says, "Government employee or student outside the Yukon." It only makes provision for that. Elections Yukon did not look into expanding that eligibility for special ballot. That is not something we are avoiding, but we have not looked into that and it is outside the scope of this *Elections Act* series of recommendations.

Ms. Hanson: I am not trying to belabour the point, Mr. Chair.

I just want to clarify — was this provision — I see this as a provision that was in the act — and is still in the act — but at the time when the act was enforced with proxies — and I'm wondering if this isn't — the question is: Is this an oversight from when we made the transition from using proxies to special ballots?

Mr. Harvey: It was not looked at. There were many recommendations, when we looked at this *Elections Act*, that need updating and further thought as we go forward. It's something that I'm very interested in getting perspective on, obviously. If that is something that is denying people a vote within the legislation, then it's something we should look at.

I'm not against it; it's just that we did not look at it and it was not considered an oversight. The legislation is quite clear — it said "territorial", and we didn't challenge that.

Ms. Hanson: I appreciate the clarification. It probably is one that needs to be looked at and could we come back to that at another more appropriate time.

I would appreciate it if the Chief Electoral Officer could just outline the importance of having special ballots without the kind of — and the rationale for moving to basically saying anybody — any elector who is eligible to vote — can vote by special ballot versus if you could just elaborate for the record the kind of constraints that were placed on both the timing of special ballots and basically having to find a reason or rationale — and why moving from having a rationale-based — or having somebody else determine whether or not you had a legitimate reason to seek to have a special ballot — because I think that's an important part of this integrity piece that we need to make sure that citizens understand.

Mr. Harvey: When we looked at special ballots — and going through the legislation — the first thing we noticed is that there were different categories of who could actually get a special ballot and different timelines when they had to make an application for a special ballot.

So, the timeline to make an application — just for clarity — is time to have an approved application where your vote would be struck off. So that's not just asking for an application. They've applied, they provide all the documentation, and it's approved. They would get that — a special ballot would be struck off and they would have up to the close of poll to turn it in.

We had day 17. We had day 24. We had day 29. We had 9:00 on day 28. So, we had all these different times about special ballots and all these different categories — institutions, care, absent, remote, electors in small divisions, incarcerated — all these had different provisions and different rules about when they could apply and how they could apply. It was very confusing. It was irregular. Some could even say that it was unfair — why they could have a longer time or less time to do something.

Obviously, we felt that modern mail services, technology, and road and air transportation allowed the interchange of mail and such between districts to improve. What we wanted to do when we looked at special ballots was to simplify it and make it as clear, concise, fair, and consistent as we could across the board.

This tied in with other jurisdictions. Elections Canada was open to everyone once the writ is dropped. As soon as it's dropped, you could go and say, "I want my ballot" and you can vote the exact same day. We supported that rationale. It was about integrity; it was about consistency; it was about intrusive information — we had an envelope, Mr. Chair, that you had to check off that "I am applying for this ballot because I'm incarcerated. I'm in a youth detention centre. I am requesting confidentially because I fear for my physical harm." So, people were actually checking off boxes on this and we even had a form that said, "Explain why you are in physical harm." So very intrusive and unnecessary.

Another aspect of it beyond the access to it was the actual demand for it. People are encouraged by special ballots. They find it is convenient. They can do it in their home. They have lots of time. They can apply for it and have it done. They can hold their ballot as long as they want as long as they make the deadline. So, they can have all the benefits of voting, but at their own convenience and not have to worry about, "Oh, what if it's voting day and I'm sick or something happens." As a voting option, it is important and it is growing. For all those purposes — to make it clear, simple, and concise — we looked at that to reintroduce special ballots as a legitimate voting option.

Special ballots — even the term "special ballots" kind of turned some people — "Well, I don't know if I'm special." But when they talk about special ballots, they are not talking about the ballot being special. They are talking about the elector's circumstances being special because it went outside all the advanced poll and the ordinary poll, which used to be the only way to vote. Advanced poll and ordinary poll — that's it. So, there are many reasons to explore and promote special ballots within the election period, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Hanson: I appreciate that explanation. One of the notes I had is that there is an anticipated increase in special ballot use. I recall that there was a statistic given that, of the

ballots cast in Yukon, seven percent were special ballots — if the witness could confirm that or not — and that, federally, 23 percent of the ballots cast — though I'm not sure if it was the last federal election or the previous one — had been by special ballot.

Mr. Harvey, do you anticipate that we will see — that's almost three to one, for sure — an increase? What kind of anticipated increase in the use of special ballots do the Chief Electoral Office's staff and you anticipate?

Mr. Harvey: We couldn't quantify it. There are many factors that apply to special ballot uptake. Federally, they expanded their advanced polls to four days, for example — and obviously a lot of people use advanced polls as well, so maybe less went to special ballots. We had two days of advanced polls. We believe that we will absolutely get more people on the uptake of advanced polls. We will promote it. We will make sure — well, obviously, it is part of the voter information card, so all those people with registrations who are registered will get a card to say, "Here are your ways to vote. You can vote by advanced poll. Just see your returning officer or go online and get an application, or you are advance poll day 23 or 24 or at ordinary poll on day 31" — whatever those dates are. So, we expect an uptake. Hopefully we will get a lot more — because it is convenient and it does take the risk out of, "What if I'm not available on polling day?"

Ms. Hanson: I appreciate that and appreciate the challenge of trying to forecast exactly the uptake of that, but hopefully it will expand the number of voters participating if they can do it by special ballot.

I would like to go back to some of the questions around the permanent register. There was some discussion about confirming or verifying the elector's location in terms of their address over the course of the development of the legislation through to when it was passed in 2015. Subsequent to that, there has been discussion about geolocation. Is that something that is integrated into the methods that we anticipate adding to the toolbox for confirming where someone is actually physically located, so that's the riding they should be voting in?

Mr. Harvey: That is a huge focus of Elections Yukon right now. We have met, and we have had discussions with our provider, Elections Canada, emergency services and geomatics here, and with Community Affairs to understand this addressing because it's such a critical issue. We will have geographic coordinates for all of the buildings on which we have to be able to assign electors to a building or to a house — I think that's what you're getting at. When we get that map, these are all of the buildings — they call them "rooftop surveys" in geomatic terms because they need it for 911. They can say that, in that building, these are the electors in that building. What makes that so good is that it helps us to correct the addresses that are irregular, but it also helps us to identify where there are gaps. If we have a street — and we talk about completing the registration and say how we got the registration — and it has 100 houses on it, and we see that there are only 40 electors in there — well, that's a big cue for us to say, "I need to send out targeted revision. Go knock on doors and get people to fill out the forms to amplify the list."

That geographic linkage to us is key. We're very involved in that. It is absolutely part of the technology that we have acquired, and it's also part of the data sharing that we get from Elections Canada to help to identify where people are. That all being said, we have thousands of addresses right now — from what we have and what we're getting from Elections Canada — that we're trying to sort out so we can produce these lists that have to be resolved. As I said, we have over 1,000 electors that we don't know exactly which district they belong to. They are on the Alaska Highway somewhere, so that's a very slow and tedious process to do. That's a huge priority.

The permanent register is the cornerstone of our election work. It supports the candidates, the parties and our election workers, and it supports the public. We're working very, very hard. That geomatic — that addressing is key for us.

Ms. Hanson: This is really a key issue. I'm reminded of almost 10 years ago when I ran for election, and I got all excited because I thought, "Oh, goodness, I have a whole bunch of people in this one location, and that's one fell swoop" — and, of course, it's the address on Elliott Street, which is a mailboxes and things kind of location where there are indeed hundreds of addresses, but they don't live in downtown Whitehorse; they live elsewhere. What other means do you have to verify when somebody has a 108 or 118 — I think it's 108 Elliott Street — address, and, no, there is not a high-rise there? Where do we get the other source of information to physically point to their physical location if that's their mailing address for all government purposes, taxation, and whatever?

Mr. Harvey: That's absolutely a critical issue because your mailbox could very easily be in a different electoral district. So, what kind of ID and that kind of thing — what we do for that is that they will be unresolved. We will get a list of electors at mailbox whatever. It might be in Pelly or Ross River, so we know what electoral district or maybe even which polling division that they are in, but we don't have the right address. We're confident that we know where they are, but we don't know their actual civic address. What we would do for that, obviously, is from the different data that we would get. I think that, through some of the different public bodies, they have to have — and they are moving toward more rigour and discipline in requiring a civic address, and 911 and Community Services are pushing more for that in ID. We're using that, and we're also using targeted revision. Between elections, we can do targeted revision as well. It is actually doing a drive-by and having the returning officers say, "Right, I need you to review this list of electors. Here are some unresolved addresses that we have. See if you can help sort that out." It's a process of technology and it's investigation work. It takes 15 or 20 minutes for someone looking in phone books, looking through the mileposts, the street keys and everything else to try to identify — but that's the kind of work that is so different from what happened last time.

So, when you get that list and you are all excited, hopefully — and when we get additional information from Elections Canada from the previous election and from the kind of work that we're doing and the detective work that we're doing — you will get lists that are meaningful and accurate. They won't be

perfect, and we'll identify that we're still working on it, and we will be because it is continuous. I'm very confident that you will be very pleased with the quality of that list, but it is a huge issue that we're working on. We have teams working on it now in different areas to make that happen.

Ms. Hanson: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is encouraging. I would suggest that, in a rural riding — at least it's a riding — and it would be nice to have the right poll, but in an urban riding, it has a material impact because they may not be in the riding at all. So, I can see why it's so important to get that process in place. This brings me to another question. This House will rise on November 27 and legislation will be passed. What is the electoral office's anticipated timeline for (a) commencing, and (b) completing the necessary integration of these various sources of data? When would you, the Chief Electoral Officer, anticipate effectively having an electoral list that would satisfy the objectives that you set out when you made these recommendations to the Members' Services Board with respect to making these amendments to the *Elections Act*?

Mr. Harvey: I will say that the implementation of the register is obviously a major undertaking. We have had to revisit all of the street keys because we were establishing boundaries in a new system. We have old, inaccurate data from 2016 and we have data from Elections Canada that doesn't fully align, so we are working through that. Right now, we have no list of electors. I can't produce for you a list of electors right now, saying "Oh, where is my permanent register?" and then press a button. We are close, but we are not there. I had hoped we would be there.

Right now, our list of electors is from 2016. That's what we got when it was the final list of electors. We know that is horribly inaccurate now for many reasons. The timeline for that — because that is a huge question: Okay, it all sounds good, but what does it mean for actual implementation? I will say that, to meet the legislative requirement — so November 7 — and we were aware of that November 7 deadline and we were working toward it. If we had something to offer, we absolutely would have offered it. My intention is that, hopefully within the next two to three weeks — I will say definitely before Christmas — you will get a list from Elections Yukon. There are two elements: one is to give you a good list, and the other is that we are working with the Privacy Commissioner to make sure that, before I give you a USB or something, we have the protocols in place. That's a concurrent activity that is going on which is slowing down some of the processes that we need to do.

I am required once a year on that anniversary date, if there is a change, to provide that. It does not preclude me from an additional offering of an update. So, I am thinking that I will get the Elections Canada list sometime after Christmas. It's very slow; they obviously have millions to do and I'm not on the top of their list to get stuff out to. It will be in the spring that we provide an updated list that is using some of the Elections Canada data. I want to have that for the spring and certainly before June 1, which is our internal readiness date to say, "Okay, right now, we could hold an election. We have our forms, our materials, and our people." It might be a bit ugly

because we still have work to do, but we could carry out the election, and we will get better and more prepared as we go along. Crossing that threshold will be on June 1, as we go.

A long story short: You will get something in the next couple of weeks. We are almost there. I will say: Be advised that this is what we have now and we have throughout the territory 1,200 unresolved electors who are not included on the list. Then hopefully we will update it once I get more information from Elections Canada sometime in the spring.

Ms. Hanson: I just want to clarify then, Mr. Chair: One key element is the Elections Canada data. Where do the municipality and First Nation governments' data sources fit in there? One would assume that electors for the municipality and the people who are eligible to vote in a First Nation government's process would also be electors in federal elections. But I'm not sure if it's required or if you feel it's necessary to have that complete overlay before you have 100-percent confidence, or will you be able to move forward with Elections Canada and then supplement it later? I'm just asking which is your order.

Mr. Harvey: Thank you for that, because we have met with the public bodies already to discuss information. I've met with Education, Health and Social Services, and the Yukon Bureau of Statistics. I also met with Highways and Public Works to discuss information sharing. The public body information will help us resolve some of these unresolved issues.

Municipalities and First Nations — once this passes, they will be allowed to give me their lists to update addresses, which will be very helpful for their municipal roles, to identify the names that we can go and track. So they are important.

I will say that the municipality and First Nations are only on arrangement. They have no obligation to share any data, but if we can work out something for electoral purposes that you say, "Right. This is it" — which I believe they are interested in — at least in some of the discussions I have had with a limited number of First Nations and with the major municipality on that.

To me, Elections Canada is a very prime source, because it is the whole territory — it is everybody — public bodies as well. It will be very key as well. We haven't got it all worked out, so we are seeing how we can incorporate that.

Ms. Hanson: When we were talking about Elections Canada — and we were talking about the various — so the federal polling system is different from the territorial polling system — is it ever anticipated that we would have matching poll definitions so that we wouldn't then have to transfer? Because the current data systems are not the same. So, if you look at the federal polls for Whitehorse, they are all different from the territorial polls for Whitehorse, and it is really hard to migrate data that way. Is that ever something that we could anticipate?

Mr. Harvey: I will say that this is a huge focus of Elections Yukon — to standardize and stop reinventing the wheel. We have worked closely with Elections Canada for the last election. I will say "worked closely". We collaborated with them about understanding where they were holding their

venues and other aspects of their election. It is a huge topic when we have interjurisdictional meetings about how we can support each other not only in polling places, but in equipment and understanding — “Hey, that is a better process” or something that makes a bit more sense.

So, it helps us mature and evolve. It is very much — for me — going from an event-based process, where we are trying to prepare for one election, as opposed to a process-based event to “I don’t care when the event is; I’m ready” — because I have all the equipment. I don’t have to reinvent the wheel and reinvent forms and do this, because it is another event — so no panic — this is the event. I have the processes — a few tweaks, and off we go. You can have 10 elections — I don’t care — because that is just the peak amount of work. It is all the preparation work that allows us to deliver on those election periods. That is our focus when we talk about readiness — it is having that preparation work. Call it when you want — we are ready to go. The more time we have, the more time we will have to prepare and do even better.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Harvey, you have talked about having a June 1 drop-dead date or come-alive date — whatever you want to call it — for this new electoral list. I guess that I shouldn’t make the assumption here and ask the question: Do you anticipate any concurrent activity with respect to other recommended changes to the *Elections Act*? You have mentioned that this is the first of a series of some changes that you anticipate. Could you give us a sense of when you might anticipate bringing forward additional amendments for consideration? Is it after June 1? I can’t imagine before, but maybe you have parallel tracks operating here. I would just be curious as to what they are.

Mr. Harvey: Mr. Chair, absolutely. Obviously, electoral processes are something that are always evolving. We have captured many areas where we believe that there is value to the elector and to the political entities if they incorporate these changes. To that end, you can expect something from the Chief Electoral Officer, hopefully, in the near future.

I will say that this process — and when I did my acknowledgement at the beginning — is kind of different from the traditional processes for recommended changes. Ideally, after the last election, the Chief Electoral Officer report would have tabled a document that said, “Here are 100 things that I have noticed in the last election for recommended change. This is what it is, and this is why we think it would change.”

The process would be: Okay, the Assembly looks at it and the subcommittee — or however they want to handle it — and say, “Right, there are 10 we’re interested in — there are two we are interested in. Carry on.” Then you would go through the process. So, we never had that process of that document.

So, I am trying to catch up and I appreciate the support all around that kind of allowed this to get an accelerated look. I want to get this thing back on track. So, my view is to potentially offer a small number of additional recommendations that are not too dramatic for consideration by the House, to say, “It makes sense; let’s do it.” We can go from there. You can have it reviewed and say, “yes, no, yes, no” — whatever — and try to get it back on that kind of track.

I can guarantee you that, after the next election, you will get a document that will speak to changes in the *Elections Act* and potentially a whole re-look to make it plain language and a bit more user friendly, for sure.

Ms. Hanson: I would like to thank the Chief Electoral Officer. I appreciate very much the commitment that he is demonstrating here and the reinforcing for all of us here that the *Elections Act* is a process — a document — and we want to make it as effective and fair as possible. I look forward to those future recommendations and the discussion thereof.

Chair: Mr. Harvey, I would like to thank you before you leave. Thank you very much for appearing here this afternoon on behalf of the Committee and all members of the House.

The time designated for the appearance of witnesses pursuant to Committee of the Whole Motion No. 1 has now expired. The Chair shall therefore thank Maxwell Harvey, Chief Electoral Officer, for appearing as a witness today. The Chair shall now rise and report to the House.

Witness excused

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair’s report

Mr. Hutton: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and directed me to report progress.

Also, pursuant to Committee of the Whole Motion No. 1, the Chief Electoral Officer appeared before Committee of the Whole to discuss matters related to Bill No. 4, *Act to Amend the Elections Act*.

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.

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

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

The following sessional paper was tabled November 12, 2019:

34-3-19

Yukon Hospitals — A journey together — Year in review 2018-2019 and Yukon Hospital Corporation Consolidated Financial Statements March 31, 2019 (Frost)



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 22

3rd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Wednesday, November 13, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
Don Hutton	Mayo-Tatchun

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King
Liz Hanson	Whitehorse Centre

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Dan Cable
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, November 13, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Ms. Frost: I ask my colleagues in the Legislative Assembly to please help me in welcoming Tristan Peter to the Legislature today. Tristan is the great-nephew of the late Joel Peter. We have a dear friend from Old Crow, Catherine Merangu, as well as Frances Ross-Furlong, and of course Vuntut Gwitchin member Stephen Mills. Welcome today.

Applause

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I would ask my colleagues to help me welcome members of our staff from the Tourism and Culture department. We have Jonathan Parker, Assistant Deputy Minister of Strategic Initiatives; Pierre Germain, Director of Tourism; Sarah Marsh, Manager of Industry Services; and my executive assistant, Edwine Veniat.

Thank you very much for coming.

Applause

Speaker: Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In remembrance of Joel Peter

Hon. Ms. Frost: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government, the Official Opposition, and the Third Party to pay tribute to a Gwich'in elder, the late Joel Peter. The Gwich'in communities mourn the loss of a very kind and gentle elder — one of our last true, Gwich'in knowledge-keepers, known as a gatekeeper and educator of our Gwich'in practices and teachings.

Joel Peter, the son of the late Tabitha Kyikavichik, and the nephew to the late Reverend Dr. Ellen Bruce, sadly left this world on October 9, with his family at his side in Vancouver. In the true Gwich'in fashion, while following our traditional practices, Joel was educated in the Yay'no'daii — long ago — way by those two wonderful Gwich'in matriarchs.

Joel was held in the highest regard in Old Crow. He never sought recognition or praise for his contributions in preserving our heritage and culture. He worked endless hours with the Gwich'in heritage team documenting and recording the old language and interpreting the stories recorded from the long-ago ancestors. A true elder, in his quest to preserve the language, he quietly supported all young people in our

Gwich'in communities by either helping them to learn the language or educating them with stories of days gone by.

Joel was a man of few words, but those words that he shared were wise words. He was a friend and a mentor to many. A lot of hearts are broken, but many lives have been made better as a result of his teachings. Joel knew that children raised and steeped in their language and culture have proven to be academically better off and stable contributors to our community. The good memories and teachings that he left us will bring comfort to each and every one of those who have come into contact with our Gwich'in legend.

Joel spent many hours as a Canadian Ranger. His most informative role was to share his survival skills in the harsh northern climate with his fellow Ranger colleagues. He also spent a lot of years with his colleagues on the North Yukon Renewable Resources Council. This was a role that he took very seriously, as he was able to emphasize the importance of local traditional knowledge and merging that with the contemporary practices resulting in a co-management regime that all agreed to in good-faith discussions. The teachings that he so willingly shared sustained the Gwich'in people and will for millennia.

He spent his whole life on the land, on his trapline, in Old Crow Flats. He was a hunter and a provider for his family; he especially provided support to single moms and the grandmothers in our community. Joel could often be seen heading out on the land to his trapline with a nephew or a younger person from the community to show them the ropes. He was a phenomenal man — professor of the land, mentor of the language. He was the most humble of souls, one of the few out trapping but also living his quiet leadership role in guiding Gwich'in language research. He respected hard work, good humour, and a new story.

With a life spent on the land, he was an invaluable leader to the North Yukon Renewable Resources Council, giving advice and direction toward new protected areas, like the Ch'ihillii Chik wetlands, the Peel land use plan, and the north Yukon land use plan — plans that have ingenious and subtle ways to get the talkers to move the conversation along from discussion to action. Most notably, his success and contributions to many land use plans in the Vuntut Gwitchin traditional territory have proven to be most valuable and resulted in successful plans — always merging, of course, traditional practices with contemporary measures.

He was always interested in learning. He took college math courses in his 70s because "It's good to keep learning new things," he said. He liked spending time with John, his tutor, and in tutoring the young people in our community or anyone who lived their life with kindness, humility, and good intentions.

Not only was he eager to work with or educate his own people, but he would offer and share with university students who frequented Old Crow, helping them to get grounded while assisting with their university research or thesis papers.

Joel took notice of and supported the good he saw around him in Old Crow by educating young leaders, young moms, emerging students, and athletes. He was known for his patience

when working with new leaders like me. He worked with us all to have an in-depth knowledge of Din'gi'jik, our Gwich'in language, culture and beliefs.

In his final years, he genuinely shared his knowledge and comprehension of the dinjii ZhuH Kyuu — which means “in the native way as the grandparents have taught” — in an ongoing effort to preserve dii'gii'jik. His nephew Geoffrey Peter so eloquently described his uncle by stating — and I quote: “He spent his whole life developing his skills and knowledge necessary to make a safe and final journey.”

I personally would like to describe Joel in these words: “Yeindoo gwinah'in — that one sees far ahead — six or seven years ahead into the future” — always looking to preserve and document our traditions for our community to use into the future.

Hai' choo. Greatest of thanks to Joel. Mahsi'.

Applause

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Speaker: Introduction of visitors outside of the time provided for in the Order Paper.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the grade 12 Vanier social justice class to the Assembly, taught by my spouse, Janet Clarke. I have the list. I apologize in advance if I miss anyone, and I also apologize in advance if I mispronounce anybody's name.

So, welcome to the Assembly: Hanz Alojipan, Arden Anderson, Prabjyot Bajwa, Tatiana Cabiso, Cindy Cacatian, Jose Echeveria, Sasha Farrow, Johan Geshev, Thomas Janzen, Benjamin Kates, Tony Kim, Shirley Lehr, Brian Mabilog, Jamvee Madrigal, Christine Miral, Nints'ia Murphy, Katambe Nguvauva, Uno Nguvauva, Marithe Planas, Abby Roberts, Chantelle Scheper, Sonjaa Schmidt, Jimbert Trinidad, Chad Williams, and Lucas Yuill.

Welcome, all — and as I said, I apologize for my mispronunciation in advance. Welcome to the Assembly.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with partners and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive Yukon strategy in response to the final report on the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to:

(1) establish a publication date for regulations giving effect to Bill No. 23, *Lobbyists Registration Act*; and

(2) table the communications plan for informing the public, including lobbyists, about the existence of a Yukon lobbyist registry and how it will operate.

Ms. McLeod: I rise to give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of all documents from the Government of Yukon outlining:

(1) why the recent Housing First project came in at \$1.4 million overbudget;

(2) why the opening of the recent Housing First project was delayed;

(3) what the total operating costs will be going forward; and

(4) how many new FTEs will be created to staff the facility.

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

THAT this House urges the Minister of Highways and Public Works to do a better job next year of ensuring that highways that get ripped up actually get resurfaced the same year by taking actions, including ensuring that contracts are issued early enough in the year to allow resurfacing to be done before the end of the construction season.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to ensure that the Champagne dump is open for public use by taking actions, including:

(1) working with the contractor to resolve the current service disruptions;

(2) making sure that the facility is open during scheduled hours; and

(3) recognizing the importance of ensuring that, when tendering landfill contracts in the future, bids are assessed on a value-driven model that includes local participation and knowledge to better meet the needs of communities.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Tourism development strategy

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I rise today to speak about an important milestone in the implementation of the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy — Sustainable Tourism. Our Path. Our Future. — 2018-2028*.

Tourism is a vital part of our economy and a sector we want to grow sustainably. Our Liberal government is committed to doing that. This strategy is multi-year and it is goal-oriented. It lays out a vision for tourism in Yukon to be a vibrant and sustainable component of our economy and society for the benefit of future generations.

Measuring Yukoners' attitudes is a new direction for a tourism strategy, which again puts us at the forefront of

Canadian and international tourism destinations. Yukoners deserve to have their voices heard on tourism and will play a critical role in determining its future in the territory. I'm very pleased to announce that we now have the results of our inaugural Yukon resident perceptions of tourism survey.

The survey was conducted from mid-July to mid-September 2019 and asked Yukoners for their perceptions on whether tourism is good for Yukon overall, whether it is good for their community, whether it benefits the economy, and whether they feel it contributes positively to Yukoners' quality of life. I'm proud to say that the initial results for the survey show high satisfaction and support for Yukon's tourism industry, with 94 percent of Yukoners feeling that tourism is good for the Yukon and 89 percent believing that tourism is good for their community.

However — and more importantly — we now have established a baseline for measuring this goal going forward. We will administer the survey every two years. If satisfaction levels remain high, that is a good thing, but if the satisfaction levels begin to drop, this will be useful information. It will tell us that we need to do further research to learn why it's dropping and change course in the way tourism is being managed.

This is at the heart of ensuring that tourism in Yukon is sustainable. If Yukoners are concerned about how tourism is impacting the quality of life in Yukon, then we must take action.

Tourism can only succeed if Yukoners are engaged and supportive. This is also at the heart of evidence-based decision-making, which is the hallmark of the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*.

In conclusion, the survey results suggest that we are in a good place when it comes to Yukoners' attitudes about tourism development, and our goal through the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* is to ensure that we stay there. They reflect very well on our dedicated, professional, world-class tourism industry. Our industry works so hard and does such an amazing job welcoming visitors to the territory, but more importantly, we are meeting our commitments to implement the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* and to establish baseline data to objectively measure the success of the strategy on a regular basis.

I thank you for the opportunity to remark on these highlights and look forward to discussing further details with members opposite.

Ms. Van Bibber: Thank you for the opportunity to respond today. I appreciate the minister letting us know that the government conducted a survey asking Yukoners if they feel tourism is good. I think it's fantastic that so many Yukoners feel this way. Obviously, it is such an important part of our territory's economy.

I do have some questions about the cost benefit of this survey, though. How much did the government spend to go out and ask Yukoners whether or not they feel that tourism is good? What is the return on investment for this expenditure? What tangible benefit do Yukoners get from the government

conducting a survey on whether or not Yukoners feel that tourism is good?

Regarding the survey, I took a quick look through it to see who was surveyed. It says that 635 households completed the survey; however, it does not break it down by households and which communities. Can the minister let us know how many households in the communities were surveyed?

I also have some questions about some conflicting numbers throughout the report. Page 6 of the survey results say that 35 percent of Yukoners thought visitor traffic negatively affects travel on Yukon highways and in the communities; however, if you go to page 9, it says that only 16 percent of Yukoners say that visitor traffic negatively affects travel on Yukon highways. So that is interesting.

Page 6 says 21 percent of Yukoners think that tourism has a negative impact on Yukon's natural resources. Again, page 9 says that 13 percent think that it is a main concern.

There are a number of examples like this throughout the entire document that do seem to provide different numbers for very similar questions. I'm sure that the minister has a good explanation, but I'm wondering what the value to Yukoners is in having different results for what is essentially the same question.

I notice that the minister closed her remarks by saying that she looked forward to discussing further details with us today, so I'm hopeful that this means that she will be able to answer these questions in her follow-up.

Ms. Hanson: You know, Mr. Speaker, the Yukon NDP is indeed happy that it is the Minister of Tourism and Culture and not the Minister of Highways and Public Works, as the statement sent to the opposition indicated this morning. We are happy that the ministerial statement on the results of the Yukon resident perceptions on tourism survey has been released. It was quietly posted yesterday on the government site without being tabled in this House.

We understand that the survey was apparently conducted over the summer and into the fall. It would be useful — as we heard my colleague from the Yukon Party just say — to have heard from the minister what the number of respondents was and what their demographic and geographic distribution was. However, from a quick perusal of the survey, it would appear that the minister is basing her rosy assessment on responses from 635 people who agreed to participate in this survey. That may indeed be a good starting point.

It is also interesting, Mr. Speaker, that the minister does acknowledge in this statement the importance of ensuring that tourism is sustainable. However, rather than waiting to see if Yukoners are concerned about how tourism is impacting the quality of life in Yukon and then deciding that they must take action, one would think, given that this survey is ostensibly part of the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* — sustainable tourism for 2018-28 — that the minister responsible for the success of Yukon tourism would determine that strategically. You don't wait until a problem occurs to try to change course. You anticipate the challenges, and you work to strategically address them.

This fall, the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon hosted its annual meeting in Dawson City. The minister was there along with many of us, as were key officials. A reasonable expectation would be a statement from the minister regarding measures to ensure the sustainability of Yukon's tourism sector as we work to grow the sector to reflect the substantive, important issues raised by several of the keynote speakers at the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon conference. For example, the work of Megan Epler Wood — Harvard-based founder of the first ecotourism institute in the world — spoke on a range of issues relating to managing the invisible burden of tourism. Mr. Speaker, the evidence and the experience gleaned from other parts of Canada and of the world can be key to avoiding the same pitfalls and the same negative local reaction from poorly planned and poorly implemented tourism strategies.

Rather than simply using the platform of a ministerial statement to pat herself and her colleagues on the back, perhaps the minister could read *Sustainable Tourism on a Finite Planet — Environmental, Business and Policy Solutions* by the Tourism Industry Association's keynote speaker and report back to this House on how her strategic plan for sustainable tourism addresses the key factors identified therein.

We look forward to that analysis from the Minister of Tourism on this vitally important part of Yukon's economy.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I do thank the members opposite for their remarks, although some of them seemed a bit personal — but will overlook that because this is really a vitally important part of our Yukon economy. I'm happy to stand today to speak about something that's so important.

I will answer a few of the questions that were posed in terms of the cost. The total cost for this survey was \$16,500. We initiated the Yukon Bureau of Statistics to conduct the survey. Every community in Yukon participated — 23 Yukon communities. We do have the ability to break down and customize the results of the survey into the seven Yukon tourism regions and some individual communities that we were really interested in ensuring that we had specific data on.

I would be happy to have more technical briefings with the members opposite. Again, this is brand new data for us. The *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* was borne out of the largest public engagement process undertaken by the Department of Tourism and Culture. This process was guided by a steering committee made up of 15 stakeholders or partners representing the tourism industry, Yukon First Nations, the arts and culture community, as well as Yukon government.

All of the goals that came out of the strategy were very strategic and came from all of our stakeholders and from Yukoners. As mentioned, a critical aspect of the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* is that it is goal-oriented. Where we establish goals, we must establish mechanisms to objectively measure the progress toward achieving these goals.

This certainly isn't about me patting myself on the back in any way. It is about ensuring that we have good baseline data to go forward. The results are what they are — 94 percent of

Yukoners who were surveyed felt that tourism was serving us, that they were happy and have a good attitude about it.

To be specific, the Yukon Tourism Development Strategy Steering Committee endorsed and proposed the following three goals: to double revenue to Yukon businesses attributable to tourism by 2028; establish a framework that measures the sustainability of tourism development; and ensure that at least 80 percent of Yukoners have a positive attitude toward tourism.

Goal No. 1 is business revenue growth and already has a reliable indicator in place. The Yukon Bureau of Statistics conducts the Yukon business survey, which collects information about revenue and gross domestic product attributable to tourism. So we already have that mechanism in place. Goal No. 2 is to establish a sustainability framework, which is all about ensuring that tourism is managed sustainably. Ensuring such a framework will put Yukon at the forefront of the sustainable tourism movement in Canada and, indeed, globally.

Mr. Speaker, I will just speak now because I just have to address one of the comments that the Member of the Third Party made about the tourism conference in Dawson. In fact, most of the keynote speakers said that Yukon was at the cutting edge and leading in a lot of ways. I will be happy to continue to have that conversation in this House.

Thank you very much for the opportunity.

Speaker: This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Alaska Highway corridor upgrades

Mr. Hassard: I have some questions for the Minister of Highways and Public Works regarding planned changes to the Alaska Highway near the Erik Nielsen International Airport. An open house was held last night at the Transportation Museum to go over this project. It appears that this multi-year project will expand the Alaska Highway up to eight lanes in certain areas and impact a number of businesses in the area either directly or indirectly. The minister confirmed yesterday that the Liberals were in discussions with the Airport Chalet about expropriating their land and building. The plans also see the government having to buy out a portion of the property designated for a new gas station and convenience store.

Mr. Speaker, we are wondering if the minister can tell us how much money has been budgeted to buy out property owners that will have land or buildings expropriated for this project?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I'm more than happy this afternoon to talk about the Alaska Highway safety projects we have planned over the next several years. The government has done extensive assessment and planning work along the Alaska Highway through Whitehorse. We're focusing on intersection safety improvements that consider all users, including large trucks, personal vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians. This is a very narrow stretch of highway. There is an awful lot of traffic moving through this area, and it isn't the safest stretch of road in the territory.

So, we're going to make some really profound improvements that will make that a much safer stretch of road for residents and for traffic going through there. The improvements to Range Road, along with a new intersection in the vicinity of the new Toyota dealership on the Alaska Highway, are now substantially complete.

Mr. Hassard: I guess yesterday when we got an answer from this minister, that was the first and last time that is going to happen this Sitting. This plan also calls for new access to the Salvation Army Adult Resource Centre halfway house; however, we were told last night that the government is also in negotiations with the Salvation Army to purchase this property as well.

Can the minister tell us why these negotiations are taking place and what the government plans to do with this property?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I have to disagree with the Leader of the Official Opposition, because I know that, yesterday on the second question, he complimented me on my second answer. So, there we have two answers, and I'm going to give another now, Mr. Speaker. He has already contradicted himself.

The fact is that we have a very narrow stretch of road. There's an awful lot of development that has happened on the right-of-way along that stretch of road, and we are working very hard with the property owners to make sure that we acquire the right-of-way access that's necessary for the safe use of highways.

I am not going to, on the floor of the House, tell the member opposite how much our negotiating stance is. That would be counterproductive to a government that is in respectful negotiations with property owners in that area to acquire the right-of-way land that is currently occupied.

As far as the safety improvements, we can talk about that all afternoon. We are doing great work there putting in new crosswalks and lights that the residents of Hillcrest and Valleyview have asked for over the years. We're actually moving forward with that to make this a stretch of highway that's a lot safer for motorists, for bicyclists, for pedestrians, and for residents who use this area all the time.

Mr. Hassard: So, just for the minister's information, when I say "first and last", that doesn't mean two answers.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, Yukoners deserve to know how government is spending their money, so I think it's unfortunate that the minister refuses to answer this.

Over the past three years, the opposition has identified other safety concerns in the Whitehorse corridor of the Alaska Highway. We've been told by this minister that, for the time being, the government is focusing its efforts on the project that will expand the size of the highway in Hillcrest to up to eight lanes in certain intersections. However, this project has three phases and it will take place over three construction seasons.

Mr. Speaker, we want to know: Will this be the only project that deals with safety concerns in the Whitehorse corridor over these three years?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I can assure the members opposite that safety is on a lot of people's minds. This is the project we have identified right now.

I have been talking to my colleague in Copperbelt North who has raised some concerns with me on several occasions about areas north of town. I have taken a ride-along with the Member for Copperbelt South who has also expressed many pressing needs along the Alaska Highway. I know that my colleagues north of town have also expressed some.

There is an awful lot of need here, Mr. Speaker, and we are working through it in a thoughtful and methodical manner. I have talked in this House an awful lot about safety. We're doing the brush-clearing across all 5,000 kilometres of road. That's a big initiative we're doing.

We're also working very hard to make sure that the Alaska Highway through Whitehorse is improved. This year, we have taken some great measures in and around Range Road and fixed some pressing needs there — around Sumanik Drive and Range Road around the Toyota dealership and others and the new municipal services building.

Next year, we are going to turn our sights to the Alaska Highway through the area constrained by the airport. That's a really, really tricky piece of road because it is so narrow and it has a lot of users who want to use it. We have heard about the bicyclists and we have all seen those. So, we're going to continue to work to make this a safe road for all users.

Question re: Waters Act and regulations

Mr. Kent: On November 7, the Premier told this Legislature that his government has developed a new interpretation of the *Waters Act* and the regulations. He suggested that this work to reinterpret the act and the regulations was done in coordination with the chair of the Water Board. His exact quote was — and I will quote again from Hansard: "... the people who are in place now, including the secretariat, including the board, the good folks in Executive Council Office — all working together on a new interpretation — a new interpretation of very solid regulations and legislation."

So, yesterday I asked the Premier about this and he said that there was no new interpretation. So, Mr. Speaker, who are we to believe: last week's Premier, who said his government came up with a new interpretation of the *Waters Act* and the regulations, or yesterday's Premier, who said that there is no new interpretation?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Certainly not the Yukon Party.

Mr. Speaker, in 2018, the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Water Board signed an agreement that set out a governance relationship between the two parties. The memorandum of understanding was an important foundational step in clarifying the roles and the working relationships, as I have said here in the past on the floor of the Legislative Assembly. The Yukon government and the Yukon Water Board recognize the need for ongoing information exchange relative to their prospective jurisdictions and areas therein while also respecting the independent decision-making authority of the Water Board with respect to applications.

Since April 1, 2003, the Yukon Water Board has had the authority, under the *Placer Mining Act*, to perform certain functions, and also under the *Waters Act*. Again, these functions

need to be looked at from time to time. I am glad that this government has decided to endeavour to help with industry, but to also help with the quasi-judicial board when it comes to really important issues like the protection and use of our waters.

Mr. Kent: So, on November 7, the Premier said that the Executive Council Office was part of some process to come up with a new interpretation of the *Waters Act* and the regulations. Yesterday, he said there was no new interpretation. Both versions of the Premier's story can't be true.

I will just remind the Premier that Yukoners deserve accurate information out of all of their elected officials. MLAs are their community's voice in the Legislative Assembly, and when the Premier uses his time in this House to spread misinformation instead of advocating for his constituents — well, that is disappointing.

Can the Premier explain what he meant on November 7 when he said the government — including the Executive Council Office — were all working together on a new interpretation of the *Waters Act* and regulations?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, misinformation is definitely the bailiwick of the Yukon Party and it is always a great opportunity for me to get up on the floor of the Legislative Assembly and clear the record. As noted in the agreement, we also shared an interest and have committed to working collaboratively to improve efficiencies and the regulatory process for water licences and for class 4 mining operations. I am very pleased with our communications and collaboration with the Water Board and we are continuing to engage on various topics, including wetlands, and we spoke about that yesterday.

The members opposite don't want to see a hearing, but again, I think that more communication — whether that is with the secretariat, with the chair, or with the board, me, industry, or First Nation governments — their land departments — you name it — these are great conversations to be had. The members opposite can criticize us for saying “the Yukon” one day and then “the Yukon” the next day, but what is really important is that these conversations are happening.

What's really important is that we're working in collaboration; we're not using — unlike the previous government — the quasi-judicial shield against trying to work on issues of multiple interests not only for the Water Board, not only for the secretariat, the chair, and me, but also for the industry and people who use and want to protect our water systems.

Mr. Kent: Also on November 7, the Premier told this Legislature that his government had been working on reducing red tape with the YESAA and Water Board processes. Yesterday, we asked for a tangible example of any red tape that has been reduced over the last three years. The Premier couldn't point to even one single example. Instead, all he talked about was new processes and some of the hoops his government has created for industry to jump through. But as referenced, he has also pointed to the Water Board MOU as being the silver bullet for this industry.

So, I'm going to ask him one specific question with respect to that MOU: As a result of that MOU, has the average time it takes to approve a licence improved?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I see what the member opposite did there with the “silver bullet” comment. That was very clever.

Mr. Speaker, this is extremely important work that we're engaging in. As noted, again, this agreement — we are working on shared interests, and we have a common ability to work together collaboratively to improve the efficiencies of the regulatory process, and that's exactly what we're going to continue to do.

I know that the member opposite might be a little hard done by, because in his time, mining was drying up, and now, under the direction of the Deputy Premier and the whole-of-government approach here — working past just our government organizations, but into the quasi-judicial world and having greater communication there with the Water Board and respecting their opinions — I guess the former Leader of the NDP doesn't want us to do that — but again, we believe that these conversations and these memoranda of understanding or even the MLII process through Energy, Mines and Resources or the YESAA reset or the memorandum of understanding with working with other indigenous governments in the Yukon — all of these initiatives are things that the other government wouldn't do. They went to Ottawa with Bill S-6 without really engaging on major changes to our industry, and we're still dealing with the ramifications of those actions.

I can see why the members opposite, as they peer in from the outside, are worried about this process, but we're not hearing the same from the First Nation governments that we are trying to move forward with on these issues.

Question re: Alaska Highway corridor upgrades

Ms. Hanson: When the Minister of Highways and Public Works announced that this government would be pursuing improvements to the Alaska Highway corridor, he said they would be doing things differently from the previous Yukon Party government, and for a moment, things looked promising.

The department brought in highway safety expert Dr. Paul de Leur and a representative from Yukon's chief medical officer of health to speak to the importance of building infrastructure that protects pedestrians and promotes active transport. They both stated that the best way to protect walkers and cyclists was to separate them from traffic. These principles, however, don't seem to have made it into the plans for the Alaska Highway expansion between Hillcrest and the airport.

At a Highways and Public Works presentation last night, residents again questioned why this government refuses to include a separated crossing like an underpass or a bridge. Can the minister explain why this government is opposed to incorporating a separate crossing for active transport into the Alaska Highway expansion plans?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Well, I will continue my answer. I am glad to talk about this, because it is very important to Whitehorse, Mr. Speaker — the entire city.

The government has done extensive assessment and planning work along the Alaska Highway through Whitehorse. We are focused on intersection safety improvements and considered all users, including large trucks, personal vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians. Improvements to Range Road, along with a new intersection in the vicinity of the new Toyota dealership on the Alaska Highway, are now substantially complete. The new multi-purpose trail connecting the southern end of Range Road to the airport and Black Street trail is now paved. The traffic lights are now installed and are operational. Having a pedestrian-controlled traffic signal crossing will improve pedestrian and cyclist safety.

We will continue to keep stakeholders informed and seek their input. I know that the members opposite were at the meeting last night. I know that they talked about an underpass, and the engineering difficulties with that are that it is a very flat piece of ground and how much land is actually required to put in an underpass. I don't know why the member opposite didn't hear that answer last night, but that is really what happened and, when we looked at it from an engineering point of view, why it was difficult and expensive to put in an underpass in that area. It was something we looked at and were not able to do, but we have got other safety improvements to make sure that cyclists, pedestrians, and others can cross the Alaska Highway safely in front of Hillcrest and Valleyview.

Ms. Hanson: The government will be investing tens of millions of dollars on the expansion of the Alaska Highway with the stated aim of improving safety and increasing traffic flow. While those goals may be achieved, it is apparent that supporting pedestrian safety and active transportation are less important to this government.

The City of Whitehorse transportation demand management plan sets a target of doubling the percentage of residents who use active transport by 2036, with the hope of offsetting emissions and reducing congestion from the city's growing population. The city's 2018 bicycle network plan surveyed Whitehorse residents and found that more than 50 percent of cyclists felt unsafe or very unsafe and that the biggest deterrent to cycling was traffic safety.

A controlled crossing out of Hillcrest is at least two years away, and residents at last night's meeting were clear that a traffic light is not a safe option for crossing multiple highway lanes.

What meetings did the Government of Yukon have with the City of Whitehorse to ensure that the highway expansion complements the city's active transportation goals?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I appreciate the former Leader of the Third Party's interest in alternate forms of transportation. I too am a cyclist, as is my colleague, the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes. We are also cyclists on this side of the House. I cross that highway myself on my way to work in the morning in the dark of winter. It's a little bit lighter now because of daylight saving time, but I do cross the highway and do appreciate some of the concerns that have been raised there.

Mr. Speaker, we now have a controlled traffic light on the highway because of the work that we have done. It is not yet at Hillcrest. I wish there was some way that we could expedite the

work in front of Hillcrest, but, Mr. Speaker, this takes a lot of planning and a lot of work on the part of Highways and Public Works. I'm very pleased with the work of the engineering department in Highways and Public Works with the consultations that they have done with the community to make sure that this project that we heard from the community was a priority. We understand that, from a territory-wide perspective, this is a very important stretch of highway; it is the only highway we have that connects the south to Dawson City and to Alaska. It's a very important stretch of highway. There's a lot of traffic going through there, and it's important that it's safe. It does impact the communities of Hillcrest, Valleyview, and others.

We have made an investment, and this work is going to be done in two years.

Ms. Hanson: The minister just said that it's not safe now and that it's going to be two years before it may be partially safe.

The minister often talks about how keen he is to modernize government, yet this project seems to be looking to the past rather than to the future. On-road vehicle transportation accounts for nearly 50 percent of all emissions in the City of Whitehorse, and the Alaska Highway expansion is clearly not geared toward reducing personal vehicle use.

The Premier has said that the Yukon government is applying a climate lens to all of its projects. This government has also stated that its strategy for climate change, energy, and a green economy will be released shortly, yet here we have a significant infrastructure project that will do little to encourage active transportation options.

Mr. Speaker, how did the application of the Yukon government's climate lens impact the decision-making on this project, and can the minister commit to tabling the climate lens analysis that it did on the Alaska Highway corridor project?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I will say again that we're focusing on intersection safety improvements that consider all users, including large trucks, personal vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians.

The work that we're doing in terms of climate change and reducing our reliance on fossil fuels — from the carbon-pricing mechanism that we endorse on this side of the House to the improvements that we're making in charging stations and electronic vehicles and changing the fleet of vehicles that the Yukon government uses to actually promoting bicycling and other areas — this is all part of our work, and we'll have a plan coming forward fairly soon that the members opposite can consult.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that climate change is part of our assessment and planning. Studies show that keeping road pavement in good condition and increasing the efficiency of traffic flow reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Mr. Speaker, that is one concrete method we are using to make sure that we reduce our greenhouse gas emissions or actually start that process. We are also promoting biking. We have bike paths that now run right alongside the highway. They're going to be improved, and we're working with the city on many projects to make sure that we do keep the changing climate in our sights.

Question re: Motor vehicle reclassifications

Mr. Hassard: Last week, we asked the Minister of Highways and Public Works a number of questions about changes to motor vehicle classifications, and we didn't receive a response. Currently, you can choose what gross vehicle weight you want to register your commercial vehicle for, depending on your use of that particular vehicle. However, under the government's new guidelines, it appears that all commercial vehicles must be registered at the manufacturer's specified gross vehicle weight. This would have implications for hundreds of Yukoners who have three-quarter ton pickups or larger. It means that the owners of these vehicles would now have to run logbooks, and their allowable hours of driving would be limited.

Can the minister confirm if this is, in fact, the case?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I believe that the member opposite is talking about our new YuDriv system, the replacement system that we commissioned just recently. I had a ministerial statement on that fact, and I'm more than happy to talk about it again, because it represents a modernization of our service delivery standards and a way that we're improving the public's access to our motor vehicles registration system.

The Government of Yukon is committed to improving service delivery through modernization and innovation, and we're in the process of replacing Yukon's various transportation applications with a single, integrated client-centred system. The first phase of the project, which replaces the old driver's licensing and vehicle registration system, launched on November 4.

This first step involves putting in place better procedures and safeguards to protect Yukoners' personal information. Once fully implemented, YuDriv will allow Yukoners to perform more driver's licensing and permitting transactions online, thus saving them a trip to the Motor Vehicles office. The next phase of YuDriv will introduce improved online access, and we are focused on ensuring an effective transition to the new system.

Mr. Hassard: We definitely did not get an answer to that question, so we will try another.

As the minister may or may not know, most pickup trucks — three-quarter ton or larger — have a manufactured gross vehicle weight greater than 4,500 kilograms. It appears that these new rules will require all commercial pickups three-quarter ton and larger to report to highway weigh scales every time they are within a 20-kilometre radius. This will cause increased pressure on the weigh scales both in Whitehorse and Watson Lake.

Can the minister confirm if this is in fact the case, and how will the government deal with the increased pressures at these two weigh scales?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: As far as this new system that we're talking about goes, Mr. Speaker, the priority of the system relates to driver licensing and registration. It also has many other components, which we will roll out in the near future over the next couple of years. That will greatly enhance the public's ability to access and to deal with the Yukon government services online.

Highways and Public Works has been in constant contact with the city, for example, about the new system and upcoming changes from the project's very beginning, and this will certainly improve the way that businesses, the public, and other clients access our motor vehicles system.

It will be an improvement, a modernization, and an efficiency that all Yukoners will benefit from.

Mr. Hassard: Gauging from that response and the way that the minister is fumbling through his briefing binder there, I am going to guess that he has no idea, but I will try again.

As I pointed out, most pickup trucks — three-quarter ton and larger — have a manufacturer's gross vehicle weight of more than 4,500 kilograms. It appears that, under these new rules, these pickups will now be classified the same as large commercial trucks, so it appears that these commercially registered pickups will be required to have safety inspections every month. This, of course, will have financial implications on a lot of Yukoners.

Before the government decided to make these changes, did they consult with Yukoners?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: So, Mr. Speaker, along with Canadians across the country, Yukoners' hearts were broken by the Humboldt tragedy. Governments have a responsibility to do what they can to improve highway safety. As a member of the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators, Yukon is helping to develop national mandatory entry-level training standards for commercial drivers. These national standards will help ensure that new drivers have the knowledge and skills to safely operate commercial vehicles in Canada.

Question re: Tourism development strategy

Ms. Van Bibber: Last year, the government released its *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*. A key goal in this strategy is to double revenue from tourism. In August, the Minister of Tourism and Culture received the final report of the Yukon tourism development strategy governance task force, which is to provide advice to the government on how to achieve the goal to double revenue.

This report is made up of three very vague recommendations, with no clear indication or explanation on how they will help Yukon double its revenue from tourism. For example, one of the recommendations is simply to rename the Tourism branch of the department. I'm not sure how that will double tourism, but I'm wondering if the minister can explain.

How will renaming the Tourism branch contribute to doubling tourism revenue in the territory?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I just want to first say how proud we are that our government recognizes the value of tourism and is committed to supporting the sustainable growth of this industry.

One of the priority action plans of the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* approved by government in February 2019 was to establish a task force to recommend a governance model for tourism. A seven-member task force was formed in March which carefully reviewed extensive research and best practices on tourism governance models and advice from tourism destination management organizations across Canada

to see if an improved governance model could help achieve the goal of the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* to increase the alignment between government and industry. That was the task that they had.

Government has reviewed the task force report, and recommendations — including the recommendation to create a made-in-Yukon model incorporating the best of a government department and Crown corporation model — were adopted. I will be happy to continue to talk about this, because it is really important work that was done on behalf of all Yukoners.

Ms. Van Bibber: Another recommendation was simply to make administrative improvements. That might be the most boiler-plate recommendation ever.

Another recommendation was to create a tourism advisory board. This recommendation was an interesting one, as there already existed the strategic marketing advisory council that was funded through Tourism Yukon. The recommendation was the vague government statement “improve processes” and then to replace one advisory board with another advisory board.

Can the minister explain how either of these two recommendations will contribute to doubling tourism revenue in the territory?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I will continue on.

The Yukon tourism advisory board was established, and they did a lot of really in-depth work. I want to say how grateful I am to each and every one of them. There were seven representatives: two from the tourism industry, Rich Thompson and Ben Ryan; two members of First Nations, Marilyn Jensen and Michelle Kolla; two from the Yukon government, Valerie Royle and Justin Ferbey; plus an independent chair, Vicki Hancock. These folks within our community — I know that they are not strangers to anyone in this House — in each and every area that they represent, they are stellar, and they did a phenomenal job of really looking at the task that we gave them, which was to look at providing us some recommendations. I will say again that we endorsed the recommendations that they gave. Yes, there were some specific recommendations around administrative changes, around a name change to the department, and a recommended model, which we have endorsed. We are happy to be working toward implementing those recommendations.

Ms. Van Bibber: Again, no explanation for how the recommendations will double tourism revenue.

On January 26, 2018, the Minister of Tourism launched the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*. In August of this year, this culminated in the minister receiving a final report from the government’s taskforce. Despite claims of independence from the Liberal Cabinet, it included membership of deputy ministers who serve at the pleasure of the ministers.

The recommendations that came back were underwhelming, Mr. Speaker. They recommended that we rename the branch of government, they recommended that we make administrative improvements, and they recommended that we create a tourism advisory board to replace an existing tourism advisory board.

Can the minister tell us how much taxpayers’ money the Government of Yukon spent to come up with these three recommendations?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I do not underestimate the work that this taskforce did. They went through a tremendous amount of material. They reviewed the Department of Tourism and Culture. Yes, they came up with very specific recommendations. I am pleased with the work that they did. There was a tremendous amount of independence. Vicki Hancock was an independent chair of this taskforce, along with representatives from industry and from members of First Nations.

I do not question the work of this taskforce. I think that they did a phenomenal job and we have a very detailed report as a result of that. We’ve endorsed the recommendations that were provided to us. Again, this is working toward implementing the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*. This is a 10-year strategy — the first new strategy for the Yukon in regard to tourism in 18 years.

I’m very pleased with the goals that we’ve set out for ourselves and we will continue to work toward implementing those goals.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS’ BUSINESS

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 60

Clerk: Motion No. 60, standing in the name of Mr. Hutton.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun: THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to continue the process of updating the legislative regime for animal protection and dog control by introducing amendments to the *Animal Protection Act* in the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Hutton: I, like all Yukoners, love my dog. Dog control has been a very serious issue in all our Yukon rural communities for as long as I can remember, and that goes back a day or two, Mr. Speaker. In 2015, the community of Ross River suffered a very tragic event. One of their community members was fatally attacked by feral dogs in the community. The former government Minister of Community Services, Currie Dixon, made no commitment to review this act at the time of that event. I would really like to hear today from the Yukon Party — and not necessarily from the Member for Whitehorse Centre — about whether this is still their view with respect to this specific piece of legislation. We have continued to see tragic events involving dogs in our rural communities occur.

In 2018, the community of Ross River experienced another serious dog attack. In my riding, I have been made aware of several incidents involving dogs at large. There are times when

residents are fearful for their safety. They are scared to let their children play outside or walk to school for fear that there will be dogs roaming the streets. We must work cohesively as a government with residents, with municipalities, and with First Nations to come up with a solution. Communities are frustrated with the limitations of the existing laws and the challenges of enforcing them. Part of this problem needs to be addressed by updating the legislation.

A public survey was conducted last year from October 16 to December 16, and the Department of Environment held 10 meetings in Yukon communities during the months of November and December. Meetings were held in the three larger communities that fall within my riding — Mayo, Pelly Crossing, and Carmacks. Meetings were also held in other communities throughout the territory. The survey portion of engagement had over 900 responses, which I am happy to see. The sheer number of responses to this survey speak volumes about how important this discussion is to Yukoners.

Yukon's current animal protection and control legislative framework is very outdated. The current legislation seriously hinders the ability of our animal control officers to respond to concerns.

This legislative review will examine issues of public safety, animal welfare, and animal control. The results of the engagement will help to create a series of recommendations to improve the existing legislation and its associated regulations.

The animal protection officer receives, on average, 114 complaints annually. The complaints range on issues from dogs running at large, escaped or feral animals, dogs and highway traffic, dogs attacking other animals, dogs that exhibit threatening behaviour to humans, as well as concerns around animal neglect or abandonment.

Historically, due to a lack of access to veterinary care in the communities, what we tend to see are large populations of dogs or dogs that are not spayed or neutered. In 2016, the new community dog spay project and community dog care initiative were launched. The spay fund helps rural Yukon dog owners afford to have their dog spayed, which is the most effective way to prevent growing numbers of dogs.

When we begin to have these large, roaming dog packs in the communities, it becomes a dangerous public safety issue. While the spay fund has helped somewhat to mitigate this issue, we still need to look at other ways to help reduce these challenges and ensure that our legislation and regulations are written in such a way that the government has the ability to intervene more effectively.

I feel strongly that changes to our legislation and regulations around animal protection and dog control will be welcomed by all my constituents. I understand that a second phase of discussions took place during the spring and summer this year on issues that require further discussion, including how changes might affect dog mushers, livestock farmers, and enforcement in communities.

Community enforcement is a really challenging issue on its own. Most of the communities do not have a dog catcher; instead, they rely on a visiting officer. I'm really looking

forward to seeing what comes of this engagement and what thoughts the community has on helping to resolve this issue.

I have had many discussions on this matter with constituents, and they have all expressed to me how challenging it is to find someone in their community to take on the role of dog catcher. The municipalities have taken what steps they are able to when it comes to the control of animals.

The Village of Mayo has had By-law #92, the animal control bylaw, since 1992. I think that, from that time, from 1992 to 2019, there may have been three or four years when they actually had a dog catcher to enforce the bylaw.

In a small community, it is a pretty unpopular job for anyone to take on. It is a real challenge in a small community, as I said, when they are unable to find someone to take on this role.

This is an important time for animal control and protection legislation in the Yukon. I hope that members here today will recognize the value of amending this legislation and its related regulations and will extend their support for this motion.

Mr. Istchenko: I rise to speak to Motion No. 60, as brought forward by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun.

I am going to be focusing many of my comments around the "what we heard" document released by the government in July of this year on their review of the animal protection and control laws.

For the member opposite, he seems to have this thing about bringing up other members in the House. I was actually the minister in charge of this back in the day, so he should use my name — not someone else's name.

I am also really happy to see that this motion — Motion No. 60 — put forward by the member is actually on the floor of the Legislative Assembly. It sounds like it is very important to him, and it has been three years.

There have been concerns raised by groups of individuals within our opposition — and we are going to be supporting this motion today, by the way. It is a good motion.

Certain aspects of this review did seem to target groups and proposed changes that may, in fact, be detrimental to their ability to make a living, such as dogsled owners — and I will speak a little bit about that.

With respect to animal control, it is reported clearly that people want a requirement for owners to control their animals and take care of their animals — whether they are pets or their livelihood, of course — and that control does not necessarily mean that animals have to be on a leash. We have seen issues related to public safety arise out of animal control issues, specifically with uncontrolled dogs.

Better control of livestock is understandable, as we have heard a number of concerns with respect to potential problems that could arise if certain species were to escape and establish a feral population throughout the Yukon. That happened in my riding.

I am encouraged that the government appears to have a clear understanding that we must work in these discussions with First Nations, municipal governments, and local advisory councils — let me go right to the end here, Mr. Speaker — but

also with the Yukon Outfitters Association, the Fish and Game Association, the backcountry hikers and anglers, Yukon Trappers Association, and our local Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, and, of course, all of our renewable resources councils should be key players on this.

As we have seen, different communities face different problems. What works for Marsh Lake might not work as a solution in the member's riding — such as Ross River, for example.

The “what we heard” document goes into detail about feral animals. Something I picked up on — as did a couple of other Yukoners — I want to touch on this, because reports of the types of feral animals that we have here in the Yukon and proposals to deal with them appear to be a bit contradictory. I think this will probably get sorted out. But on the one hand, the government says that we currently have feral populations of cats and horses in the Yukon — cats and horses, Mr. Speaker. On the other hand, at the top of the list of next steps, government proposes moving forward to create a legal authority for the Government of Yukon to control feral populations by enabling the potential harvest of feral animals by hunters. I am hoping that there is no intention — that is why I'm bringing it up today for those who are creating this — by government to issue permits for hunters to go out and hunt feral horses or cats. I would also like to know what the government has planned. Perhaps the minister can make sense of these parts of the document — when she gets up and speaks — which suggest that the government may enable the harvest of cats and horses.

The “what we heard” document also outlines the fact that people want a limit to the number of companion animals that can be owned without requiring a permit. I spoke a bit about how this review might target individual groups like dog-sled owners. While animal hoarding is a real issue — I have also seen that in my riding — it cannot be assumed that any individual who owns more than 10 dogs or cats are animal hoarders. Sled dog owners are obviously exceptions, as they may own more than 10 dogs, but cannot be referred to as a hoarder. So, it is encouraging, like I said, that Yukoners are passionate about ensuring the proper care of sled dogs. However, proper care should be an assumed requirement of all species of pets, livestock, and work animals — so that kind of seems to be targeting dog-sled owners. For a large number of them, it is actually their livelihood that is on the line, so would those involved in tourism-related businesses be exempt from this system? That is one of the questions that I have. Why set a higher standard for these dog-sled owners than other dog or animal owners?

If government is going to implement a permitting system on Yukoners for dogs and for animals limiting ownership to five or 10 animals before having to apply for a permit, that kind of begs the question: Who is going to be affected? If the government starts with dogs, then goes to cats, then those with horses, sheep, pigs, ducks, and turkeys — who is going to be affected and where does it stop? This might turn into a bit of a slippery slope, and the animal owners must be aware that these

changes, if implemented, may affect them even if they aren't specifically targeted right away.

No Yukoner on the threshold of permitting limitations should have to beg permission from government to have another animal. If it is decided that the threshold for animal ownership is five, and an individual living on an acreage out of town has three dogs — that's a really good example, Mr. Speaker — and one of his dogs has a litter of four pups, that individual would then have to take the time and spend the money to apply for a permit to be able to keep those puppies or face being in contravention of the *Animal Protection Act*. I don't think that is fair, so hopefully we look at that.

Further, how much will the permitting process cost the government? If government was to follow through on enforcing a permit process for animals, it begs the question: How many staff would have to be hired to deal with enforcement? This is obviously not a small feat. Yukon is quite large. It can be absorbed into the daily duties of the current staff, maybe — I guess that is to be determined.

It might be better for the government to focus spending on supporting humane societies, say, rather than a massive new system of red tape to grow government. If costs were focused on spay and neuter programs in all communities, perhaps there would be fewer issues with animal protection and less stress put on humane societies.

That being said, this government does have a glorious track record in dealing with non-governmental organizations, and we have spoken at length in this House about NGOs, their valuable dedication, their service to our communities, and the increasing problems that they face due to government decisions and treatment. From the look of it, there are current financial issues being experienced by the Humane Society Yukon, and I am just hopeful that the government is taking the opportunity to see what they can do to work with this non-governmental organization to ensure that they can stay on their feet, because it is a very important organization.

There is a history of the government not working so well with them and wanting to take the reins themselves. Government has to change that track record in working with the humane societies — and there are more than just the one here across the Yukon — and see how this could play into this, and see whether the current funding structure is working for all of them and what they can do to assist.

Mr. Speaker, I spoke a little bit earlier about all of the different organizations that, through consultation — I am just curious and want to make sure that, when we go out — if there are further consultations that the government has planned with respect to the potential amendments to the *Animal Protection Act* — that they talk to all of them.

The only other thing that I want to note, I guess, in my final comments is that, like I said earlier, we are going to be supporting this motion, and I just hope — that is why we are in the opposition; we raise concerns — that they are going to be addressed in further comments from other members across the way.

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to thank the Member for Mayo-Tatchun for bringing forward this important issue and motion.

We are currently in the midst of renewing the legislation not only for dogs but for all domestic animals. I want to of course thank the staff — especially those from the departments of Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources — who have helped to advance this work.

I also want to thank the public for all of their input into the development of this important legislation thus far. The review has included looking at animal protection and welfare and the control of domestic animals. It is also looking at some gaps in our existing legislation, particularly for managing feral and exotic animals. The focus of the review is to look at how a new legal framework can be enforced effectively in communities. We know we have varied communities — some that are incorporated; some are not — the majority of which have some First Nation influence.

We also know that these are very important issues. These are live issues in many parts of the Yukon. Last fall, we invited every First Nation, every municipality, and every local advisory council to discuss how to better manage domestic animals across the Yukon. A team of officials from the Department of Environment travelled to 10 Yukon communities for public engagements as well as direct meetings with First Nations and municipal governments. Together with officials from the Agriculture branch at the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, we have also been talking directly with the agricultural sector about setting standards for keeping livestock.

We also met with other groups to get perspectives on the issues that affect them. These groups include animal rescues, the RCMP, dog mushers, kennel operators, and veterinarians. We also posted a public survey on engageyukon.ca that asked about key issues and what values should guide animal protection and control in Yukon.

We received more than 900 responses to the survey. With this level of response, it won't surprise anyone that pets and livestock are highly valued by Yukoners. A "what we heard" document is available online — and it was spoken about today — that summarizes the feedback received and the next steps that we'll be taking. I would like to highlight a few things learned from this engagement.

Many Yukoners said that they want animal owners to have control over their animals at all times — not letting animals wander around neighbourhoods freely, for example — and for there to be better tools to enforce animal control in our communities.

Yukoners said that the well-being and interests of animals should be protected and that high standards of care are critical for pets, livestock, and working animals. They said that they want to set standards for the care of animals, and it should apply to many organizations in Yukon that work with animals either as a business or as a non-profit organization.

Furthermore, we heard support for the Yukon government to have legal authority to manage feral animals as well as to take proactive management approaches so that domestic

animals don't become feral and negatively impact the health of wildlife, the integrity of the landscape, and/or public health and safety.

We know that there is more to learn before we can put an effective legal framework in place. While we have heard from many people, we have continued the conversations and our work, in particular, around how to best manage working animals, livestock, and animal organizations.

Our next step is to conclude discussions with First Nation governments, municipalities, and key stakeholders on specifics of how to incorporate the values that we've heard during the engagement — values such as specific standards of care to protect animals from situations of abuse or neglect and to maintain clear prohibitions against abusing animals. This is important to Yukoners.

These legislative processes take time, and the issues are complex. However, the Yukon government is committed to delivering updated and effective animal legislation in order to address these important issues and to ensure that what we propose will work for Yukoners.

Domestic animals from sled dogs to pack horses, from livestock to house pets have been a part of our past and will continue to be a part of our future. They contribute to our diversified economy through tourism and agriculture, and they are critical to keeping Yukoners healthy and active, even if it is just by taking the dog for a walk. If our environment and animals are unhealthy or distressed, there is a risk to the health of our communities and people.

This is an important time for animal control and protection legislation in the Yukon. This is why we want to build a framework that will be enforceable in communities to protect people and animals.

Ms. White: I thank the Member for Mayo-Tatchun for bringing this motion forward. I was in this Legislative Assembly in 2015, and it was awful. It was truly awful what happened to the community of Ross River, especially to that young man's family. So, when we talk about this act, I think it's important to note that it's outdated. I don't think that there's any question about this. I believe that what is being signalled right now from the government side is that, hopefully, we can expect amendments in the 2020 calendar year. I'm looking forward to having those brought forward and to walking through them, as we often do with new pieces of legislation so we can better understand it. I do appreciate that.

I think it's important to note that, at present, the Government of Yukon is responsible for both the protection and the control of domestic animals. The reason why I bring that up is that right now we're seeing — I don't know that this motion could be in a more timely fashion when we have recently seen the Mae Bachur Animal Shelter pretty much saying that they just don't know if they are going to last the calendar year, and they don't know how they're going to move forward.

One of the reasons why I want to bring this up is that, within the *Animal Protection Act*, it does talk about the creation of humane societies and what those requirements are. One of

the things I want to highlight — and I know that it's not popular with the government side, but it's important to note that the last time I was able to find current information about the transfer amount of money between the Yukon government and the Mae Bachur Animal Shelter was for 2014-15. At that point in time, it was included in the budget document, and it was \$80,000 — and it hadn't changed. It had been that way for a number of years. Unfortunately, when I went through the current budget documents, especially since 2017, I couldn't find a number. I don't know if that amount has increased.

One of the reasons why I bring that up is because, in reading more about what's going on at the shelter — so this is just quoting right now — they have a GoFundMe page. You know that things are dire when you turn to the community asking for donations in this way. It says, "The Mae Bachur Animal Shelter in Whitehorse has had a tough year; fundraising events fell short of what we needed, senior staff turned over, and a court case drained resources. We have 10 animals that desperately need vet attention, but we owe thousands in vet bills already. Can you help us?"

"We take in animals from all across the territory. We are 75% funded by fundraisers, donations and animal adoption fees. The animal adoption fees mostly go to pay the vet bills for neutering/spaying and vaccinating them, and don't cover other costs related to feeding, care, and keeping the doors open 5 days a week. We perform an essential service in the North, taking in strays from throughout the Territory. Can you help us pay the vet bills and keep the doors open for the animals?"

The reason why I wanted to read this is that I think it's really important to note that this is one organization — and there are others, of course. There is YARN, the Yukon Animal Rescue Network, which is based out of Watson Lake. We know that there is also an animal rescue located, I believe, on the Atlin Road. The reason why I bring this forward is that, currently, the Mae Bachur Animal Shelter has a budget of over \$400,000, and that means that \$300,000 needs to be raised by this group of dedicated volunteers and people who are passionate about the care and welfare of animals. What we have seen in recent years is that the need in the communities far surpassed the ability of this organization to keep up. When we did make changes to the act before — when we have been talking about it here — one of the things that it did was to also empower the ability to bring in abandoned or unwanted animals from the communities to Whitehorse to the shelter. It's important to note that the shelter under the current legislation is a no-kill shelter, so they do their best to keep the animal healthy and then to adopt it out.

What we have seen are the pressures that happen when those animals — not just from Whitehorse, but from all communities — are brought into town. We know that the Dawson City animal shelter often gets dogs from Inuvik, so it's not that we are just taking care of Yukon animals or abandoned animals, but we are also looking farther into the Northwest Territories.

When you adopt an animal from the animal shelter and you pay that fee — what they are trying to highlight is that it doesn't actually cover the cost of caring for that animal up to that point

or, if it has been there for a while — or how that works with the overhead of keeping the building open and all that is there. They have highlighted that the operating costs have continued to grow, whether we are talking about the cost of pet food, vet fees, utilities, staffing costs, or cleaning supplies — and the list goes on. I think that this is one of those times where — similar to how, unfortunately, in Yukon we believe that recycling is free, although there is a cost to recycle — we also believe that animal care — I'm not sure how we think that it pays for itself, but I don't think the community or the territory — when I say "community", I mean the community at large — understands how that works here.

The reason why I'm bringing this forward right now is that this is a no-kill shelter, so they bring in animals with the intent of keeping them and trying to adopt them out.

They have a really active online presence now where they do what they refer to as "glamour photos" where someone takes a picture of the animal with the name, they do a little writeup, and they try to get them adopted that way.

I think there have been moves in recent years where we talk about the importance of adopting senior pets. It's really easy for a puppy or kitten to get adopted, but it's a lot harder for a nine-year-old cat or a senior dog to get adopted out. I would say, as someone who has two or at least one senior dog at this point in time — he has lots of gumption left in him — that it is something to consider as well.

I think the real crux of the matter right now — as I talk about the Mae Bachur Animal Shelter and as we talk about the *Animal Protection Act* — is that it is the government's responsibility. It says that government is responsible for the protection and control of domestic animals.

If we, as government, have depended on this non-governmental organization to kind of be the "Raven Recycling" of the animal protection world, and they are going through these struggles, what does it mean when they close? What happens if this shelter closes? What do we believe as a society is our responsibility? What do we believe is important? I just want to leave that there because I think this is going to be a conversation that we may have to have in the future — where we feel that our responsibility lies. I would say that it's no fault of an animal that it has been brought in to the world, and like for any being, I think we need to consider a life of respect and one of care.

Under the *Animal Protection Act*, for example, we have section 9(1), which is the "Approval of humane society". It goes through and it talks about how the Commissioner in Executive Council — so, of course, that's government — "... may approve as a humane society for the purposes of this Act any organization having as a principal object the prevention of cruelty to animals..." I'm not going to go through the entire act, although it is interesting reading if anyone likes legislation, but what I would like to put on the record right now is: Where do we believe that government's responsibility lies? Unfortunately, we've seen recently with the dealings with Many Rivers — let's say the new board that then stepped down — that if, as Mae Bachur tries to — I know from something I read that they said they had fallen out of compliance. They were

trying to get back into compliance so, therefore, they didn't get their government transfer funds, which is fascinating because Many Rivers did, but that's another story altogether.

What does it mean if that board steps down and new people step forward? We've seen that the liability is actually going to follow the board no matter what that iteration of the board is.

What I do want to make sure that I put here is: What do we, as Yukon society, believe is our responsibility for animals? What would happen if that shelter closed its doors? At this point in time, we know that the City of Whitehorse municipal pound isn't fully staffed. Their preference is to move animals toward the Mae Bachur Animal Shelter because it is more staffed, peopled, and all those things.

There are a lot of questions. I am looking forward to seeing what the proposed amendments are. I am hopeful that it's going to be spring or sometime in 2020, because as the Member for Mayo-Tatchun said, I think there are changes that need to happen.

Mr. Speaker, right now, I would just like us all to consider what would happen if Mae Bachur closed its doors and what responsibility we have as legislators to that organization or to the work that they do for the territory. Again, I thank the Member for Mayo-Tatchun for the motion.

Speaker: Is there further debate on Motion No. 60?

If the member now speaks, he will close debate.

Does any other member wish to be heard?

Mr. Hutton: I would just like to thank all Members of the Legislative Assembly here today for providing their support to this motion. There is no doubt in my mind that dogs are important to all of us. I appreciate the comments from the member of the Third Party. The Mae Bachur society has certainly been on my mind for the last couple of evenings as well. It is a great question that she posed here today, and I am quite happy to close with it as well. What are we going to do if that shelter closes down? Thank you everyone for your support.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Member: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 18 yea, nil nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.

Motion No. 60 agreed to

Motion No. 27

Clerk: Motion No. 27, standing in the name of Mr. Adel.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Copperbelt North:

THAT this House endorses the implementation of the 2018 *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*.

Mr. Adel: I'm happy to rise today to speak to Motion No. 27. Yukon's last vision for tourism was developed in 2000. Since then, the tourism sector in Yukon has significantly grown and shifted. The Department of Tourism and Culture has been working steadily to lead development of a multi-year, goal-orientated tourism development strategy.

To guide the development of the strategy, a 15-member Yukon Tourism Development Strategy Steering Committee was developed. It was comprised of organizations that represent the tourism industry, Yukon First Nations, municipalities, the arts and culture community, and the Yukon government, and it was brought together to provide strategic advice to the minister and guide the initiative forward. The committee has completed this work. It has officially endorsed and recommended the strategy to the Yukon government for approval.

Today, I am bringing this motion to the House seeking support from all members to endorse the strategy, *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy — Sustainable Tourism. Our Path. Our Future. — 2018-2028*. The YTDS lays out a vision for tourism to be a vibrant, sustainable component of Yukon's economy and society for the benefit of future generations.

The strategy charts a 10-year plan for Yukoners, developed by Yukoners — which I think is a very important thing to remember — to become a leading sustainable tourism destination. Its aim is to support sustainable, diversified growth that balances economic development with environmental, community, and cultural values over the next decade.

Throughout the engagement process, Mr. Speaker, Yukoners expressed a strong desire for sustainable tourism, expressed simply by the United Nations World Tourism Organization as — and I quote: "... tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities."

As such, the strategy is guided by eight core values that Yukoners shared through a public engagement process. These values are the foundation of the strategy and underpin the vision

and the strategy's three goals to help Yukon become a leading, sustainable tourism destination.

The values also inform the strategy's four interconnected pillars that outline 24 strategic actions that will be collectively developed and implemented over the next decade to bring the strategy to life.

Seven action plans have been identified by the committee as priorities in the short term. Each of the action plans will be monitored and progress on implementation will be reported to the committee.

There are 17 remaining action plans outlined to be completed over the next 10 years. While the committee did not identify the remaining action plans as a priority, it does not preclude partners from beginning work to advance the action plans. This approach is consistent with the department's support for the strategy within Yukon's current fiscal climate.

I want to outline the many benefits that I see in endorsing the Yukon tourism strategy. While the Yukon tourism sector is doing well, as we have seen demonstrated by the growing figures that the minister presented to this House, the strategy provides the opportunity to take this success to a much higher level.

The Yukon is well-positioned to leverage access to the booming global tourism market. By building greater alignment and collaboration among governments and stakeholders, Yukon can maximize the full potential that tourism offers and become a leading, sustainable tourism destination while doubling revenues.

Tourism is a major contributor to the local economy and currently contributes 4.4 percent of Yukon's GDP, employs 3,500 people, and generates approximately \$250 million in business revenue, making it a strong and sustainable contributor to Yukon's economy while also building healthy and vibrant communities.

In 2016, revenue to Yukon businesses attributable to tourism was \$262.9 million. Doubling this revenue would have us see a target of \$525 million by 2028. A further benefit that I see to endorsing this plan is that the strategy has been endorsed and recommended by the 15-member steering committee made up of tourism industry representatives, First Nations, municipalities, and cultural organizations. Endorsing the full strategy in principle would validate the collective efforts and feedback of Yukoners.

I would like to take a moment to recognize the members of the steering committee and give folks a picture of how comprehensive and inclusive it was. The committee was comprised of: Rich Thompson, stakeholder and co-chair representing the Yukon Chamber of Commerce; Valerie Royle, government co-chair representing the Department of Tourism and Culture; Bev Buckway, representing the Association of Yukon Communities; Brian Stethem, representing the Klondike Visitors Association; Kalin Pallett, representing the Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon; Justin Ferbey, representing the Department of Economic Development; Katie Newman, representing the Yukon Historical and Museums Association; Michelle Kolla, representing the Yukon First Nations Chamber of Commerce; Casey Prescott, representing

the Yukon Arts Centre; Neil Hartling, representing the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon; Garry Umbrich, also representing the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon; Grand Chief Peter Johnston, representing the Council of Yukon First Nations; Daphne Pelletier Vernier, representing the Carcross/Tagish First Nation; Isabelle Salesse, representing Association franco-yukonnaise; Lisa Dewhurst, representing the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association; and last but not least, with support from the Yukon Convention Bureau and Sport Yukon.

As you can see, Mr. Speaker, it was an incredibly comprehensive steering committee whose membership represented the voices of a significant number of Yukoners. The steering committee was responsible for the oversight of the department's largest ever public engagement. Further, First Nation chiefs fully endorsed the strategy at the 2018 forum meeting, are particularly supportive of a one-government approach to tourism, and are keen to see the indigenous tourism action plans proceed. Indigenous tourism presents an opportunity to support reconciliation and cultural revitalization.

Yukon First Nations have expressed strong support of strategy pillar 3, Mr. Speaker — vibrant First Nation history and culture, which includes two action plans targeted to providing opportunities for First Nations to share and celebrate their stories in a meaningful and authentic way in a one-government approach to tourism. A strong indigenous tourism sector would expand opportunities for acknowledgement and celebration of First Nations' rich history, culture, and traditions and would facilitate cross-cultural understanding and partnerships.

Many First Nation governments are interested in opportunities for their development corporations, entrepreneurs, and citizens to become involved in the development of sustainable, market-ready and export-ready indigenous experiences by providing First Nations with opportunities to participate in the economy, the development of sustainable indigenous tourism facilities, and reconciliation through the implementation of chapter 22 on economic development and of chapter 13, "Heritage", of the *Umbrella Final Agreement*.

Focusing on priority actions will allow stakeholders to concentrate on their work on the short-term outcomes and to schedule work on the mid-term priorities. It's also fiscally prudent and realistic within Tourism and Culture's capacity. Approval of the strategy in principle acknowledges the significant effort and input by Yukoners that began with the Yukon Tourism Stakeholder Roundtable in July 2017, the Yukon Winter Tourism Summit in December of 2017, a comprehensive 3.5-month public engagement, and the draft strategy review.

The implementation of the strategy will continue to build and strengthen the positive relationships that have been established as partners work together to develop their action plans.

Mr. Speaker, the focus on a one-government approach to tourism provides an opportunity and a prototype testing ground to build a more unified, client-focused model for tourism

industry partners to access government services in a streamlined and efficient manner which could be applied to other government departments and services.

Further, the recent MOU between the Yukon government, Yukon First Nation tourism and culture, and the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada aligns the three respective tourism strategies and places Yukon in a unique advantage with the new federal tourism strategy currently in development.

On November 12, 2018, the federal Minister of Small Business and tourism announced the creation of an advisory council to help develop a national tourism strategy for Canada. The initiative is a result of the recognition that there is an opportunity for significant growth that far exceeds the current two percent of Canada's GDP attributable to tourism.

Mr. Speaker, the development of a new federal tourism strategy has the core objective of creating new opportunities and jobs for the middle class in the tourism sector across Canada. Yukon is well-positioned to align with Canada's vision for tourism and showcase our spectacular landscapes, attractions, unique culture, and people. The *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* supports Canada's vision for growth while differentiating Yukon as an internationally competitive destination.

Now I would like to speak a bit about the economics of tourism. Tourism is responsible for 10 percent of the world's GDP and grew faster than the global economy as a whole in 2016. It's one of the world's largest and fastest-growing economic sectors, with more than 1.2 billion people travelling for tourism in 2016. Mr. Speaker, globally, the industry is valued at over \$2 trillion Canadian dollars. As I outlined earlier, in Yukon, 4.4 percent of Yukon's GDP is attributable to tourism and the Yukon leads Canada as the jurisdiction with the highest percentage of total jobs in tourism.

Tourism in the Yukon generates revenue for a wide variety of businesses, both directly and indirectly, through a trickle-down effect. In 2016, visitors to Yukon spent \$303 million — an increase of 6.7 percent over 2015. Visitor spending has grown by a healthy 131.3 percent over the past five years.

Mr. Speaker, with over one in 10 Yukoners directly employed in the tourism sector, a growing tourism industry means higher employment, more disposable income, and the development and enhancement of local facilities and infrastructure. These statistics clearly demonstrate that tourism is one of the key drivers of our economy on a global scale. I'm proud of this strategy and the way it was developed, and I think the engagement level undertaken and the feedback received from Yukoners speaks volumes. It gives us a clear path forward.

I would like to wrap up my remarks for now, but I would also like to thank the minister and her department for the hard work and all the other groups that contributed to this strategy. I'm looking forward to hearing from other members today with their thoughts on this strategy and engagement process.

Ms. Van Bibber: I'm pleased to rise to speak to Motion No. 27, brought forward by the Member for Copperbelt North.

I'll start by saying that the Official Opposition is certainly supportive of finding better ways to increase and enhance tourism in the territory. We too want to ensure a steady flow of visitors and that the tourism private sector is able to thrive sustainably year-round.

I just have a few questions about the strategy and the next step of its implementation. One of the main pillars within this strategy notes that a number of actions must be taken for the Yukon to realize its full potential as a sustainable, year-round tourism destination. Mr. Speaker, we agree on that.

One of the things we have yet to receive from this government is clear, tangible information on what they, as a government, are doing to increase tourism opportunities within the territory. It is great to see significant involvement from the industry in the development of this strategy — and thank you to the public servants who contributed to it. But at the end of the day, it is the minister and the Liberal government who are responsible for making the final decisions on what is and isn't a priority for the territory.

The strategy document notes that a stronger governance model, infrastructure to improve access to and around the territory, and effective decision-making will be what leads to achieving the full potential of year-round tourism. So, we would like to hear a few more details about this.

Can the minister outline exactly what will be changing in the governance model to make it stronger? Are the key decision-makers changing? Will the role of Government of Yukon be different going forward? Will services or responsibilities be shifted toward the private sector, industry associations, or tourism boards? Will Tourism and Culture staff be relocated or reassigned to support the stronger governance model?

The creation of new advisory panels, committees, subcommittees, and a task force may seem like good announcements, but there are so many being created for duplicate purposes that it's nearly impossible to keep track of what is happening. Based on some of the answers the government gives during Question Period, it seems we're having a hard time keeping track.

Moving on — what specific infrastructure has the department targeted to achieve its goals to reach Yukon's full potential for tourism? The strategy mentions roads in communities, so which ones will this strategy address first in its implementation? We know that the government has chosen to invest significantly in the north Klondike Highway, but we also know that it's not the only important roadway with which repairs could improve tourism. We have noted on multiple occasions that maintenance of the north Alaska Highway plays a role in tourism from across the border, but the government hasn't even blinked an eye at this suggestion.

Speaking of communities — perhaps the minister can let us know whether community infrastructure includes the replacement of the visitor information centres that need it — for example, Watson Lake. We raised the issues of the Watson Lake VIC numerous times, wondering what steps the minister has taken to replace the centre. There needs to be a permanent solution, and after asking the same questions of the minister

over numerous legislative Sittings, it is time we have a firm commitment to fixing this issue.

I think we can all agree that the key element to achieving the full potential of tourism would be to ensure that all communities have accessible information about tourism opportunities within each area. So, overall, I think Yukoners deserve to know which communities are going to be given a priority once the strategy is implemented.

The strategy also mentions airport facilities as an area for improvement. We know that many of our local airlines provide services across the territory for the purpose of tourism, so we would like to hear what and where the government's plans are in terms of which facilities will be prioritized next.

The government committed to spend \$5 million this year on the Mayo aerodrome and it was recently certified as an airport by Transport Canada. It would be nice to hear a tourism perspective regarding that \$5-million investment and whether it will enhance the tourism opportunities in the Mayo area.

It would also be nice to finally get an answer from the government as to why they are lapsing a significant portion of the money that they originally budgeted for the Mayo aerodrome. What will the impacts of lapsing this funding be on this tourism sector?

Mr. Speaker, it is the minister in this government who is responsible for making the final decisions.

Earlier this summer, CBC reported that Skagway was preparing itself for a million cruise ship passengers to arrive over the summer season. At the time, we noted that this market represents a huge opportunity for the Yukon tourism industry and the private sector economy and that it is still a market that the Government of Yukon should be actively courting. In response, the government was clear that it was not a market that they were actively promoting. So, the Liberals were leaving a million tourists on Yukon's doorstep.

Hopefully, they have changed their perspective on this idea.

I think that in light of the goals outlined by the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*, the government should look into tapping into every opportunity to grow. If the goal is to help Yukon realize its full potential as a year-round tourism destination, one would assume that no stone would be left unturned when it comes to creating this environment for potential.

As a closing note, the strategy has almost 40 pages of beautiful pictures and bright infographics, but not a lot of clear takeaways as to where the government's priorities lie. It outlines a lot of goals and objectives, but not a lot of tangibles on how the government intends to achieve them.

We will be looking to the minister to take that responsibility and fill those information gaps for us.

We look forward to hearing exactly how the government will be accomplishing the goals through the implementation of the strategy, when these goals will be accomplished, and how much of the government budget will be set aside for this — including what portion of the government's capital budget will go toward infrastructure intended to improve tourism.

That said, we will be supporting today's motion.

Mr. Gallina: I'm happy to rise today to speak to Motion No. 27 as presented by the Member for Copperbelt North.

As my colleague had mentioned, this new tourism strategy charts a 10-year plan for Yukoners, developed by Yukoners. Today I will focus my comments on the vision of the steering committee in the collaborative development process that gave this strategy shape and definition.

The development of the strategy was guided by a steering committee made up of 17 individuals representing 15 organizations. Mr. Speaker, as I have begun to unpack the vision of this steering committee, it was evident to me that they recognized that sustainable growth of tourism in Yukon will only be accomplished through greater alignment and collaboration among all tourism partners.

The direction to the steering committee for this vision was clear and concise, which I believe contributes to the effectiveness of this strategy. This was to develop a strategy for the Yukon with a vision for tourism in which all Yukoners could see themselves.

Mr. Speaker, this is a powerful statement. It's powerful because it sets a clear path to connect with those who will benefit from it most. It's a strategy that can be embraced. It can be embraced because Yukoners have a deep connection to it and they can see how they fit into this strategy and what it means to them.

As mentioned, the steering committee oversaw the Department of Tourism's largest ever public engagement. The strategy was informed by extensive Yukon-wide engagements that generated over 12,000 comments from 55 engagement sessions held across the territory, 10 written stakeholder submissions, and 115 online surveys, as well as by an internal Yukon government working group and research on best practices from leading destinations. This included community engagement and online platforms connecting with tourism stakeholders, Yukon First Nation governments and citizens, the arts and cultural communities, and the general public. Mr. Speaker, I have outlined some of the work of the steering committee and how that work has influenced the strategy we have today.

Now I would like to spend some time talking about the collaborative approach the steering committee took and why this approach was so effective in capturing how Yukoners see themselves in tourism and how they want to be represented. Mr. Speaker, collaboration recognizes that power is greatest in the collective team. It allows solutions to develop from the best ideas of the group and take a team approach in solving problems. Collaboration employs open information sharing. This is the cornerstone of collaborative success. Sharing information across the collective team and those participating creates more opportunities to develop and implement creative solutions and creative ideas. This is evident in the goals, the core values, and the pillars for success in this tourism strategy.

Effective collaboration gives everyone on the team a voice and, Mr. Speaker, we see this in how the tourism strategy captures the voices of all members of the steering committee. A collaborative environment is based on trust in which teams

are encouraged to work together — information, resources, knowledge, time, and efforts are shared. This allows ideas and positions to evolve and fluctuate based on the greater good of the team and no one individual.

Mr. Speaker, we know that this strategy has progressive bold ideas and has been praised by industry stakeholders within the territory and across the country. I believe that the success on how this strategy was developed is attributable to the thorough, collaborative approach that the steering committee employed.

The steering committee embraced sustainability and aligned with leaders in the field who are bringing about progressive change. Sustainability was focused on providing visitors with reasons to stay longer and spend more rather than increasing visitation at all costs.

As my colleague has mentioned, endorsing this strategy in full would validate the collective efforts and feedback by Yukoners. There were many values identified through the engagement process and it was clear that Yukoners are very proud to call the territory “home”.

We value wilderness, our vibrant communities, and our way of life. Yukoners value heritage as well as our cultural diversity. As a Yukoner, these are certainly values that I share.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I rise today to speak to Motion No. 27. I wish to thank the Member for Copperbelt North for bringing this motion forward. This motion brings a monumental undertaking from the Department of Tourism and Culture. It’s really wonderful to speak to it today.

In 2017, the department embarked on the development of a multi-year, goal-oriented strategy to sustainably grow tourism in Yukon.

Tourism is recognized — we have spoken about it a bit here today — as a major economic contributor to Yukon’s economy, and by all accounts, tourism has been performing well. More than four percent of our gross domestic product is attributable to tourism, which is the second highest percentage among Canadian jurisdictions, only second to PEI. Tourism is also our second largest industry and our largest private sector employer. Almost 14 percent of Yukoners are employed by the tourism sector, which is the highest percentage among Canadian jurisdictions. We aim to keep it up at that level, Mr. Speaker.

As recently released results from the Yukon visitor exit survey show, the collective efforts of Yukon tourism operators, industry partners, and the Department of Tourism and Culture are paying off. Since the last survey of 2012-13, we have seen a 25-percent increase in visitors to Yukon and a 37-percent increase in visitor spending.

As you can see, the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* was not about solving a problem with the sector; rather, it was about maximizing the opportunities that tourism provides. More than simply updating what was already there, we wanted to really seize the opportunity to redefine what a tourism strategy can do and who it represents. It was clear that, to fully realize Yukon’s tourism potential, our strategy needed to be based on collaboration, as you heard my colleague speak about

today — an alignment with stakeholders. That would only be achieved through that comprehensive type of engagement.

We believe that everyone has a role to play in the development of a successful tourism industry, so I tasked the department with developing not a Yukon government strategy, but for sure, what I really was after was a strategy for Yukon — a strategy and a vision that every Yukoner could see themselves in.

To ensure that we have the necessary collaboration and alignment of our key tourism stakeholders, a steering committee was established to provide advice and recommendations on the development of the strategy. The steering committee, as you have heard, was made up of 15 stakeholders representing the tourism industry, Yukon First Nations, the arts and culture community, and the Yukon government. Again, when we put this all together, we wanted to ensure that we had all the stakeholders in the room speaking about the development of tourism and the advancement of tourism in our territory. I wanted to ensure that we were but one partner, and that is what we achieved.

The committee went on to oversee the largest public engagement process ever taken by the Department of Tourism and Culture. I won’t go through those numbers; you have heard them several times.

I’m absolutely proud of the type of engagement that we had from Yukoners. I know, as a lifetime Yukoner born and raised, that when I look at the values and what was achieved through this, I could see myself in it. The values that were identified are my values as a Yukoner. I feel that, from my perspective and from others’ perspectives — because I asked everyone: “If you read the tourism strategy and you think we’re off point, tell us because it’s really important that we get this right.”

The strategy’s collective vision is for tourism to be sustainable, a vibrant component of Yukon’s economy and society for the benefit of future generations. We heard from Yukoners, and we’ve instilled into the strategy three goals, eight core values, and four pillars to emphasize a balance between economy, community life, and the environment. We are the only jurisdiction that identified indigenous tourism development as a key pillar in our strategy. When I talk about economy, community life, and environment, this is also foundational to truth and reconciliation in our territory. This is where we will see culture revitalized and languages revitalized, and what we are hoping and what we know that we’ll see through this is Yukon First Nation culture revitalization and then telling the story through their own voice and their own lens.

From these goals, values, and pillars came 24 action plans. I’m proud to say that we allocated funding this year to begin implementing seven of the 24 strategic action plans. These include establishing a task force to recommend an improved governance model for tourism, which we talked about today in Question Period. That work is done. I’m proud of the work that this task force was able to achieve: adopting a one-government approach to tourism; developing a framework that measures the sustainability of tourism development; establishing Yukon as a

premier destination for indigenous tourism experiences; improving signage; marketing Yukon as a year-round destination; and supporting industry access to a skilled and experienced workforce.

We in Yukon government are working to develop a one-government approach to tourism. Within government, all departments touch on or support the tourism industry or visitors' experiences. For example, my colleague in the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources has overseen the Peel land use plan, containing within it opportunities for sustainable, eco-friendly tourism offerings. EMR also oversees the Agriculture branch. New growth in agriculture will feed into the culinary tourism sector and provide opportunities for agri-tourism experiences.

My colleagues in Highways and Public Works recently undertook paving the Dawson runway, opening up that region of our territory for year-round visitors. Highways and Public Works is also planning \$157 million worth of upgrades to the north Klondike Highway, which will provide a better driving experience for our visitors. Highways and Public Works has developed a new tourism-oriented, directional signage policy, which has been shared and discussed with the Yukon Tourism Development Strategy Steering Committee.

Environment has held public engagements and worked on campground regulations and on developing a Yukon parks strategy. Campgrounds and parks are essential visitor infrastructure.

In Education, the transition to Yukon University provides opportunities for tourism sector educational programs to grow the industry's workforce right here at home. Education also offers a suite of labour market programs to help the tourism industry with employee recruitment, retention, and training. These are just a few recent examples of many ways that our government departments either support, regulate, or serve the tourism industry.

To take action on our commitment to review Yukon's model of Yukon's tourism governance, we formed a task force last March. The mandate of the task force was to assess potential tourism governance models based on their ability to achieve the vision, goals, and values of the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*. The task force presented their report to government on August 29. In the report, they made three recommendations.

I know that there was a question — and I realize, as I'm going through my presentation, that I didn't answer it today in Question Period — about the cost of the task force. We had allocated \$50,000 for this work of the task force, Mr. Speaker.

In terms of the recommendations, the first was to "Enhance Yukon's current governance model by establishing a Cabinet-appointed body of tourism representatives to advise the Minister of Tourism and Culture" — on the ongoing implementation of the strategy. The second was to "Rename the Tourism branch, Department of Tourism and Culture to better reflect its role and profile as a destination management organization." The third was to "Make administrative improvements in the department to enhance flexibility,

responsiveness and efficiency while maintaining accountability."

In October, our government accepted the task force recommendations to establish a new advisory body, the Yukon Tourism Advisory Board — YTAB. This will establish a formal channel through which a board of qualified Yukoners will advise the government on the implementation of the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*. This made-in-Yukon governance model supports increased collaboration and alignment between government, the private sector, and other tourism industry stakeholders.

Members of this advisory board will be solicited through the Government of Yukon's boards and committees appointment process, with an effective date of April 1, 2020. Renaming the Tourism branch and review of administrative processes will occur over the coming months.

With respect to indigenous tourism, we are working closely with the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association and the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada. Just under a year ago, we signed a tripartite MOU with these two organizations, committing to work to establish Yukon as a premier destination for indigenous tourism experiences. This summer, we entered into a contribution agreement with the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association to provide this organization with \$300,000, to be matched, dollar for dollar, with funding from CanNor. This funding reflects our strong commitment to supporting progress in this area and will enable the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association to move forward with their 10-year indigenous tourism strategy, which essentially builds the pillar within the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*.

We talked today about visitor perceptions. In addition to moving forward on the seven priority action plans and the strategy, we are also putting in place the foundation for measuring progress toward achieving the strategic goals. One of these goals is to ensure that at least 80 percent of Yukoners have a positive attitude toward tourism. As we talked about today, the inaugural Yukon resident perception survey is now complete, and we have those results.

The survey, which was conducted from mid-July to September, asked Yukoners about their perception on whether tourism is good for Yukon overall, whether it's good for their community, whether it benefits the economy, and whether they feel it contributes positively to Yukoners' quality of life, among other questions.

I'm proud to say — of course we talked about it today — the initial results were very good results. Ninety-four percent of Yukoners feel that tourism is good for Yukon and 89 percent believe that tourism is good for their community.

However, the really important point to make here is that we have established a baseline for data that will allow us to measure and be held accountable for how we implement the strategy going forward.

We will now administer this survey every two years. If satisfaction levels remain, that of course is great and we will continue to do what we are doing. But if they drop, then we will ensure that we're doing further research and look into why

those levels are dropping. It allows us to monitor as we go forward.

This is at the heart of ensuring that tourism in Yukon is sustainable. If Yukoners are concerned, we want to know that. If tourism is developing in such a way that it is interfering with the quality of life of Yukon, then we must take action. Tourism can only succeed if Yukoners are engaged and supportive. This is also at the heart of evidence-based decision-making, which is a hallmark for the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*.

I'm just going to go back and have a look at some of the questions that were raised throughout the debate.

I would like to just speak a little bit about some of the questions that were raised today — I think I spoke to a lot of them — around infrastructure, airports, signage — in terms of a one-government approach and our commitments to communities. We certainly engaged very extensively with our communities throughout Yukon to look at what their priorities are. We will work with various regions around the development of tourism plans for various regions throughout Yukon.

For instance, I've spent a lot of time in the Klune area over the last six months. We've spent time in Watson Lake. We know that there's an outstanding issue with the visitor information centre and the community is working closely together to come up with strategies to rectify the issues that are within their communities. Government again — we see ourselves as one of the partners. I did hear the member opposite say that it's only up to government to set the priorities for tourism. That is not how we see this. We have committed to working in partnership and in collaboration with all of our stakeholders. That is in fact what we are doing. We are working in a new way in terms of developing tourism in our territory.

I see that I'm coming down to the end of my time today to speak to this motion. I want to again thank the member for bringing this forward. I appreciate the opportunity to speak about tourism at any opportunity. With the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* as a road map, Yukon's appeal as a sustainable, year-round, world-class travel destination offering transformational experiences for visitors will continue to grow. By moving forward with these and other initiatives by government and our stakeholder partners, tourism will continue to provide Yukon with sustainable, diversified growth — growth that balances economic development, environment, community, and cultural values.

As we showcase the stunning natural beauty and extraordinary heritage of our special corner of the world, we are committed to keeping our territory and our citizens healthy and prosperous. Again, thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to this important motion. If I haven't answered all of the questions that were posed to me, I am happy to have conversations with the members opposite to ensure that they have all of the answers that they're looking for here.

There is actually one more question. In terms of the one million visitors to Skagway — I think that when you look at our tourism strategy, Mr. Speaker, you will see that one of our overarching goals is to double revenue from tourism, not necessarily visitors. We do see the Skagway market as an important one. It sustains a lot of businesses within Yukon, but

one of our overarching goals is to double revenue. Based on our last visitor exit survey, we know that we're on the right track for that when we have seen a 37-percent increase in visitor spending and the lower amount of a 25-percent increase in visitors. We think we're on the right track. It fits with Yukoners' values.

Thank you very much for allowing me the time to speak.

Ms. Hanson: I am pleased to rise today to speak to Motion No. 27 — that this House endorse the implementation of the 2018 *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*.

I just want to say at the outset that I'm not quite sure, in putting this motion forward, whether the member intended that we should be endorsing the 2018-2028 Yukon tourism strategy and/or encouraging the government to implement that strategy. We're happy to do both. We think that it doesn't do much to have a strategy unless you actually take sincere and active measures to implement said strategy.

One of the things that's attractive about having a 10-year strategy is that, in committing to do this, the lifespan of a strategy that's 10 years will naturally span the life of more than one government, possibly three, so that commitments being made by this Legislative Assembly on behalf of Yukoners need to resonate and address the issues that Yukon citizens at large, in addition to whatever government of the day, have identified.

To a large extent — and having attended, over the course of the last eight or nine years, most, if not all, of the Tourism Industry Association annual general meetings — there are many aspects of what we see in the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* that resonate. As the minister and the Member for Copperbelt North indicated, many of those same people who have been involved integrally in various aspects of Yukon's tourism industry have been involved in the development of both the strategy and the articulation of some of the core values that should embed any strategy and any operationalization of that strategy.

The key, of course, to any strategic approach or to any strategy is that, when you take it from the lofty language of the vision, the goals, and the values and then you start saying, "Who, what, where, when, how, and how much?" — I will speak a little bit to some of those in a moment.

Mr. Speaker, members preceding me have spoken to the goals of the strategy. Inherent in each of those goals, there are a number of questions. I think that one of the key ones — and it completely underpins all of the core values that are there — is the notion of sustainability. I think we really need to speak about this sustainability in the Yukon context. It is with that in mind that I raised the questions and the concerns that I had raised earlier today with respect to the survey.

It has become more and more clear that, across the globe, it doesn't matter if you have trillions of dollars spent on tourism or if you have increased the number of tourists coming to your place, it could be the worst disaster for a jurisdiction — the absolute worst disaster. This morning, we heard about Venice flooding. The floods are the result of a number of factors, but one of the other challenges that Venice faces is not just the flooding by water, but the flooding by tourists to the point that

Venice is no longer liveable for the citizens of that jurisdiction. That is a concrete example of what happens when there is no constraint or thought given to what sustainability means. It is a real example.

We are thrilled — absolutely thrilled — to see the emphasis on indigenous tourism and all aspects of that and the remarkable growth if you think back to 2007 when the Canada Winter Games were here and how the organizing committee of that Canada-wide event were challenged in terms of getting a significant First Nation cultural presence. From that seed, we have seen remarkable growth and resiliency — and I would say an explosion — of the First Nation Culture and Tourism Association, the Dakwakada Dancers, and all sorts of things that have become renowned.

At the same time, I am reminded — if you go back 20 years and you went to Uluru —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Ms. Hanson: Called Ayers Rock at the time, that's true, as my colleague just pointed out.

But in terms of indigenous tourism all around the base of Ayers Rock, or Uluru, it's owned by the indigenous people of that area. There were tourism shops and tourism cultural events going on, but that sacred site was being inundated and disrespected to the point that it took until this year to see the banning of the climbing of Uluru.

There is a challenge when we talk about sustainability. That's why we say that we support the implementation of this, but that means ever-greening it. It means coming back and saying, "This is what we're doing and this is where we see the red lights. These are the challenges that we're facing."

One of the important aspects of this also is resident support for tourism. Resident support means that people need to feel that not only does it resonate with them, but if they are being affected by tourism or if there are opportunities for them, those opportunities are somehow not inadvertently denied them.

I point out sort of a catch-22 in a way. In this Legislative Assembly a few years ago, we raised a lot of questions to the previous government about their lacklustre response to the potential that existed in Carcross and the strong representations made by representatives of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation development corporation about the importance of developing infrastructure — because without essential infrastructure — and I'm talking about pretty basic infrastructure like water and sewer so that, when tourists came there, they could use washrooms — infrastructure that included a place to stop, to stay, to eat.

If you do that, you begin to get a sense of opportunity and people see potential. Then you have a challenge when you get people seizing that and they say, "Okay, fine. I'll invest, and I'll get my little business in there, and I'll put in whatever it takes to run that business." Then suddenly, they are blindsided because the main tour operators that are engaged with the Government of Yukon and others stop for 15 minutes — not enough time to get from the bus to the shops in the back.

So, how do we work in collaboration — because I've heard a lot about the word "collaboration" again this afternoon — how does that manifest? How do we manifest collaboration

with those major partners to get them to stop and stay for more than 15 minutes? Because it doesn't matter if that bus goes zooming by on the brand new road there — if that is the intention, that doesn't speak well to the one-road, one-government approach, in terms of sensitivity to the local community's needs — which is to have people linger a bit, maybe spend a bit, drink a cup of coffee and listen to Kevin Barr play music in the Carcross Commons, as he does three days a week. I don't know how he does it, but he does.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Ms. Hanson: I have got to keep the boy sort of fed, you know.

So, that sustainability issue, I think, in my view, is one of the critical linchpins to this whole strategy that the Member for Copperbelt North and the minister have outlined — absolutely critical. I am so pleased to see sort of the evolution in the kinds of presentations that the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon has fostered over the last couple of years. There has been an increased emphasis on this notion of managing capacity to avoid "over-tourism" and the creation of meaningful what we call "off-season tourism" or "shoulder season tourism".

The whole importance of seizing the opportunities for ensuring that, when we do tourism, as I said, that celebrates culture, that we are mindful that it can be too much of a good thing — and how do we manage that? Anybody who has been to any variety of UNESCO World Heritage Sites has seen the examples of too many people inundating something that was incredibly valuable and meaningful to the local culture, but that can't cope with too many of us travelling about. Also, what is acceptable and how much are we prepared to change our infrastructure? How much are we prepared to change the nature of Yukon to accommodate tourism demands? That was the essence and the core of the whole discussion that was a key component of the tourism conference this fall — and the importance of looking at that not just from sustainability — can we hold on, or can we accommodate it — but what are the full impacts? There's a whole need for us to be looking at our tourism strategy.

I was pleased to hear the minister willing to take this one-government approach because it's not simply — it's the full-cost accounting of tourism in the territory and that has an environmental cost associated with it; it has a sustainability cost.

Those ones are going to be — "are", in our view — as I referenced earlier, the authority that the industry had brought up — Megan Epler Wood talked about managing the invisible burden of tourism. Tourism is great, but it has these invisible aspects that we don't see and it does stretch through the economy.

There are a number of other factors. In terms of the local residents' support for tourism — it's ensuring "Loving Yukon" and "Preserving and enjoying our natural environment". I'll just quote here from the strategy: "Our natural environment must be effectively managed so that visitors and residents can explore our wild and dynamic landscapes without detracting

from them or impacting wildlife habitat. Our wilderness is our strength and a fundamental part of who we are.”

We may need to make decisions, Mr. Speaker. When we have small tourism businesses — because many, many tourism operators in the Yukon are not Holland America and they’re not the big hotel owners. They’re the small businesses that run a bed and breakfast with one or two rooms. They’re the small operators who run a small expediting company. They count on their environment looking like the Yukon that people expect. They don’t expect to see — and I’ll use this example again, but the notion that Highways and Public Works — to the extent that it’s contributing to tourism or not — and some people may find it amusing, but do all roads in the Yukon need to be cleared — right away, clearing — to the same extent as the major highways? Do secondary roads that people choose — there’s a terminology when you’re travelling — people choose to take the blue highways. It’s not the major thoroughfares throughout North America. I choose to travel the blue highways because, on the maps, they’re marked in blue because they’re not all paved and all fancy cleared. I get to see what the real country is and what people’s real-life experience is. That’s what I’m looking for as a tourist, and I believe that many tourists are.

So, the notion that we have to clear-cut 65 feet from the centreline on every road in the Yukon — I begin to wonder what that’s going to look like when we get to Fox Lake where there are many bed and breakfasts and other private accommodations along there that cater to tourists.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many aspects to that. When we look at Energy, Mines and Resources and the assurance that land use planning isn’t just a theory, but is actually happening — and not happening with respect to just dealing with one sector of the economy, but looking at the implications for all sectors, including tourism. So, when we are talking about regional land use plans that will somehow roll into the land use plans that we anticipated in the final agreements, where does tourism factor into that? Where are tourism opportunities? Are they articulated? Those are going to be one of the challenges that we anticipate from the implementation of aspects of the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*. We think the challenges are worth meeting, because our tourism sector, as we have said for many years, has incredible potential if we work together to manage it properly.

We will say this yet again: The demonstration of a government’s commitment to a sector is their willingness to invest in it. I would just urge all members of this House to look at the tourism budget. The tourism budget, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, is kind of static. Immediately after this government came into effect, the budget went down by \$500,000. Now it is slowly incrementally increased, but if we look at it over time, it has pretty much flatlined. I would suggest, as we say to the private sector, to put your money where your mouth is. Perhaps the government needs to reflect, too, on how much it is willing to invest in tourism. I am talking about the rollup number. On capital for tourism, it is kind of moribund — and I am taking these numbers and my assessment from the Public Accounts over the last five years.

I will leave that there. I think that we would encourage the government, as much as it takes, to work with officials who have been charged by the minister and officials across government.

We will be looking to see how the activities of Community Services, Highways and Public Works, and Energy, Mines and Resources positively impact the success of this *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*, because that will determine whether or not Yukon has been successful in developing a strategy that will live beyond 2028 in a good way.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on Motion No. 27? If the member now speaks, he will close debate. Does any other member wish to be heard?

Mr. Adel: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the members from across the way from the Yukon Party and the Third Party for their thoughtful remarks and their challenging questions. All of those will help us move forward.

In response to the member from the Third Party, in the motion, it is that we endorse the implementation of the strategy, which, moving forward, is what I think they were asking for.

I would also like to thank the members of the committee — the 17 of them who worked very hard on this. Every journey starts with one step. We now have a road map that the community and the department have put together. Working together with a one-government approach, we can maybe meet these challenges that have been brought forward by members from across the way and make the Yukon the destination and the place we want it to be.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

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

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion No. 27 agreed to

Hon. Ms. McPhee: 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 (Mr. Hutton): Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter now before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 200: *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-10*.

Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Silver has 18 minutes and 19 seconds.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I will allow my colleague across the way to ask some more questions.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the Premier for that. I just want to go back — I know, last time, we chatted about campgrounds and about the fee increases. I just want to get a bit more of a definite answer from the Premier. It looks like they were looking — one of the recommendations was to charge seniors, and those are seniors who get a free hunting licence and, right now, a free camping permit — \$100. Is this something the government is thinking about doing?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I do know that senior fees were part of the consultation that was underway. Again, in general, we are proposing new payment options and increases to fees for camping at territorial park campgrounds. These efforts are part of our response to the Yukon Financial Advisory Panel's recommendations in their report and also our work to set a strategy for the future of Yukon parks systems.

The proposed new fees will better help us to sustain park services and to improve convenience and efficiency and also maintain affordable access while still retaining some of the

lowest camping fees in Canada — extremely important. Right now, it's still in the proposal stage and so there are certain things that are being proposed, including either a discount for seniors on an annual pass or other considerations.

Again, that public engagement on the draft strategy did close on September 29, and we are now preparing a "what we heard" document and will be incorporating feedback into a final strategy. Those proposed changes should be coming into effect in 2021, but again, we are at that stage of collecting the data and moving on with a "what we heard" document. That's where we are currently.

Mr. Istchenko: I want to apologize for not welcoming the staff here again today. I know that you are in here lots lately for some reason, but anyway, thanks for coming again.

I thank the Premier for that. In the survey, there is also mention — and we touched on this a little bit — of creating a new campground in the vicinity of Whitehorse. Can the Premier please provide a bit more information about where this campground will be located? How many sites will it offer, and will it be lakefront or by a river? Does the Premier have any information on that?

Hon. Mr. Silver: There is nothing new to report today. You can imagine that something like that would be something that the department would be on. If there was something, they would have an opportunity to do a communications dialogue if they were prepared today to give any new information.

It is worth noting that the government maintains 42 campgrounds with more than 1,000 campsites, 12 recreation sites, and six territorial parks — for example, Tombstone in the beautiful Klondike — where people can connect with nature. Nearly 89,000 Yukoners and visitors camped in the government campsites in 2018, which was an increase of 17 percent from the previous year.

As we take a look at these pressures and we take a look at the ability of Yukoners and tourists to get out on the land, it is imperative that we keep up with that demand. In 2018, we did mark a record year, welcoming nearly 27,000 people to the centre and 19 more visitors than in 2017 as well.

Speaking directly about investing in camping, as the demand for clean, safe, and quiet camping continues to grow, so does our investment to care for our campgrounds and our parks.

Again, Tombstone Park and the world-class interpretive centre there is an extremely important investment. In 2019, we continued our investment in upgrading and our investment in maintenance and also the staffing of our campsites to ensure that they continue to be safe and enjoyable for all Yukoners, visitors — and the environment.

We have so many campsites that are so readily available from whatever city or town you live in. It's something that I appreciate myself. If I have the opportunity on a day's notice to have some time, you can usually find me at a campsite somewhere in the Yukon. I have my favourites. I'm sure the member opposite has his own favourite in his riding. He has some beautiful parks in that beautiful riding. But, again, it's really important that we continue with that investment.

In the 2019 season, we are investing \$833,000 for improvements including: a total of 11 additional campsites at the Little Salmon Lake and Five Mile Lake campgrounds; replacement of the Wolf Creek bridge; playground replacements; roofs replaced on kitchen shelters, which are extremely well-used in our campsites; rusty outhouse barrels are being replaced with fibreglass tanks; bear-proof garbage cans are being replaced as well; additional bear-proof storage bins are installed; docks and roads are upgraded and repaired; new information kiosks and signs installed; and hundreds of hazardous trees are being removed.

The strategy could indicate a process to identify a location for the Whitehorse-area campground. That is kind of where we are right now. We have shared a draft Yukon parks strategy this fall for comment, and we will be incorporating feedback on the final strategy this winter.

Again, it's a great opportunity to thank everybody who participated so far in the engagements on parks and campgrounds. It's clear that it is an extremely popular subject matter with Yukoners.

As the demand and the expectations continue to grow and to evolve, it's a good time to take a long-term and strategic look at our system of territorial parks and campgrounds in Yukon. Specific proposed actions would include the building of a new campground — as the member opposite mentioned — in the Whitehorse area, testing a reservation system for select sites in campgrounds, updating fees, and also encouraging more year-round use of parks and campgrounds.

So, again, there is nothing specific as far as the location, but that would come out of the strategy. The Yukon parks strategy and the good work there is where we will be identifying a location for that Whitehorse-area campground.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the Premier for that. The Premier was talking about upgrades and improvements being made to existing campgrounds and campsites. He did list a few that were happening, and that was good to hear. I want to talk a little bit about docks when it comes to campgrounds. I know there are quite a few campgrounds that have older docks that need replacement — good old Mother Nature and wind usually have something to do with that. I know that the dock that had been put in place this year — and it just got pulled out — for the cottage lots on Kluane Lake was a pretty nice dock.

Constituents from all around the Yukon are just wondering if there is money in the budget for upgrades to some of the other docks at some of the other campgrounds.

Hon. Mr. Silver: This would be work that would come out of the strategy, and that draft strategy is a 10-year plan. It does have eight different priorities in it. "Keep doing what's working" is one of the main pieces, and so if you are seeing success in a particular campsite — either the way that it is structured or the assets that are there — it is extremely important to make sure that we continue to provide those things; developing a plan for the parks system, as well; establishing and operating emerging new parks; enriching and diversifying those park experiences; ensuring protection; advancing reconciliation; modernizing regulations; and also financially sustaining our parks.

Again, as the good work is being done on the strategy, it is extremely important to know that these are the guiding pillars for that 10-year process.

As I mentioned, in 2019, we invested \$833,000 to expand and improve campsites. For example, Little Salmon Lake campground was expanded by seven campsites, Twin Lakes campground by five, and bridges were replaced at Wolf Creek campground. We also added wheelchair-accessible camping sites at the Tombstone Mountain and Five Mile Creek campgrounds — and three campgrounds with wheelchair-accessible trails, which is great to see.

Data on the usage of parks and campgrounds in the 2019 season are expected to be available very soon, in a couple of months — really important work there.

I know that, specific to the member opposite, he was asking some very specific questions.

All of our government-owned and -operated boat launches were inspected in 2018. These are managed by the Department of Community Services. The good news is that Community Services is up for debate, as well, here in Committee of the Whole under the supplementary estimates. A little bit of background information there for the member opposite: Community Services did receive \$4.1 million in infrastructure funding from the Government of Canada to update boat launches. The results of the 2018 inspections will prioritize that investment.

In closing on that, over the next six years, the department will be requesting approximately \$1 million in capital funding to fulfill the Government of Yukon's requirement to pay the 25-cents per dollar for the project funding through the Investment Canada infrastructure program — so that's where those dollars will be allocated from.

Mr. Istchenko: I want to thank the Premier. I also just want to throw — I know some of the staff who work in the individual departments are probably listening. I just want to thank the staff who do the work on campgrounds. One of the things you probably hear most — when we were debating tourism earlier — was how clean and how operationally functional our campgrounds are. You know, we're the only jurisdiction that provides wood and stuff like that, so hats off to those who work in there. It's sometimes not a fun job, especially when someone is screaming at you in a different language and you're the attendant, but they do a good job.

I want to switch a little bit over to some other stuff here. I have a question about hunting. I just want to confirm — there was a lot of displeasure with the government's handling of the permit hunt system over the years. It seems to have been changed — there were some things that were done. I just want to ask the Premier for his perspective on that and just ask him if he has received any concerns or complaints from hunters who use the permit hunt system as it's set up now.

Hon. Mr. Silver: It sounds like the member opposite has an exciting camping story, and I would like to maybe draw down on that a bit later, but maybe we'll do that outside of the Legislative Assembly.

I do have to say that I have used the opportunity to meet a lot of Yukoners and non-Yukoners alike with the free wood that

is provided and gathering together at those wood boxes, and making friends by splitting some wood for some folks is always a good way of meeting your neighbours right across the Yukon — and visitors.

When it comes specifically to the permit hunt authorization — the 2019 hunt authorization lottery was a success, with all permits issued before the start of the hunting season on August 1. In total, 4,742 applications were submitted for the 223 available permits. Eight rounds of the return and re-issuance process were completed, and the permanent hunt review — and lessons learned from the 2018 lottery — led to a number of changes, as the member opposite is indicating, for 2019 — including an earlier application period and enabling applicants to see and verify their application history online before applying.

We are always trying our best to make sure that the system matches the needs of Yukoners. Again, having the ability to make changes from the 2018 process to the 2019 process — it's important to always move forward and look at what worked in the past and what didn't work in the past — and expand that. Also, it is really important for us to acknowledge the traditional knowledge of First Nation governments and be able to work with communities as much as we possibly can to share that information on something for is extremely important to most Yukoners.

I don't know too many Yukoners who don't have wild meat in their freezers, Mr. Chair. This is an extremely important issue and one that we take extremely seriously. There are, of course, going to be lots of varying views on the system, but the good news is that the Department of Environment has been working extremely hard to ensure that they are modernizing the system and making it better, including, like I said, the early applicants — verifying the application history online before applying — extremely important upgrades to that system. The purchase of seals and non-resident licences require attendance at an environmental office or recognized vendor. It is important to know that, as well, at this time.

Again, important changes and a suite of improvements are being made to the lottery system. I mentioned a few, but also, we're making all resident hunting licences electronic — meaning no paper licences were sold — and also offering an earlier application period, which began, this time, on April 15. These are just some of those new improvements — providing the ability for applicants to view and verify their history, waiting online before even applying, ensuring permit returns no longer result in the applicant's waiting increasing by one instead of the waiting remaining the same, and also that data and statistics from the 2019 draw — including the distribution of permits by waiting and the number of applicants for each zone — are available to help applicants better understand their chances for success in future lotteries.

So, still working on much more improvements for the future — looking at things like the ability to sell seals through the e-licensing system in the future, also averaging the waiting between the two applicants for joint applications — so much accomplished; much more to come.

I think that the department is doing a lot of great work in using a modernized approach but also, at the same time, implementing some much-needed upgrades to the system.

Mr. Istchenko: Can the Premier confirm for me — you used to be able to register your hunting — where you hunted or what you did — online. I believe now you can't anymore and you have to go into a regional office somewhere. Can you confirm if that's actually a fact for me please?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Yes, that is true. The member opposite is correct.

I just wanted to say as well that the changes that were implemented, they seemed very well-received. Fish and game associations were very pleased with the outcome as well. Being able to engage and interact with all stakeholders in the hunting community — it's really extremely important that we make sure that any of these changes are based upon the needs of Yukoners first and foremost.

But again — to the member's last question — he is correct.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the Premier for that. I will just leave a parting comment on it. As we move, and it started previous to this government — we moved to online and we talk about that a lot in here — how it's way better to have online services. This is where we've gone backwards. It's probably not such a big deal for someone who lives in Whitehorse to go by 10 Burns Road or in Haines Junction. There are a lot of people who don't have an office and their conservation officer is posted in Haines Junction, but they're a hunter from Beaver Creek. In the Chair's riding, there are a few communities like that — they don't have that. So, a few people have been getting a hold of me saying, "Hey, what happened there? Now I have to make a special trip." So, I'll just leave that — I'll let the Premier continue. Thank you for that.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you to the member opposite for giving me the chance to respond. Again, this is something that they're working on. I agree with the member opposite, being a rural member, that it is important to make sure that there is equal access. I think really, right now, it's about fixing the draw, and that's where a lot of the tension was. I don't disagree with the member opposite, and it is something that the department is working on.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the Premier for that.

I'm going to switch over to the ATV survey. I have a couple of questions. Has the government reconsidered making changes to ATV use in the territory?

Hon. Mr. Silver: That would be an initiative under the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and also through the modernization of the *Motor Vehicles Act*. There are initiatives underway right now that would consider changes to, as the member opposite called them, ATVs — all-terrain vehicles — but there is more on that through the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources or also the modernization of the *Motor Vehicles Act*.

Mr. Istchenko: Okay, I'll save that for another time — the ATV stuff.

Another question that I have is: Could the Premier confirm — and just let me know the status of the work being done on the Kusawa Lake area management plan? It has been going on

for a while, and it has been kind of on hold — so if I could just get an update on where that is at.

Hon. Mr. Silver: In a nutshell, there are continued conversations with the three affected First Nations. That process is ongoing. There is nothing new to report at this time specifically to the Kusawa plan.

Again, we have talked a bit on the floor of the Legislative Assembly in the past about the status of parks, protected areas, and management plans in general. Again, this is extremely important work. We are working closely with First Nation governments, but also with the Inuvialuit in certain areas to address parks and protected areas and making sure that management plans are there to guide the conservation and use of these areas.

Management plans are currently in place for nine habitat protection areas and four territorial parks. When it comes specifically to Kusawa, that would be one of the plans currently under development or review. There is also Agay Mene and other areas.

When it comes to habitat protection areas within management plans underway, that also includes Pickhandle Lake and also the Tagish River, and we will continue to work with our First Nation partners to advance and to finalize those plans. We are also committed to our obligations under the final agreements and the regional land use plans and supporting these key conservation areas for legacy and moving into the future.

For a little bit of background, Kusawa park was identified in the final agreements of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation and the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and was legally designated in July 2016. A management plan was developed with Carcross/Tagish First Nation, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, and Kwanlin Dün First Nation. The plan was recommended in January 2016 but has not been signed by all parties, as the member opposite knows.

Again, there is nothing else to necessarily update the member opposite on right now other than that those conversations are continuing.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the Premier for that.

This is something that was a derivative of the Dawson Renewable Resources Council way back in the day when I was a member of the resources council, and it has to do with Movi. I want to talk a little bit about the legislation — and that is domestic sheep interaction. I know that there is work being done on legislation for that.

I know it's important for people in the agricultural sector and the people who have goats and sheep, but it's also so important for our thimhorn sheep population — our Dall's sheep population — across the Yukon, and we do need something. There were some problems that came up from the sheep and goat order. I am just wondering if they are dealing with it, if it is being dealt with quickly, and if it is a smooth transition for those folks who have domestic animals that have to follow this legislation.

Just for the Premier, it's just that they are looking at legislation and at coming up with something so that we don't have wild sheep and domestic sheep mixing. There were some

issues with administering what the department was going to do, and I just want to see if it is now moving smoothly or not. Maybe the Premier can get back to me on another day on that one.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you for the clarification. As the member opposite knows, we returned with some information on domestic sheep populations yesterday after answering some of those specific questions. Just to continue on that, when it comes to animal health protection, we share our environment and our lives with animals, whether wild or domestic. I know that we have different opinions than maybe our neighbours in the State of Alaska as to how to do that.

But again, with domestic animals — from sled dogs to pack horses — I mean livestock to our household pets — we talked about that today, Mr. Chair. It has been a part of our past and it will obviously be part of our future, so we have to take this very seriously — the protection of our animals. They continue to diversify our economy through tourism and agriculture, and they are critical in keeping Yukoners very active and very healthy — even if it's just by small things like taking the dog for a walk or other things as well.

When it comes to the disease risk monitoring specifically, the Animal Health Unit — with partners in the Department of Environment and the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, the public — that's our watchdog for disease risk in wild and domestic animals. Staff monitor the health of Yukon wildlife by leading surveillance programs for things like chronic wasting disease, winter ticks, lead exposures, and also rabies.

I know, in other jurisdictions, the tick situation is becoming unbearable in certain provinces across Canada — so again, being able to look at best practices in other jurisdictions but also working with the stakeholders in both of these departments and the public is extremely important work.

These programs give us an early warning system to really understand and to deal with the risks to the health of our wild species — our moose populations, our caribou populations — even our ravens and eagles and beyond that too. One of the things that we look for is evidence of Movi — which is short form for an extremely large word, *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae*. It's a bacterium that's associated with a severe and sometimes fatal respiratory disease in wild sheep.

We are aware of the risks that Movi poses and we have been monitoring the harvests of the thimhorn sheep — been doing that since 2013. At this time, the bacterium has not been found in Yukon wild sheep.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the Premier for that.

I want to talk a little bit about caribou and specifically, right now, the Finlayson caribou herd. Can I get an update on the hunting ban of the Finlayson caribou herd? Was the hunting ban based on scientific evidence?

Hon. Mr. Silver: We're extremely committed to addressing the Ross River Dena Council's concerns about hunting and other matters in regard to wildlife management and conservation in the Ross River area. No Finlayson caribou permits were made available in the 2019-20 hunting season, as

the member opposite pointed out. This is respecting our shared concerns for this declining herd.

Outfitter quotas are also set at zero for this herd, a commitment we made and communicated in 2018-19. We are continuing our efforts to work with the Liard First Nation, as well as the Ross River Dena Council, to address wildlife management issues, including harvest limits aiming at stabilizing the Finlayson caribou herd.

No matter where you hunt in the Yukon, you are in the traditional territory of a First Nation or of the Inuvialuit, and Yukoners have a long history of being extremely respectful harvesters, taking only what they need, using all that they take, and recognizing that we share the land and its resources. We also share our information and traditional knowledge. Again, I can't think of a better pursuit than working in commitment with the people who have been on the land for thousands of years and the traditional knowledge that they bring to the table — also pairing that up with our knowledge, as a government, and working together to make sure that we address wildlife management issues with an aim at stabilizing those herds.

Mr. Istchenko: I agree 100 percent with the Premier about working with First Nations and that traditional evidence. I believe one of the reasons the permits were cancelled was because there was concern over the herd population and size, but we're hearing concerns on this side that there are still people hunting caribou — part of the Finlayson herd — and they might not be residents of the Yukon or living in the Yukon. They could be coming from other jurisdictions. Can the Premier — with the Finlayson herd — confirm if there are still hunters hunting the Finlayson herd?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, you know, there are anecdotal conversations and then there is our ability to work with Ross River Dena Council and basically try our best to monitor this herd. Those efforts have been going on since 1982. It is hard to make comments on what would constitute illegal hunting on the floor of the Legislative Assembly. If the member opposite does have any information to share, then the department is absolutely all ears as to making sure that people respect the limits and the population. Monitoring of that population is extremely important. That is where we can see the health of this herd. At this point, in 2017, population estimates for the herd were 2,712 animals and showed that it declined since the 2007 estimates. So, 10 years later, we went from 3,077 animals down to 2,712 animals — continuing the declining trend we have observed since 1990 when this particular herd was almost at 6,000 animals — 5,950 animals, to be specific — after wolf reduction efforts in 1990. Also, the numbers we have for a couple of other dates, for the record — in 1996, the herd was at 4,537 animals and in 1999, 4,130 animals.

Again, the department has been conducting the composition surveys for awhile now and introduced permit hunt authorizations for this particular caribou herd in 1989. It had issued 30 permits annually up until 2018, and in 2018, no permits were being issued.

So, again, we have our numbers as far as the size of the herd. We are continuing to monitor that herd. Again, if anybody wants to call the TIPP line or the department to make sure that

any illegal hunting activities — I mean, again, we spoke on the floor about a lot of hunters very cognizant about harvesting — but we all need to be making sure that these herds are being protected based upon the rules that are set out by the governments that are here.

Mr. Istchenko: Now I am going to switch gears. I will stay with the same type of animal — but the Fortymile caribou herd. What hunting opportunities under the management plan are there for Yukoners in this upcoming year?

Hon. Mr. Silver: In this particular area, we're extremely proud of the recovery work that has been accomplished with our government, with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, and other partners in Alaska and Yukon on that Fortymile caribou herd. For the past 20 years, we have focused our efforts on the goal of this herd growing large enough to reoccupy its historic range in the Yukon. It is now at a level where a limited harvest in Yukon can be sustainable, and we are developing a harvest management plan that describes the harvest allocations and approaches for subsistence and licensed hunters.

We must be very careful and consider the concerns of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the community of Dawson, and we're working extremely closely with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in staff and also the renewable resources council and the community to understand their concerns and to ensure that our harvest plan is responsible and respectful. This includes publishing a newsletter to keep communication open with the community.

Mr. Istchenko: I didn't get an answer. What I was looking for, basically, was: Will there be or are there going to be any hunting opportunities set out under the plan for Yukoners this year, this winter season, this season now?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I unfortunately don't have anything more to report to the member opposite. When working with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and also with the renewable resources council, these conversations are ongoing. The good news is that the caribou are at a level where a limited harvest in Yukon can be sustained. We know that, again with Alaska, there need to be conversations there as well with quotas and opportunities there. I don't have anything more to report, other than to say that we're going to continue to work on establishing a sustainable licensed harvest for the Fortymile caribou herd, and we are designing that harvest to integrate approximately with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in's subsistence harvesting. There is more to come on that, but I have nothing new to report.

Mr. Istchenko: If you read the management plan for it — and it has a harvest plan in there — it has numbers that are allowable numbers for Yukon and allowable numbers for Alaska. For the past two years, there has been a recommendation under the plan for a certain amount of those numbers on the Yukon side to be harvested by resident hunters. We're going into year 3 now, and there's still no opportunity. The Premier has probably heard it lots from Yukoners that their hunting opportunities are becoming less. We have this opportunity, and we've had it now — we're going into three years. My questions would be: Why are there no opportunities? When will this come?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, the member opposite is hunting for some numbers that I can't offer him right now.

We are working on establishing a sustainable licensed harvest.

It's worth noting that there has been no licensed harvest of this herd since 1995. The lifestyle of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in is extremely important. The traditional ways and just the stories that we know of — the sizes of these herds in the past. A lot of the focus over the last couple of decades has been on getting the numbers to where they are now. We know that there are some pressures. We know that there are pressures in Alaska as well. We are continuing to work with the renewable resources council, with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. It would be great if the 2020 year had more information for the member opposite because a sustainable size of this herd — it takes a few different governments to collectively work together on this, including the State of Alaska.

We're finally at some good numbers. Following the release of population estimates in 2017, we saw them exceeding a threshold of 65,000 caribou, and that was established by a Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in general assembly resolution. We know that the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in is encouraging harvest of the Fortymile caribou by its citizens, but no licensed harvest has been happening on this particular herd for over two decades now. The herd itself is a very large herd that historically ranged not only just in that particular area, but all the way down to Whitehorse. At times, the numbers were in the hundreds of thousands. To get this, you take a look just to our neighbours in the Northwest Territories and take a look at some of the herds there. Without comprehensive management, you talk about losing opportunities to hunt — if we don't get this right, then we will lose huge opportunities to hunt.

I understand the desire for folks to get out on the land, and I know that there is a great opportunity through the first hunt and the BC curriculum that we're on which really has expanded our ability to take traditional ways of being and doing into the curriculum and classroom, and what a great opportunity this would be to see a healthy herd.

Seeing that these numbers have only recently been up to that area, you can imagine that these are hard conversations in that we want to make sure that the actions that we do now are sustainable into the future. When you see a herd that, in the past, has had a much larger range and has been a much larger size and now we're into these numbers of about 65,000 whereas they were in the numbers of hundreds of thousands in the past, I understand community sensitivities to increase pressure. The member opposite talks about that, and I agree with him.

Increased pressure on the hunting of moose, for example — if licensed harvests were to come to a new area or if we are trying to manage those types of things, it is really important to take a look at all those pressures not only in one jurisdiction, but in all of them. We do have guiding principles from the *Umbrella Final Agreement*, and we take those very seriously. We take our partnerships with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the council seriously, as well, when we are making these decisions.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the Premier for that. I will switch to another animal with horns — moose — seeing as the Premier brought it up.

The Alesk moose recovery program was a program that was started and set up with the previous government, working with the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, the Alesk Renewable Resources Council, and many local trappers. They hired a coordinator, and the coordinator went out and talked to trapline concession holders, many of them elders. I think that 80 percent of the concession holders are First Nation trapline holders. They worked with all the trapline holders to look at getting access because there is always an issue with access. The program got the trappers out there. The youth in the community got involved. The local renewable resources council, through funding availabilities, helped with snare sets. It was a good success. You never find a success of a program or something in the first year — something that is set up. It always takes a few years for the success to come out. Last year, the program was cancelled or shut down.

It was a three- to five-year program and it was a good program. I understand from talking to many other Yukoners and local resources councils and First Nations — they were like, "That's a great program. We should do that in our area." So, now it's not being done in any area and it was cancelled in game zone 7 where the program was set up.

If you go out on the land — which, I'm a big proponent of that — the Premier spoke about being out on the land and we are, and there are people who live out there. Our moose populations — we're actually seeing an increase by working with the predators through this recovery program and this trapping program. I'm just wondering, I guess, if the Premier — besides the fact that the money dried up or it was only a three-year program, is there a tangible reason for why this program was cancelled when it was a successful program?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I wouldn't necessarily say the — maybe the specific initiative was no longer being funded, but that doesn't mean that these are not important issues that continue to be funded in different ways.

For the record, moose is the most harvested species by Yukon hunters. Total harvest of moose is at or above sustainable levels in some areas of Yukon, and that's of concern to a lot of people. The highest rates of moose harvest are occurring in areas of easy access. As the member opposite knows, access is getting increasingly easier with advances in technologies. It's not like a couple of generations ago — especially when it comes to sheep.

We do need to take action to manage this extremely important species responsibly and this means preventing population decline while respecting aboriginal harvest rights as well. The Department of Environment has been working extremely hard with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, the renewable resources councils, and First Nations to discuss moose harvest management across Yukon including what tools we use and where to apply them.

A little background on that as to the current initiatives the member opposite might not be as familiar with — the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board recently requested renewables councils to submit ideas, thoughts, and commitments regarding the sustainability of various tools that we could use to manage moose harvest — moose tools,

Mr. Chair. The submission deadline just occurred for that. That was October 31 of this year. So, information gathering from the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board requests will inform the revision of the 2002 moose tool kit which is expected to be finalized this coming spring — 2020.

Then the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board 2019 public review of proposed amendments — the wildlife regulations currently include a proposal by the Department of Environment allowing for the use of a number of different management strategies and management tools beyond the permit licensing lotteries.

These tools are meant to be for more close and adaptive management of moose harvest across the territory. There is a whole suite of tools currently identified in the moose tool kit, and the updated tool kit and work with the renewable resources council will help us to determine what tools to apply and where, based upon these pressures I mentioned earlier.

In 2016, the Department of Environment created and publicly shared a document on science-based guidelines for the management of moose in the Yukon, and these guidelines provide a scientific approach to integrate with local and traditional knowledge as well.

Mr. Istchenko: Can the Premier confirm when was the last time the Alsek — the moose in game zone 7 were surveyed and when the next survey will be happening?

Hon. Mr. Silver: A pretty specific question — I'm going to have to ask the member for his indulgence, and I'll get back to him with some of those numbers.

Mr. Istchenko: My point on that is, I believe it was surveyed — I'm not even going to — it was a while ago when it was surveyed. When you put a program forward like that and your traditional knowledge and those land users — those First Nation people and non-First Nation people who use that area tell you they're seeing an increase in moose population — ungulate enhancement, ungulate populations are coming back because the program was put in, everyone in that area, in that traditional territory, gets pretty excited and stoked. But how can we make policy or make changes if we don't actually know if these programs are successful?

I always enjoyed my time in the previous government as a member of my community. I wholeheartedly believe in the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and our local resources councils and how they incorporate traditional knowledge into this.

But if we're not going to survey that moose population again and you cancel a program that was actually bringing up a population, how are you going to know if these programs work? The feedback that you then get from — I looked at the *Wildlife Act* proposals and there are some in there that have things to do with trapping. But if you don't put resources toward that science-based information to go with your traditional-based knowledge, how will you know how to bring moose populations back? How will you know to make ATV regulations? How will you know to make any sort of legislation changes — *Wildlife Act* changes — if you don't do the complete management up front where you get the science-based knowledge and you also get the traditional knowledge?

Now, the traditional knowledge, like I said, it is there. People are talking about it. If you go to a local Alsek Renewable Resources Council meeting or you go to the Champagne and Aishihik elders' lunch — they are talking about seeing more moose at Six Mile — it is incredible, but if you are not going to survey it in the next 10 years, what good was everything we ever did?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I don't think we are disagreeing with the member opposite. I will say that, you know, the member opposite absolutely has a lot of information in this area and has lots of friends — and himself — who are hunters. But he also knows that many hunters in the Yukon are divided about the current status of moose populations depending on the area that we are talking about, and they are very concerned about their future harvesting opportunities.

I know that I hear it a lot — taking a look at areas like Hunker Creek — lots of pressures there. As we expand mining roads as well, we are looking at people being able to access areas that they have never been able to access before. That adds pressures as well.

Again, the extremely important work that is done with the Fish and Wildlife Management Board and the renewable resources councils, that is extremely important work. I spoke a lot about the tool kits and the process there.

Again, my answer to the last question is valid for his concerns — for his specific question now — about how, if we don't do the surveys, how would we know? So, we went through a whole bunch of different reasons why we do know. But again, I will get back to him on that specific question about that specific survey, but we know that we have to monitor a lot of species — and we do — particularly species of concern that are being harvested — especially when it comes to moose, specifically.

We do this collaboratively; you can't do it alone. It's done with First Nation governments; it's done with the Inuvialuit; it's done with non-governmental boards, as the member opposite suggested, and committees, renewable resources councils, international neighbouring and regional governments, hunters, trappers, outfitters, and individual Yukoners who are out on the land. We do collect this data. It is ongoing all the time. I hope that the member opposite isn't saying that we're not doing that. He asked me a specific question, and I know that he's interested in that. We'll get back to him on that, but we are collecting data all the time to help to identify targets and priorities for research efforts as well. This work informs the decisions that we make on harvest management, on land use planning, and on environmental assessment processes as well.

When it comes to harvest management specifically, ensuring that our wildlife populations are healthy and sustainable is our ultimate goal. It enables responsible harvest opportunities and wildlife viewing for not only this generation of people who are excited to get on the land, but also for our next generation and our next generation. That harvest management — those discussions that are happening across the Yukon and are continuing to happen across the Yukon — they are challenging. Again, we do get anecdotal information from a lot of different areas about increases. I've heard the same

conversation but in different directions on some of the areas in the Klondike where some people believe there's more and some people believe there's less and some people are just luckier hunters than others. That's for sure, Mr. Chair.

In response to information from harvesters and from our scientific surveys and issues that are raised by our partners, we are working. We're working at the Yukon Forum as well and through land claims boards and committees to ensure that harvest species, specifically like moose, continue to thrive.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the Premier for that. I think we agree on most stuff.

One thing that I think has been disappointing a little bit for Yukoners is that Yukoners rely on their local resources council and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board. They understand how the regulation change proposal works. This has to go with appointees. I know that when the review was started of the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board — I have it in front of me here, and I have the final report — there were vacancies for quite a long time. The review is this thick. This document here has a lot of pages on the Yukon *Wildlife Act* rate change proposals.

My question for the Premier is: Does the Premier think it's fair to a renewable resources council or to the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board to leave positions vacant? Government positions are to be appointed by the minister, but to leave them vacant for months or almost years when the work that these boards and these councils do when it comes to wildlife management are ongoing — they don't have a chance to wait for a review to be done or whatever. Does the Premier think it's fair to have boards not at capacity as set out in chapter 16 of the UFA?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I will make a general statement that it is extremely important that all boards and all committees are at full capacity. That is extremely important.

When it comes to the specific question that he asks, we are in a review period. To be very broad and general, I would say that, absolutely, we need to make sure that boards and committees have the human resources that they need.

Mr. Istchenko: So, the Premier believes that the boards should have a full membership and that they are great and work hard — correct?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I will also add that this board that he is talking about now — all positions are filled.

Mr. Istchenko: For the record, there were many board members of resources councils, previous and past, who were very disappointed with the lag time and the actual non-appointment of them while they were reviewing the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and the local resources councils. They put petitions to the government to try to fill positions, and that waylaid process didn't go over well with a lot of Yukoners. I will leave it at that. The Premier can get up and comment on that if he wants.

I want to talk a little bit about the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board review. In my past life, being a member and working with a lot of the fish and wildlife board members over many years and knowing a lot of them — they are busy. They do a lot. They do a lot just keeping up with the ongoing

things of the day and the regulation change proposals. As you know, things change, governments change, and when governments change, sometimes the direction changes on what they have to do. So they are very, very busy.

If you read through the review, there are a lot of things — like establishing mechanisms in recommendations, consideration for areas of strength and gaps. I could just go on and on in here. How long does the Premier think this is going to take? Is this going to be done without working with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board? All these recommendations are in here. There are discussions and recommendations. Who is going to sit down with the board then? Will they bring back previous members from basically when the board was started in 1993 when land claims came through — bring back a bunch of members and go through this so they can get a really traditional — like, this is how it should work? Or will somebody say, "This is how it's going to work. Welcome to the board."

Hon. Mr. Silver: Well, when you put it that way — great recommendations from the member opposite. I know that he is passionate about this.

Also, I believe that it was in the spring of this year when he urged the ministry to ensure that the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board positions were filled. The good news is that those positions are filled right now.

With the third-party review of the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board being submitted to the Government of Yukon on May 7, 2019, and released on September 18 of this year — not a lot of time has passed since the release on September 18 of this year. That review did include interviews with First Nations, boards, board members, staff, alumni — I don't know if the member opposite was one of those past members who was being interviewed — and also government officials and a whole bunch of other Yukoners. It did include a survey that was available to the public.

In addition to that review as well, other fish and wildlife topics of interest at the Yukon Forum happened, including things like trapline allocation, wildlife registration consistent with the final agreements, and a conversation that we talked about earlier, which is the pressures on moose harvesting.

The Yukon Forum tasked the fish and wildlife working group to oversee a third-party review of the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board. This is a publicly funded board that plays a central role in helping to manage valuable public resources — that is our fish and wildlife, as the member opposite obviously knows.

The third-party review is now complete, as I mentioned, and was presented to the Yukon Forum. That was made public in its release, as I said, in September, and the review report can be found on yukon.ca. The working group and the board are now beginning the implementation of all 27 recommendations. Canada — they're collaborating as well on the implementation there, but again, implementation of not just a few, but of all of the recommendations, conducting reviews — they're extremely good practice, Mr. Chair, for any organization — and in particular, one that serves the public interest in a fast-evolving

world of self-governing, reconciliation, and land and resource management — extremely important work being done.

When you look at all of the different working groups of the Yukon Forum, there's lots of work being done on this particular file. It's extremely important not only to this government, but also to the First Nation governments.

The Fish and Wildlife Management Board — I believe the work that they're doing is extremely important. Now that the review is completed, we will be moving on implementation of those recommendations. We're working collaboratively with First Nations through the forum, as I mentioned, identifying those priorities and establishing those working groups.

Again, an extremely important pursuit. I think the timeline has been pretty shortened, when you think about — starting in the spring from the beginning of this process to now working on the implementation of all 27 recommendations. I think that's extremely good work and extremely important work to coordinate with other governments and other First Nation governments.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the Premier for that, and just to follow up — so the implementation of the recommendations — does the Premier have a timeline? Are we looking at by the fall of next year? Is there a timeline that has been given? You know, if there's no timeline, it could never ever get done. We could just be always working on these recommendations.

Does he have a timeline?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I don't have a timeline right now, but I do — from the level of importance it has been given not only by Canadian governments, but by the First Nation governments — and when something gets to the Yukon Forum, these are co-agendas that we create together. This is extremely important not only to this government — not only to this Department of Environment — but also to all governments that are involved as we begin implementing the 27 recommendations.

I hope that the member opposite is wrong and that “never” is not the answer.

Mr. Istchenko: I think it was a bit of a surprise actually when it came out of the Yukon Forum — the review, for some — that they were going to review the Fish and Wildlife Management Board. As you know, on this side, we're not privy to the conversations in there. I know that the Alsek Renewable Resources Council had put a proposal forward to look at the working relationship between the Department of Environment and the boards and councils. I think people thought maybe that might happen.

It begs me to ask the next question, I guess — because we've now done a review of the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board. Like I said, we're not privy to the conversations at the Yukon Forum. Is there a conversation about reviewing, then, our renewable resources councils also?

Hon. Mr. Silver: So, yes — as far as the Yukon Forum goes, those conversations are done in camera — and for good reason. I mean, if you take a look at the Council of the Federation, First Ministers' meetings, Finance ministers' meetings that I'm involved with — there's a certain format where conversations are being had. It's extremely important and confidential information. With the Yukon Forum, the

legislation that designed the concept of the Yukon Forum was created by the Yukon Party. We're following that lead from former Premier Fentie, as he designed the exact formula for the Yukon Forum. It works. It works really well when it actually meets.

Again, whether or not another conversation is going to happen at the Yukon Forum — the Yukon Party should understand that, based upon how it was designed, those agenda items are co-established. That's an extremely important part of these conversations. It would be one thing if all these conversations were just an opportunity to talk about some good news and not actually get down to some hard conversations. I think that's maybe why the forum in the past wasn't necessarily so successful or didn't meet. But now, there are some really important conversations that are being had and dozens of working groups and JSEC — all of these committees moving forward — it's really great to see the deputy ministers and the top officials in First Nation governments working together in a joint action committee setting — and also the working groups being controlled and run by chiefs and councillors. Lots of good work is happening there.

The format of that Yukon Forum, again, is something that we did not create, but at the same time, we do not feel that it needs to be changed either.

We think that the Yukon Party, in designing the Yukon Forum, got the concept right. We are making sure that it does what it was supposed to do, which is to meet up to four times a year. That is extremely important for us on this side of the Legislative Assembly.

A top priority of the fish and wildlife working group is a review of the instruments established under chapter 16 of the final agreements. What a great place to have a conversation — Yukon Forum — with the First Nation governments. We are trying our best to make sure that reconciliation happens and that we work together on some extremely important processes.

When it comes to Yukon Forum working groups specific to fish and wildlife — together, we have established two working groups that include the Department of Environment officials. These are regarding fish and wildlife management and land use planning. The third-party review of the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board was conducted, and its findings — as we spoke about — were presented at the forum in September. Again, it is really important that the information is shared from the fruits of that labour. That can be found on the website yukon.ca. As we mentioned, we are moving forward on those 27 recommendations because it is extremely important work and we are excited about it.

We spoke about it a bit, as well, but moose harvest is another top priority. We are working with the renewable resources council offices, the First Nations, and the Fish and Wildlife Management Board on all of those potential changes as well.

Again, I can't stress enough how important those conversations at the Yukon Forum are. It is an extremely valuable opportunity to develop those strong government-to-government relations and to collaborate on priorities shared by

the Government of Yukon and also the First Nation governments.

I know that we are running down on time — there are a couple of minutes left — so I will cede the floor to the member opposite if he has some final questions before we close debate today.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the Premier for that. I will just end on — if you look at the regulation change proposals that are forward — the moose regulation proposal — the adaptive management of moose in the Yukon — who proposed the change? Fish and wildlife or the branch — the Department of Environment?

A lot of the changes come from a 2002 document on moose management, wildlife regulations — amending them to enable a minister’s discretion, adaptive provisions for permits to certain subzones, enable their ability to vary season dates and enable use of antler configuration, thresholds, and registration authority restrictions. Everything that they have in there is limiting someone who wants to harvest moose. It is a way to manage the fact that there is not enough moose to harvest.

I think that the Premier might be surprised to find that a lot of the local organizations — non-profit organizations that deal with hunting — and there are a couple that I can think of such as outfitters, resources councils, and boards — and nowhere in here is there a proposal in the regulation change process. There are a few in trapping to help a little bit, but what about complete management? Is there enough food for moose to eat? Are we looking at what moose eat? In here, we are not. Is there enough actual food for them to eat? What is the predator/prey relationship there? What are the actual numbers?

I hear it more and more and I hear it all the time, and people get frustrated. The proposal is coming forward and they are looking at a 2002 document and asking a bunch of questions. They are asking Yukoners, saying, “Well, what would you like for the tines of a bull to be — three or four?” Does that mean that they get to hunt more? No, it doesn’t; we are just going to find ways to manage the last of the moose we have. The complete management of moose populations, caribou populations, or any other populations has to do with what they are doing in other jurisdictions. They are looking at the caribou population — some of the stuff that you are seeing in British Columbia and Alberta — but those conversations aren’t being had. I believe that those conversations need to be had.

Anyway, I will leave it at that. Seeing the time, I move that you report progress, Mr. Chair.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Istchenko that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Chair, I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Chair: It has been moved by Ms. McPhee that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair’s report

Mr. Hutton: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

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

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 23

3rd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Thursday, November 14, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
Don Hutton	Mayo-Tatchun

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King
Liz Hanson	Whitehorse Centre

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Dan Cable
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, November 14, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed with the Order Paper.
 Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Van Bibber: I would like all colleagues in the House to help me welcome a few special guests here today for a tribute: Mr. Rolf Hougen, his lovely wife Marg Hougen, Craig Hougen, Kelly Hougen, Kevin Benson, Eva Bidrman, Ron McFadyen — a well-known Yukoner, Amanda Leslie, Mark Beese, and Tim Kucharek. Welcome.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I would like my colleagues to join me in welcoming the Yukon Employees' Union President Steve Geick, vice-president Paul Johnston, and Public Service Alliance of Canada President Chris Aylward, and other civil servants to the House this afternoon.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is not often that you get to do this. I am sort of surprised and proud to ask the members to join me in welcoming a friend of mine — for 50 years — which is appalling to actually think, but true. My friend is the founder of POVNET — which is a digital community — an anti-poverty activist, and the owner of Lezara Publications. Her name is Penny Goldsmith.

Applause

Hon. Ms. Frost: I will ask my colleagues to please help me in welcoming a team from Environment, the Climate Change Secretariat staff: Rebecca World, Director of climate change strategies; Aletta Leach, Ryan Davies, Maxine White, Katie Woodstock, and Diana Dryburgh-Moraal.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I would also like the Assembly to welcome Mr. Shane Andre, who is our director of the Energy branch of Energy, Mines and Resources, and Mr. Kevin Hannam, who is our acting director of policy, planning and communications from the Department of Economic Development. Thank you for being here today.

Applause

Mr. Cathers: I would like to ask the House to join me in welcoming a constituent who I'm sure is also here for the CKRW tribute, Craig Hougen.

Applause

Speaker: Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of CKRW 50th anniversary

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to the 50th anniversary of CKRW. Since 1969, CKRW has been a mainstay on Yukon airwaves and is embedded in our culture. We have Klondike Broadcasting Company and the Hougen family to thank for that.

When I grew up, CKRW or CBC were always on in the house or in the car. Birthday greetings were a big deal in those days — and still are now — as it felt like you knew everybody in the Yukon. We always looked forward to finding out whose birthday it was and who was giving their greetings. On weekends, we always tuned into *Trader Time*, which still runs today. I will always remember playing Shriners radio bingo with my family. It was such an important event to us, but I don't think we ever won.

My most distinct memory, though, with CKRW was from August 16, 1977. It was an announcement that Elvis Presley had died. As a little girl at the time, that was a monumental moment. I could barely wrap my head around what death meant and to hear that the most famous person of all time had died was really kind of mind-boggling to me. It's funny how certain memories stand out. But what stands out the most to me about CKRW is its familiarity. I grew up with it, and in some ways, it helped me to grow up too.

The station and its many great personalities over the years have contributed greatly to the social fabric of Yukon. CKRW was licensed in 1969 and first signed on the air on November 17, 1969. It broadcast from the frequency 610.

At the time, CKRW operated farther north and farther west than any other Canadian radio station. The station had a middle-of-the-road music format. Al Jensen was the manager and Ron McFadyen was the production manager.

Over the years, the company expanded, and in 2004, CKRW officially launched The Rush, 96.1 FM.

In 2007, CKRW was authorized to operate transmitters in Atlin and Inuvik, expanding its reach across territorial boundaries. Its history goes on, but what most people think of when it comes to CKRW really is the familiarity.

I grew up with CKRW just like so many other Yukoners. What at first seems like just background music and talk as you go about your day — it has a very strange ability to become part of your life. CKRW is part of who we are as Yukoners. I really encourage everyone to join me in congratulating CKRW on 50 great years on the air, and I hope for 50 more.

Applause

Ms. Van Bibber: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to CKRW on their 50th anniversary.

Another milestone: 50 years of on-air magic. The month was November, the day was the 17th in the year 1969 when Yukon was introduced to a new sound. CKRW signed on at

6:00 a.m. with a crew of 12 staff members managing all the knobs and dials to ensure that locals could hear it all. Remember: In 1969, we were still in the era of typewriters, reel-to-reel recorders, and splicing tape. It called for a crew who had skills, who could handle doing many tasks that required on-the-spot thinking to fix a problem. Once digital and modern electronics came along, it did make it a lot easier and streamlined to bring programming to radioland.

Mr. Rolf Hougen and some partners under Klondike Broadcasting already operated a cable TV company, WHTV, and he decided to expand into radio and had the first private radio north of 60. He did his homework — as Rolf was known to do. He took an Alaska Highway road trip with stops along the way, checking in with radio stations to see how they operated.

Rolf saw a format that he wanted and applied for the necessary CRTC licences. He had a winner. Imagine — some of this programming is still on today. How many of us have called into *Birthday Greetings*, both to share a birthday wish but also to let everyone in town know who you were celebrating and, at times, the age of the birthday celebrant?

The wonderful *Trader Time* — calls, phone numbers, and what was available about town to swap, trade, inform, buy or sell, or just give away. It was so Yukon, and I can't imagine how much treasure has been moved about the territory through this unique venue.

The Hougen Group has kept timelines, highlights, and snippets of Yukon history through the decades — a name, a date, and what transpired. For example, on November 13, 1969, breathalyzers were used for the first time in the Yukon. Under other news on that same day — the Yukon and Northwest Territories, with a joint entry, will enter the Canadian men's curling championship, the Macdonald Brier, for the first time. Let's not forget November weather. On November 27, 1948, it was 40.6 below, but on November 2, 1970, it was 11.7 above.

There is a segment of short stories of iconic events called *Yukon Nuggets*. Rolf commissioned former CBC reporter Les McLaughlin to record a series of *Yukon Nuggets* historic stories specifically for CKRW radio. One reads: "Whitehorse Named Capital City — It was a day for celebration in Whitehorse back in March of 1951. But for the people of Dawson City, it was a black day not soon to be forgotten."

Many of us grew up with only radio, where it was our connection to learn about the outside world, our introduction to music and stories. To have more local content was amazing, and kudos to the founders, the staff, and the crew at CKRW through the decades for all that you have contributed to Yukon. Congratulations RW, and here's to many more years.

Applause

Ms. White: I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP to add our voices to the chorus of celebration for the 50th anniversary of CKRW. Half a century of connectivity, news, music, contests, and catchy ads. I know, especially listening to today's tributes, that I am not the only one who has grown up listening to the larger-than-life radio personalities moving through the airwaves.

From the morning show through to the midday mashups, there is something for every listener. CKRW has news reporters at every event sharing highlights with the listening Yukon public. *Trader Time* has been a pillar in Yukon communities since before I can remember. I never realized how unique *Trader Time* was until, more than a decade ago, a friend who was working down south turned up the volume one morning. He couldn't get over that this curated call-in show happened and not only that it happened, but that it was still happening — and it's still happening today. You can see the long-term impact of things like *Trader Time*, Ivan Coyote and Sarah MacDougall's musical review by the same name — and they are taking that across Canada right now.

Who else finds themselves singing along to the catchy tunes created for local companies? I am sure I am not the only one who knows the phone number for Clean Choices solely because of CKRW. Then, of course, there has been mention about the gems like the *Yukon Nuggets* and what neat stories we have learned over the years from all the familiar voices. It is fun right now to have Ron McFadyen in the audience, because it was his interview techniques after such things as marathons and running races where I learned that, as an emcee, the best thing I could do is shove a microphone in someone's face and ask them how they felt. I use that today. It's the Ron McFadyen move, and anyone who knows Ron is familiar with it. I would be remiss if I left out the number of community members who tune in on Friday nights for radio bingo. We all know that familiar sound. Everyone is listening for the last number that they need and they're all waiting to see who calls in to win.

Mr. Speaker, after the success of last weekend's retro dance party, I am also certain that I'm not the only one who has got stuck in my car just wanting to listen to one more song. There have been times when I've been overseas and feeling a little bit homesick, and as soon as I was able to access it online, it was a quick connection to home. No matter what has been going on in the world, the folks behind CKRW have worked hard to make sure that this local radio station has remained relevant for half a century. That alone deserves recognition, so on behalf of the Yukon NDP, we want to thank CKRW for keeping Yukon connected for the last 50 years, and we wish them well into the future.

Applause

In recognition of Diabetes Awareness Month and World Diabetes Day

Hon. Ms. Frost: I rise in the House today to acknowledge this month as Diabetes Awareness Month and November 14 as World Diabetes Day. This year for Diabetes Awareness Month, we are asking everyone to help spread awareness to end diabetes together.

Diabetes Canada estimates that one in three Canadians is living with diabetes or pre-diabetes, yet knowledge of the risks of complications of the disease remains low.

What we know now is that people in their 20s face a 50-percent chance of developing the disease. We also know that the same percentage of Canadians cannot identify half of the

early warning signs of diabetes. Therefore, I cannot stress enough how awareness is key to lower the risk and prevent complications.

According to new research presented in 2018 at the European Association for the Study of Diabetes in Berlin, Germany, type 2 diabetes may begin more than a decade before diagnosis. To help support those with diabetes, the chronic conditions support program has collaborated with the Yukon Diabetes Education Centre — which is run out of Whitehorse General Hospital — to develop and run the diabetes wellness series. The diabetes wellness series consists of four education sessions that provide a wide range of information, including: practical strategies for submanagement; advice about medication; and tips on healthy eating and physical activity. The very popular sessions are offered in Whitehorse and in some rural Yukon communities each year. This collaborative effort is a great example of how our communities are working together to assist Yukoners living with diabetes.

We also have the type 1 diabetes support network — a group advocating strongly for the coverage of continuous glucose monitoring for individuals with type 1 diabetes. This group has been our partner in a pilot project around coverage of continuous glucose monitoring for type 1 diabetes for those up to the age of 25. That pilot project ends in March 2020, and we look forward to working with the network on the evaluation of the pilot project.

I also want to pay tribute to the support network around each individual living with diabetes — friends, family members, and health care providers, to name a few. Whether you are learning to cook new healthy foods, driving your loved ones to exercise sessions, or learning to check blood sugar levels or to inject insulin, your help makes a difference.

Applause

Ms. McLeod: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to recognize today, November 14, as World Diabetes Day and November as Diabetes Awareness Month. November 14 was chosen as World Diabetes Day as it is the birthday of Dr. Frederick Banting, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1923 after discovering insulin in 1921.

Diabetes Canada shared that, from 2010 to 2017, the number of Canadians living with diabetes increased by 28.7 percent. It is also noted that this is significantly higher than Canada's population growth over the same period, and that's an astounding increase, Mr. Speaker.

Currently in Canada, there are more than three million people diagnosed with diabetes, and it's estimated that a further two million live with diabetes and don't know it. Six million more are living with pre-diabetes, placing them at serious risk for type 2 diabetes.

I wanted to highlight the efforts of the Yukon type 1 diabetes support network, a group of individuals who provide incredible support for families and individuals facing type 1 diabetes. They have been an amazing resource for Yukoners, providing not only support and education, but advocacy for service provisions. Their efforts have led to two pilot programs

in providing children and then young adults aged 19 to 25 with continuous glucose monitoring systems. The Yukon T1D support network fundraises throughout the year to provide services to families such as summer camps, awareness videos, and more.

This year, funding from the Whitehorse Lions Club and the Copperbelt Charity Golf Classic tournament enabled the Yukon T1D support network to put on Camp Becca in honour of a young Yukoner, friend, and mentor who lived with type 1 diabetes. This camp was offered from October 4 to 6 and enabled youths between the ages of 15 and 25 to share stories and support one another while having a great time in a retreat-style setting.

Tonight, the Three Chicks and a Dude Comedy Night is taking place at the Westmark Whitehorse to support this wonderful group in their continued fundraising efforts.

I also wanted to mention that the Diabetes Education Centre located in the Thomson Centre provides services to individuals across Yukon and northern BC. Services include support and education on type 1 and type 2 diabetes, gestational diabetes, and pre-diabetes. A referral from a physician or health care provider is required to access these services and staff will work with your health care providers to ensure that you are provided with the best care going forward.

Thank you to all of those involved in supporting, treating, and advocating for families and individuals living with diabetes in the Yukon. I'm amazed by the incredible support network we have here in the Yukon and their continued efforts are truly appreciated.

Applause

Ms. White: I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP caucus in recognition of Diabetes Awareness Month and to mark today as World Diabetes Day.

November is a month-long global diabetes awareness campaign when communities around the planet team up to bring awareness to diabetes and encourage action to tackle the diabetes epidemic. Canada can no longer afford to ignore the impact that this chronic health condition has on individuals, families, our health care system, and the economy.

Although type 2 diabetes can be managed with diet and exercise, type 1 diabetes has nothing to do with lifestyle or diet. It is not preventable. It is lifelong and there is no cure.

Diabetes, Mr. Speaker, is all about the numbers. It is about counting carbohydrates to determine how much insulin is required to cover food intake, and for children with type 1, it is a never-ending task for parents to manage to keep their children safe. For adults with type 1, it is no less work. No matter how hard they try, the blood glucose levels of a person with type 1 diabetes will not truly stabilize. Life with type 1 means good days, bad days, highs, lows, constant monitoring, insulin dosing, carb counting, and adjusting.

Living with type 1 diabetes is like an intricate puzzle. It is more than checking blood sugar and giving yourself injections. It is a complex balance of insulin dosage, exercise, and carbs. Growth, illness, stress, changes in activity levels, injection locations, and many other factors can affect this balance.

Continuous adjustment helps maintain healthy glucose levels. Managing diabetes is a full-time job. There are no paycheques, time off, or vacation days, and overtime is always required.

The Yukon TD1 support network works hard to support those living with type 1 diabetes in Yukon. They fundraise to be able to support the community through many different avenues, including supplying individuals with constant glucose monitors. These lifesaving, life-altering devices aren't cheap, so I hope that people will join me tonight at the Westmark Hotel to laugh our way to a cure as they present Three Chicks and a Dude Comedy Night.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that Canada should have a national diabetes strategy and that organizations should not need to fundraise and that individuals should not pay out of pocket for a lifesaving tool, but that is a fight for another day.

So, as we mark World Diabetes Day, let's add our voices and our dollars to those who raise awareness on the impact that diabetes has on the family and the support networks of those affected — from parents whose phones are never turned off so that they can receive up-to-the-minute glucose readings from their TD1 children — CMGS — to those with type 2 diabetes as they learn to live and work with their known reality.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I have for tabling Price Waterhouse Cooper's report, entitled: *PWC — Review of the determination of security for reclamation and closure of the Wolverine Mine.*

Ms. Hanson: I have for tabling a letter from a citizen regarding privatization of Yukon government services. Mr. Speaker, this is one of approximately 600 letters that the Yukon NDP and the Official Opposition have received to date on the subject of the privatization of the Queen's Printer and Central Stores.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Mr. Hassard: I have for tabling the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

Speaker: Are there any further committee reports to be presented?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Mr. Kent: I rise to give notice of the following motion:
THAT it is the opinion of this House that the Liberal government has failed to demonstrate that there will be cost-

savings as a result of their decision to shut down Central Stores and gut the Queen's Printer Agency.

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

THAT this House urges the Liberal government to explain why, after running with a slogan of "Be Heard" during the last election campaign, they did not have the decency to talk to employees of Central Stores and the Queen's Printer Agency and to hear their views on the Liberal government's plan before they made the decision to shut down Central Stores and gut the Queen's Printer Agency.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to consult with Yukoners on the draft *Our Clean Future — A Yukon strategy for climate change, energy and a green economy.*

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to mirror the *Veterans Hiring Act* amendments made to the *Public Service Employment Act* that aim to help Canadian Armed Forces members and veterans access public service job opportunities by:

(1) providing priority entitlement for medically released veterans found qualified for a position;

(2) ensuring that modern-day veterans who apply for and are found qualified receive preference for appointment to a job open to the public; and

(3) ensuring that Canadian Armed Forces members and veterans are treated as employees in advertised internal appointments.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?
Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Climate change strategy

Hon. Mr. Pillai: It gives me great pleasure to rise to speak to *Our Clean Future* — the draft climate change, energy, and green economy strategy for Yukon.

As Yukoners know, the Government of Yukon has joined Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, the City of Whitehorse, and Canada in declaring a climate change emergency. Yukoners are calling for action to address climate change, and we are listening.

The draft strategy that we released today was developed in partnership with Yukon First Nations, transboundary indigenous groups, and Yukon municipalities. Because of this collaborative process, the draft strategy outlines priorities that are reflected across Yukon. The draft strategy also incorporates feedback from several industry stakeholders. The draft strategy outlines our collective vision, goals, values, and objectives for the next 10 years.

In response to the 2017 audit of Yukon's efforts on climate change, the Government of Yukon committed to make sure that the new strategy contains clear targets, timelines, and costs. This draft strategy includes clear targets and outlines how we plan to meet them.

Following this public engagement, the final strategy will include a timeline for each action and cost estimates for the implementation of the strategy. The draft outlines 26 objectives and 142 actions focused on reducing Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions, ensuring that Yukoners have access to reliable, affordable, and renewable energy, adapting to the impacts of climate change, and supporting Yukon businesses and individuals to participate in a green economy.

We are proposing clear targets to make it easier to track and report progress. Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions per person are currently the sixth highest in Canada at about 18 tonnes per person, and 75 percent of Yukon's total greenhouse gas emissions come from road transportation and heating. The draft strategy sets out a target to reduce Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent by 2030, compared to 2010 emissions.

Only 26 percent of our current heat energy comes from renewable sources. The draft strategy sets out targets to meet 40 percent of our heating needs with renewable energy sources by 2030. We are also proposing to continue to have 93 percent of Yukon's electricity come from renewable sources, even as our population and energy demands grow along with our economy.

This is an ambitious Yukon-wide strategy that proposes action across the territory to respond to climate change. We look forward to hearing from Yukoners on the ideas identified so far. The draft strategy will be out for public review until January 17, 2020. The public and stakeholders have the opportunity to review and comment on more than 140 actions that the Government of Yukon proposes to take toward a greener, more resilient future.

We will continue to work with indigenous and municipal partners to identify partner-led actions for the final version of the strategy, which will be released in 2020.

Developing a coordinated climate change, energy, and green economy strategy is just one of many steps that the Government of Yukon is taking to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and grow a green economy. The Government of Yukon will invest \$120 million in joint federal and territorial funding for energy-efficiency improvements to residential, commercial, First Nation, and municipal buildings in the territory for four years. We're also committed to supporting zero-emission vehicles on our roads.

As well, we are working with Canada to support 13 climate change adaptation projects that are helping to address impacts of climate change on health, food security, infrastructure, and more. I encourage all Yukoners to share their thoughts on our clean future and help shape Yukon's next 10 years.

Mr. Kent: Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this ministerial statement today.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the former Yukon Party government took a number of significant actions to help fight climate change during its time in office. These programs included investments in energy retrofits, investments in renewable energy, beginning to electrify Yukon government vehicles, and incentive-based programs to encourage Yukoners to switch to clean energy and reduce their reliance on fossil fuels.

I'm pleased to see that the Liberals have continued with many of these programs. However, with respect to the successful microgeneration program that incentivized the development of renewable energy, the Liberals have capped this program. So, we're wondering if the minister can tell us why they brought in limits on the amount of renewable energy that can be produced through this program.

I also have some questions about the targets that the minister has provided us with this afternoon. Targets are, of course, a good thing as they allow Yukoners to hold the government to account and track their effectiveness. However, without a plan or details, targets are just a set of numbers on a piece of paper. For example, the targets that the minister just announced to increase renewable energy so that 40 percent of our heating needs are from renewable sources obviously sounds great to us, but how is the government going to do this with a growing population? Where are all these new renewable energy projects to meet increased demand?

I also have questions about the government's economy-wide target to reduce Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent by 2030 compared to 2010 emission levels. Especially, Mr. Speaker, how does mining fit into this scenario?

For example, a recent CBC article noted that the Faro mine cleanup process is going to increase Yukon's emissions by 31 percent. Further, there are a number of major mines currently proposed to open in the Yukon over the next several years. They would obviously be great for the economy. They would provide good, well-paying jobs for many Yukoners and their families, so we are 100 percent on board with them and we hope to see them open in the next few years. However, we are left wondering how the Liberals' new emissions target can be reconciled with these projects as each of them is expected to increase emissions.

For example, according to a *Yukon News* editorial from November 18, 2015, the proposed Casino mine would double the Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions. As well, in the YESAB submission for the proposed Kudz Ze Kayah project, during its operation phase, it would add an equivalent of 22 percent of Yukon's total greenhouse gas emissions at the 2014 levels. These are just two of the many projects, Mr. Speaker, that are currently going through various stages of approval. As I said, they are all good projects, and we support them and want them to go forward, but we are curious how the Liberals will meet the emissions targets while supporting these projects.

I do think that there is a lot of good in today's announcement. We support the expansion of renewables. In fact, we made significant investments in them in the past. We support incentivizing greening our homes and reducing our

transportation emissions. Again, this is another area where we spent a lot of effort in the past. We support giving Yukoners the opportunities to switch to electric vehicles, helping families reduce their reliance on oil, and supporting communities in getting off of diesel. Our concern is that, with the economy-wide target that the minister just announced, if implemented, it looks like the Liberals will potentially be putting the brakes on a lot of really good mining projects. As I have said, if these projects do not go forward, Yukon and its economy will suffer.

I am glad that it is the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources who is delivering this statement here today, because I am eager to hear how he will be able to reconcile this target and still support these many mining projects that are either on-grid or off-grid. If those projects go forward, can the government meet the target that they announced here today of a 30-percent reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions?

Ms. White: This government has talked about and promoted the release of their strategy for climate change, energy, and a green economy since the very beginning of their time in this House. It has been debated at least twice, and in replies to questions, we have been told that the answers are coming with the release of this strategy.

Mr. Speaker, I was able to access this document at 10:07 a.m. this morning when the news release went live. I want to highlight this because it means that we were given less than an hour to read the 61-page document with 142 individual recommendations before receiving the ministerial statement to which I now reply. I mention this because I believe that the work done by the public service and all of those who participated in the public meetings, online consultation, and through whatever avenue was made possible deserves more than a quick read. This document is a gold mine. Maybe I can start changing my expressions about a greener future and say that it is the solar farm of good ideas.

In 2015, when Canada signed onto the *Paris Agreement*, it was the first time that all nations agreed to focus their attention toward the common cause of undertaking ambitious efforts to combat global climate change. We committed nationally to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions from the 2005 numbers by 30 percent by 2030.

In Yukon, lots of things have happened between 2005 and 2010 as far as emissions go, so I wonder why the later date was chosen as the benchmark.

I appreciate that, once government has consulted with Yukoners on the draft as directed in the draft plan, the final strategy will include information about timelines, evaluations, and costs, but I believe that there are many good ideas contained in this document that don't need public affirmation for the government to proceed with and for the work to move along quickly.

For example, this House has been discussing — and I believe that it has reached consensus — on the need to enable the Yukon Energy Corporation to conduct demand-side management programs, and action 53 says that YG will direct the Yukon Utilities Board to allow Yukon's public utilities to pursue cost-effective capacity demand-side management

measures. This doesn't need to go out to consultation, so we hope that this can happen sooner rather than later.

Action item 75 says that government will conduct a review of best practices for developing walkable, bike-friendly, transit-oriented communities and develop guidelines that can be used by the government. Mr. Speaker, active transportation considerations aren't being adequately incorporated into future planning right now. Take the new highway crossing at Sumanik Drive. A little planning could have made it accessible via Hillcrest, but instead, kids and their parents have to play Frogger for the next two years exiting their neighbourhood. There is no reason that these principles could not have been implemented now while also being developed for future plans.

Mining will indeed play a central role in the green economy of the future. Precious metals play key roles in solar panels and battery storage, and I'm hopeful that the work with industry to set intensity-based targets for mining will look not only at the Yukon context, but the global need to reduce our emissions.

We look forward to seeing the Yukon government lead renewable energy generation projects. Partnerships with others are important, but so is the ability to lead. We're hopeful that, with the acknowledgement that the full cost of diesel fuels and other fossil fuels like air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and fuel spills are not reflected in the fees that Yukon currently pays for these energy sources and that the monetary rate, when calculating an IPP for renewable energy, is reflected against the true cost of the fossil fuels that it is compared to, because, Mr. Speaker, this will make wind and solar not only feasible, but attractive.

There are so many Yukoners, businesses, and private citizens who want to participate, so I appreciate that this plan is ambitious, but it needs clear timelines in the short term and the middle term, with an implementation plan for each action item that is costed.

The true test of the mettle — or when the sunray hits the panel moment — will be when the final plan is released and Yukon government rolls up its sleeves and we get to work.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I am going to do my best. There were a lot of questions there. I do want to first just thank the public servants who are here today. They have been an exceptional team who has put together an exceptional plan.

There is a tremendous amount of work left to be done. I would like to just start by adding that the sleeves have been rolled up for a while — the work on the IPP legislation, all of the work on renewable energy projects in communities throughout the Yukon, the Energy Solutions Centre, and the climate change team. All of these individuals have been working, and so a lot of this work moves into the strategy.

I am going to do my best to answer a number of questions. First of all, I do think that the previous government did some excellent work on putting programs together. Things like microgeneration are really being used to the point where we have to figure out now, at that high rate that we are paying for the energy, how we are actually going to balance that within our budgets. They are great programs, but we do have to

remember that there was an audit that was underway. This work is in response to that audit, and the audit was quite damning, which has been the catalyst for us to actually take on this project — the audit of 2017. That really reflected back on 2016. There was good work to be done, but it also stated that there was a lot of work that needed to happen in the future.

Microgeneration — I think we see it as a great program. It is something that needs to be reflected upon, but also our IPP, which both opposition critics have talked about in one form — in the sense of capping energy purchase — and also with IPP and the rate that we pay. It is important to understand that we set it up and we needed to get this in place. People waited for it for years. It is in place. After 24 months, the team who is with us today — they know how to handle these things. They made sure that there is a chance to review and reflect on how it works in the first couple of years, and then we can look at our pricing mechanisms or even how much we purchase from individual groups.

Yukon Energy Corporation — and I will be speaking about this next week — is about to announce a renewable energy plan for the next 10 years. We knew that we had to have this plan out, and we knew that we had to have a plan in place for the Energy Corporation which identifies all of these renewable energy projects. We are really excited about the fact that it, of course, will parallel this work, and it can dovetail into the strategy in Q1 of 2020 as we roll this out and as Yukoners reflect on what we are doing.

On the mining side, I think that both critics talked — one was just saying, “How are you going to right-side this? Are you really supporting mining?” — and, of course, the look toward how we deal with emissions. Those are great questions.

Yukoners extract renewable commodities, and in a way, as we look globally, not only are we doing this in a clean fashion — when we know that this world needs, for a clean tech economy, things like zinc and copper — and in some cases, gold — we do it better than others across the globe. So, if we are going to contribute to the world and our globe on how we deal with emissions, we think that mining certain things in the Yukon is better than in many other parts of the world.

We will be working with industry. We have already been working with Canada on some of the intensity targets they are looking at and also with British Columbia.

As for demand-side management, I appreciate the question. We do have some strategies, as we have committed to, and those will be done in place.

I just hope, Mr. Speaker, that everybody has a chance to look at this strategy. We will have lots of time inside the Legislative Assembly to discuss this. I am sure that there will be lots of questions and we are excited to answer them.

I just want to thank everybody who worked on this plan because we think that it is a fantastic plan.

Speaker: This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Queen’s Printer Agency and Central Stores services

Mr. Hassard: So, on October 23, this House debated and passed a motion for the production of papers calling on the government to provide the evidence supporting their decision to cut Queen’s Printer Agency and Central Stores. Seven days after that motion passed, the minister tabled a document in this House in response. If the document existed prior to the decision to make these cuts, then what was the holdup in providing the evidence to the House? Why, if the decision was made in September, was the government not able to provide the document right away?

One might think that it did not exist before the government made the decision. We have heard that the delay was because the document that the minister tabled in the House was hastily cobbled together at the last minute.

Can the minister confirm if the document tabled in the House was the same document that the Liberal Cabinet used to make the decision to cut these branches?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I want to say to the members opposite that we did indeed use that document to make our decision.

Mr. Speaker, I want to start this afternoon by saying that I value the employees impacted by this transition. I was just speaking to them a few minutes ago out in the foyer of the Legislative Assembly, and I have to say that their skills, knowledge, and professionalism are important to our government and to the civil service.

I know that change is difficult — there is no getting around that — but this decision was based on the understanding that the government must continue to adjust and update how it provides service to its clients — be they within the civil service or outside the civil service.

I’m very happy this process is being done with no job losses. We followed the collective agreement and we involved the union during this transition. Seventeen people were impacted by this change and all 17 of those people still work in this government at the same pay level. Ten employees have new reporting arrangements and will continue in similar jobs. The other seven are being offered alternative positions at their same classification and level within Highways and Public Works.

Again, I want to stress that I know that change is rarely easy, but we have worked — and we’ll continue to work — through the union honouring the collective agreement as this change is implemented.

Mr. Hassard: It’s unfortunate that the minister has such a strange way of showing his appreciation to these employees.

I’m going to ask another question about the so-called “evidence” that the minister tabled in the House because I think it’s important for Yukoners that we understand how the Liberals arrived at this decision.

On October 17, the minister announced the Liberals’ decision to make these cuts and claimed it would save government \$1.6 million. Then on October 21, the minister told us that the decision to make these cuts was made in September.

On October 23, the opposition passed a motion calling on the government to table the evidence supporting the claim of savings. On October 30, the minister tabled this alleged “evidence”.

Can the minister tell us when this “evidence” was actually written, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I must take exception to the remarks by the member, the Leader of the Official Opposition. There are no cuts, Mr. Speaker, as I said. We have followed the collective agreement and involved the union during this transition. Seventeen people are going to be impacted by that change and all 17 of those people still work in this government at the same pay level — so, Mr. Speaker, there are no cuts.

I also want to note that we unanimously passed a motion in this House. We all agreed to that motion. We agreed with the motion and provided the paper within one week.

Mr. Speaker, this change will save roughly \$1.6 million and is creating opportunities for the private sector to benefit from government spending.

Mr. Hassard: The Minister of Highways and Public Works originally stated that he worked with the union as soon as the decision to cut Queen’s Printer and Central Stores was made. The minister told the House on October 21 that the Liberals made the decision to make these cuts in late September, and his quote was: “As soon as the decision was made in late September, we reached out to the union and started working with them to plan how this will be executed.”

We’ve heard the union dispute this claim, so I would like the minister to confirm a few things for us here today. What day in late September was the decision made? What day did the Liberal government reach out to the union to start working with them on an implementation plan? What were the results of those meetings?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Once again, Mr. Speaker, I’m going to take issue with the wording of the Leader of the Official Opposition. There are no cuts. He keeps repeating that, but I want to correct him. We followed the collective agreement and involved the union during the transition on — I believe it was October 7. Seventeen people are being impacted by this change. I understand that change is difficult, but all 17 of those people still work for this government at the same pay level. Their skills, knowledge, and professionalism are important to this government and the civil service that they serve.

We also appreciate the hard work that these public servants across government provide Yukoners through the programs and services that they need. We continue to look for ways to improve service while getting the best value for money, and we want to retain our valuable employees as we modernize the public service.

Question re: Queen’s Printer Agency and Central Stores services

Ms. Van Bibber: The Liberals have claimed that their cuts to Queen’s Printer and Central Stores will save government \$1.6 million and will be done with zero job losses. However, if you look at the document that they had that is supposed to explain how the savings will be met, it says that

\$618,000 of the savings will come directly from personnel costs. So, there will apparently be no jobs affected, but 39 percent of the savings are associated directly with job cuts.

Can the minister explain these contradictions?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I certainly can, and I thank the member opposite for her question this afternoon. In total, there are 17 people impacted by this change, and all 17 of those people still work for this government at the same pay level. Nobody is losing a government job through this modernization initiative. Ten employees will have new reporting arrangements and will continue in similar jobs. The other seven people are being offered alternative positions at the same classification and level within Highways and Public Works.

We’re doing this because their skills, knowledge, and professionalism are important to this government and to the civil service that they have served in — some people for many, many, many years. That’s important to recognize.

When we move these people from these two agencies to their new positions, the government will then be able to take off the books 17 FTEs, which we talk about quite often in the Legislative Assembly. We are doing this because we want to make sure that we manage our growth of this government.

Ms. Van Bibber: With respect to the decision to make these cuts, we have discussed how many times the Liberals have mistreated the employees through this implementation. We have heard that the 17 affected staff were given approximately 10 minutes’ notice before a global notice was sent out to all public servants. We also heard that the Human Resources branch was completely caught off guard and, as a result, was scrambling to figure out the next steps when affected employees started calling them to ask questions about their futures.

Does the minister believe that this is a fair and respectful way to treat employees?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: As I have said on the floor of this House just this afternoon — and on the several times when I have had to address this issue — I value the employees impacted by this transition. I understand that change is difficult. That said, Mr. Speaker, the people who are affected by this change in the way that we serve our clients have a lot of knowledge. They are professionals, and their skills are very valuable to this civil service and to this government.

Again, I am very happy that this process is being done with no job losses. I want to also say that we followed the collective agreement and we involved the union during this transition. We reached out to the union immediately after making the decision within Cabinet at the end of September. We scheduled a meeting with the union on their timeline, and we continued to work with the union through this transition for weeks until the actual meeting with the employees was made in later October.

Ms. Van Bibber: Looking at the options paper that the minister provided, it lists pros and cons of the decisions to outsource central services. The cons contain only one item: “Cons — May negatively impact local retailers if not selected in the bid process.” After the decision to cut Central Stores was made, the government issued a public RFI on the tender system

seeking proposals from companies to provide office supplies to the government.

There are 30 people on the plan holders list for this tender, and of those, half are from outside the Yukon, but that is just the plan holders list. We don't know who bid. As I said, the options specifically identify the only negative being that local businesses would be hurt.

Can the minister tell us how many companies submitted proposals for this tender, and how many were southern companies?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I thank the member opposite for her question. I think that we are moving into the realm of procurement, Mr. Speaker, and as the members opposite know, I have spoken at length about procurement and the changes that we have made to our procurement policies in the territory. We have redefined what a "Yukon business" is. We have done so in conversation with the business community. We are changing the way in which we procure goods and services through our tendering process to make sure that we give credit to local knowledge and experience and to make sure that we do keep the dollars that we spend in this government within the territory — the best we can. We are going to continue that effort through this change in the way we procure janitorial supplies, office supplies, safety supplies, the printing of documents, and the securing of print jobs.

I have spoken to members of the Queen's Printer about the way that they procured print jobs. I have also spoken to the print shops myself, and I have every confidence that we will be able to continue to maximize opportunity for local companies.

Question re: Queen's Printer Agency and Central Stores services

Ms. Hanson: When the government announced the sudden move to eliminate the Queen's Printer and Central Stores, the minister was unable to provide a rationale other than describing hard-working public servants as archaic and virtually obsolete. When pressed for a more substantive analysis — one that might prove that gutting these government services was cost-effective — the minister released a one-pager that purported to show savings. However, nowhere in that simplistic chart were additional costs shown for departments that will now be responsible for their own purchasing, printing, shipping, et cetera.

Governments planning to privatize government services normally conduct a value-for-money assessment, called a "public sector comparator". It assesses not only the savings of removing public services, but the new costs of purchasing from the private sector. It is essential for an evidence-based decision.

Did the government conduct a public sector comparative analysis to compare the net additional cost of government privatizing the Queen's Printer and Central Stores?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I appreciate the question from the Member for Whitehorse Centre. As she has noted, this change will save roughly \$1.6 million and is creating opportunities for the private sector to benefit from government spending. We have worked very hard in this government to make sure that we do maximize the spending of our government budget in local

communities, and we're going to continue that effort through this modernization of Queen's Printer Agency and Central Stores.

Ms. Hanson: This government's constant refrain of "getting out of the business of doing business" reflects an ideological assumption that privatization is inherently good and more efficient. Ideology should never replace analysis, and this government clearly has not done its homework.

The argument that eliminating Central Stores and Queen's Printer will save \$1.6 million only stands up to scrutiny if you assume that shuffling an employee to another branch eliminates the personnel cost, that it won't cost government departments to do their own purchasing, and that the private sector will provide these services for free.

Before the government pursues a much broader privatization campaign against the public service, it is their responsibility to conduct a sound analysis of whether there is a tangible benefit to privatization beyond dogmatic belief that government service delivery is bad.

Before this government acts as another branch of the public service, will it implement a comprehensive public service comparator to determine whether the savings it claims will materialize?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: As we move down this road, we're going to be assessing how it's doing, and we will make course corrections as we have to. That has been my approach to many different initiatives we have taken in this government, from procurement to modernization.

The Yukon Financial Advisory Panel's final report emphasized the importance of increasing the efficiency of government services to reduce cost and allow government to focus on providing services to citizens. In the past, Mr. Speaker, spending was way more than it was bringing in — we have spoken about that — and you can understand that this was not sustainable. So, the government values modernization and changing the way we do things so that we actually make sure that we manage our growth.

We're going to continue to do this in a responsible way that respects our employees and makes sure that they have a place in this Yukon government because, as I've said several times this afternoon, their skills, knowledge, and experience are valuable to both this government and to the civil service they've served — sometimes for decades.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, the fact that this government hasn't done a basic value-for-money exercise speaks to a serious lack of attention to detail. It begs the question: What other important analyses and assessments have been missed?

For a long time, the Queen's Printer has capably provided confidential printing services and secure document management. The government says that they will retain components of the Queen's Printer to do confidential printing, yet it is unclear what that work will cover or who will be left to do it.

When government creates a new project or significantly modifies one, it has the duty to conduct a privacy impact assessment and share it with the Information and Privacy Commissioner for review. The assessment is essential for

identifying risks associated with the collection, use, and disclosure of public and government information.

Did the Government of Yukon conduct a privacy impact assessment on the effects of the cuts prior to eliminating the Queen's Printer?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite, the Member for Whitehorse Centre, for her question this afternoon. I have heard her a couple of times referencing this afternoon a one-page document. I hope that she has the opportunity to review the 18 pages of documents that we put up on the — that we tabled in the House recently — within a week, having that motion we debated fulfilled.

Mr. Speaker, we understand that there is a statutory requirement for the Queen's Printer Agency and that will be retained through this process.

Question re: Queen's Printer Agency and Central Stores services

Ms. White: When this government announced plans to close down the Central Stores, many may have shrugged and suggested that it was no big deal. But if we look at who relies on Central Stores, it's an entirely different story. Who would have guessed that the RCMP, Yukon College — soon to be the Yukon University — the Hospital Corporation with three hospitals, Yukon Energy, the City of Whitehorse, WCB, all Yukon schools, Parks Canada, and more will all be impacted? This is not just Yukon government departments and not just government departments in Whitehorse; it's community schools, offices, community health centres, hospitals, and more. The civil servants living and working in rural communities are not able to simply run down to Staples to grab some paper or ink for the photocopier when supplies run out.

Mr. Speaker, how exactly will supplies for all of those government and other offices across Yukon be tendered, purchased, delivered, and paid for without Central Stores?

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker: Order. Order, please.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: As I've said before this afternoon, I know that change is rarely easy. I know it is unsettling to people. I know that it's disruptive and I understand that. We are working very hard to make sure that disruptions are as few as possible and that we address some of the concerns that are coming forward.

Prior to this change, almost 70 percent of government purchasing was done by individuals using corporate credit cards. This meant that people were paying retail prices for goods that our government could have been purchasing in large quantities at a lower rate. By moving to an online purchasing system, employees — be they in Whitehorse or in rural Yukon — will still be able to get the needed supplies but will not have to physically travel to do so.

Ms. White: The Auditor General issued a report in 2017 entitled *Government Transfers to Societies — Yukon*. In the audit, the AG made recommendations that should be a guide today when looking at this government's plan to close Central Stores. The Auditor General recommended that departments

collaborate in order to standardize systems across the public service.

Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General found that, when systems are standardized across the public service, inefficiencies and duplications can result in higher costs. This is exactly why there is Central Stores. Its objective is to obtain, at best value for money and in a timely manner, the goods and services required by all departments. Central Stores stocks and ships commonly used supplies on behalf of government departments. That would be things like paper, office supplies, and so many more things.

Where are the efficiencies to be found by removing this central service that collaborates across the public service to provide standardized services and products?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I thank the Leader of the Third Party for the question. As I've said, Mr. Speaker, I know that change is rarely easy. I know that it is disruptive and hard. We have and will continue to work through the union, honouring the collective agreement as this change is implemented. The change will save roughly \$1.6 million and is creating opportunities for the private sector to benefit from government spending.

Prior to this change, Mr. Speaker, almost 70 percent of government's purchasing was done by individuals using corporate credit cards. This meant that people were paying retail prices for goods that our government could have been purchasing in large quantities at a lower rate. By moving to an online purchasing system, we will still be able to get the needed supplies, but employees will not have to physically travel to do so.

We are tendering this contract and we will have a central online repository where government employees will be able to get the goods and services they need.

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, the government has announced huge savings by shrinking the Queen's Printer and closing down Central Stores. We are now aware of other meetings and plans afoot to look at downsizing or the privatization of other units, including fleet vehicles. My colleague asked this question earlier, and what we heard was a lot of words and repetition, but no substance or real information. This is hardly reassuring coming from an old newspaper guy and even less reassuring coming from the minister responsible for the decision.

Mr. Speaker, before this government axes another branch of the public service, will it implement a comprehensive public sector comparator to determine whether the savings will in fact materialize? Have they conducted a privacy impact assessment on the effects of the cuts prior to eliminating the Queen's Printer?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I thank the Leader of the Third Party for her question this afternoon. She has raised a lot of points in her preamble that really are a lot of words, but not a lot of substance, Mr. Speaker.

I want to say that we have moved to modernize our civil service. We are using the resources that we have at our disposal — our people, who we value — to put them into positions where they can change the way that government delivers

services. In the Queen's Printer, we are going to be moving to online PDFs and more digital documents. We want to be printing fewer documents, not more, so we are moving some of those employees into ICT. We are moving some employees into procurement so that we can better understand printing and how we actually procure goods and services. We are also moving to an online portal that will produce a savings for government and simplify the way that we obtain the goods and services that we need within the government, such as janitorial and safety materials, Mr. Speaker.

We are doing this because the world is changing too. I understand that this is difficult, and we are working very hard with our employees and our union partners to respect the civil service and the people whom we employ.

Question re: Mining sector development

Mr. Kent: I think we will try a different minister on a different topic to see if we can get some answers here today.

In a recent online issue of *North of 60 Mining News*, an article entitled "Mineral exploration slows in the Yukon" outlines what it refers to as Yukon "... witnessing a significant slowdown in 2019." The article goes on to say — and I quote: "Several factors ... have converged to put the brakes on the territory's typically brisk pace of mining activity this season."

As of July of this year, the article reports that the number of mining claims staked in 2019 has dropped significantly and was only 12 percent of the total in 2018. Additionally, the article states that there were 151 exploration projects last year, but in 2019, this total had dropped to only 61 active projects.

Can the minister confirm these decreases in exploration spending? Are these the same numbers that he will announce this week during Geoscience?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: The season that we're looking at continues to be a season that is quite strong. If we take a look at the last three years and then we go back to the previous government's last four years, we would still be probably around \$19 million more in exploration spending.

I have been a challenge in the House around accuracy on the numbers, because we get a projected number from the federal government, and then we get numbers later on in the season. I don't think that I have to announce any numbers other than the fact that we are happy about seeing these two mines — one is back into production, and another is open. We're happy with the lowest unemployment rate in the country, and we're happy with the fact that our projected GDP is actually our real GDP from last year's — 18 percent higher than what was projected.

We're happy that, per capita — only one other province in the entire country — provinces and territories — has a per capita GDP as strong as ours.

We're going to continue to support our industry. We're going to continue to thank our private sector for the strong economy that we see, and we're going to continue to support, through a series of programs and marketing, a very important mineral industry, not just in the Yukon —

Speaker: Order, please.

Question re: Mineral staking

Mr. Kent: This new question — this second question is also for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, but it's regarding land available for staking. With those exploration numbers, obviously we'll wait to hear from the Yukon Geological Survey during their presentation at Geoscience next week to see exactly what the season held.

As mentioned in my previous question, the number of claims registered as of July 2019 is only 12 percent of the total staked in 2018, and not many of those are in new prospective areas. Obviously, this is a concerning trend, as today's staking and exploration leads to tomorrow's operating and producing mines.

What is the government doing to ensure that land is available for exploration? Will this minister commit to supporting the free-entry system?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: It is a very valid question. I think that the real focus for the critic's question is really about grassroots exploration and how you continue to have an ecosystem and a pipeline that produces new programs — and land availability is key — but also ensure that you have capital available to do that work. What we are seeing at a global level is capital that is starting to dry up because it has gone into other particular investment strategies — whether it be cannabis or bitcoin — significant — billions and billions of dollars — moving out of the junior market and into those areas.

But we are also at a place that is doing ethical mining. We see diversity embraced within our sector. Twenty-five percent of the staff at Victoria Gold are women who are taking part in that economy. These are all extremely important things for investors, for big pension funds, and for global investors.

We are doing the right work when it comes to working with the Women's Directorate, the Department of Environment — assessment. These are key items — and also investigating with the Province of British Columbia on how we can look at early-stage pools of capital that we can inject, not unlike other areas such as Québec with Plan Nord.

That is some of the work that we are doing.

Mr. Kent: I am sure that if the minister runs into some prospectors this weekend or early next week, they will be certain to tell him that, without access to land, you are not going to be able to find any new mines or new occurrences, and that is exactly what that first question was about, so hopefully he will be able to address that.

In the discussion paper entitled — and I quote: "Mineral Staking and Development in Planned and Zoned Communities" recently released by EMR, it reports that there are approximately 170 withdrawal orders in the territory, covering approximately 250,000 square kilometres or about 52 percent of the Yukon — so more than half of the Yukon is prohibited from staking. A significant portion of that area is part of the traditional territory of the Yukon's Kaska First Nation.

Can the minister provide us with an update on the temporary withdrawal orders for the Kaska traditional territories and tell Yukoners when they will deliver on providing certainty for Kaska and southeast Yukon citizens with the full or partial removal of these temporary bans?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I would like to thank the critic for these very valid questions once again. I think that we have worked very well with the Yukon Prospectors Association. I have taken advice from them.

I would like to specifically thank Gary Lee in his work around helping us to look at prospecting approaches and the low-impact work that they do.

I think that part of what I'm glad we have done is — back in — I think it was 2011 — the member opposite walked into a room with industry and First Nations and made a big promise that, by June of the next year — I might be off on the year, but I'm willing to take that in — made a commitment that he would have class 1 in place and the world would be well.

That didn't get done, but we followed through, working with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and other nations.

That also was part of the discussion around the Kaska — and of course that's another series of legal challenges and court cases that we are again unwinding and continuing to work — the Premier continues with his work around aboriginal relations.

Here's the bottom line, Mr. Speaker. I hear it all the time — “Answer the question: When is this going to be fixed?”

We will sit at the table and we will ensure we have respectful negotiations as per the agreements that are signed which are contracts with other governments. We will not walk from the table, and at the 11th hour, we won't take off and change the rules on our own without talking to them. That's the work we'll do. You have to be committed to it. You have to respect the other people across the table. That's the only route.

If the opposition has a silver bullet that they know about, please let me know. Please let me know. But other than that, it's respectful work. That's what we're doing — and we'll unwind the court cases from the past. I want to congratulate the industry on this strong work that they're doing. I want to congratulate Victoria Gold, Pembridge Resources —

Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Mr. Kent: I'm interested that the minister spoke about class 1 notifications as being complete. That will no doubt come as a surprise to many of the prospectors whom we deal with on a regular basis. I'll send a few of the prospectors who will be coming to our offices complaining about what's happening under his watch his way so that he can perhaps talk to them as well.

The minister spoke — we were talking about the temporary withdrawals in the Ross River area as well as the Liard First Nation traditional territory.

The minister spoke to respectful dialogue at the table, so I'll ask him a couple of simple questions: When was the last time he sat at a table to discuss these temporary withdrawals? When is the next time that he'll sit at a table with those First Nations to discuss those specific issues?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Lots of questions there. First of all, the Yukon Prospectors Association — I believe I'm meeting with them on the weekend.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Pillai: If they can hold off on talking off-mic, I can answer the question.

On the weekend, we're meeting with them. Just to clarify, the miscommunication may be from across the way.

The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in — we have worked on class 1. The previous class 1s were with White River First Nation and both Kaska Nations, and we continue to work with the 10 other self-governing First Nations. When it comes to municipalities — it was brought up in the last question — there are withdrawals. The members opposite can't have their cake and eat it too. We have committed to working with municipalities. Of course, some of that work has to do with withdrawals. I assume that the members opposite who represent rural areas and communities go back and talk to the individuals who represent them. That is what they want. That is the work we're doing, which is to go out and make sure — again, another one from the didn't-get-'er-done pile on municipalities — we work on that. I will work with the Minister of Community Services on that particular work.

My office door is always open for the Yukon Prospectors Association. I am looking forward to the discussions with them this weekend. As for conversations with the Kaska Nation — I think my last meeting with Chief Caesar on all things that are his priority was last Wednesday morning.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Motion to engross Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, I move:

THAT the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne be engrossed and presented to the Commissioner in her capacity as Lieutenant Governor.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier:

THAT the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne be engrossed and presented to the Commissioner in her capacity as Lieutenant Governor.

Motion agreed to

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 7: *Technical Amendments Act, 2019* — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 7, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Streicker.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that Bill No. 7, entitled *Technical Amendments Act, 2019*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 7, entitled *Technical Amendments Act, 2019*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I will start my quite brief remarks with respect to third reading of the *Technical Amendments Act, 2019* by thanking my colleague, the Acting Minister of Justice, for his participation on the floor of this House in regard to the *Technical Amendments Act, 2019* with respect to second

reading and Committee of the Whole. I have very brief remarks here on third reading.

The House covered a significant amount of material during the debate on this bill. I would like to take just a couple of minutes to outline the bill and its contents before the vote.

From time to time, technical amendments bills are required to ensure that discrete amendments to various statutes are made to keep those pieces of legislation current and accurate. My colleagues have heard me mention this before and the importance of making sure our legislation is up to date.

While miscellaneous statute amendments bills seek to correct legislative items, such as numbering issues or cross-references, typos, and other issues of that nature, these technical bills typically fix discrete items that carry some degree of policy implication, and that is the case with respect to the one before us.

For example, such technical bills may be used to address changes to federal legislation or changes in the common law. To be clear, this bill is presented by this government and contains amendments that are before us again today as necessary technical amendments that will address three specific issues. They will ensure that Yukon's legislation aligns with Canada's *Criminal Code* to provide Yukon's safer communities and neighbourhoods — also known as the SCAN — unit with the authority to investigate illegal property-related activities specific to cannabis. It will also amend the *Crime Prevention and Victim Services Trust Act* to allow judges to exercise their discretion in ordering victim fine surcharges to the benefit of Yukoners, and it will make changes to the *Jury Act* to expand jury pools to include those individuals who have been incarcerated for periods of less than two years, ensuring that a larger pool of individuals can be considered for this important civic duty and activity.

Mr. Speaker, I know that this has been debated through first and second reading and in Committee of the Whole, and I am seeking and recommending that the members of this Legislative Assembly support the passing of the *Technical Amendments Act, 2019* that is before this House as a means to ensure that Yukon's book of statutes remains current and aligns with current federal legislation.

Mr. Cathers: The Minister of Justice just largely repeated remarks that have been made twice by the Acting Minister of Justice, which really isn't a very efficient use of House time. I have already spoken to this and don't need to repeat myself, so I will conclude my remarks.

Ms. Hanson: I just wanted to reiterate in speaking to Bill No. 7 that we did have — as the minister mentioned — some discussion with the Acting Minister of Justice.

The NDP will be supporting this bill — Bill No. 7, *Technical Amendments Act, 2019* — but I want to put on the record again for the minister the concern that was expressed with respect to the amendments on the *Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act* — that at some point there needs to be a review of this piece of legislation.

I raise this in particular because, when I look — and the Acting Minister of Justice and I had some conversations about this — but as we further extend the reach of SCAN, then it comes closer and closer to provisions that are more commonly found in civil forfeiture legislation. There are concerns, and there have been concerns in this territory in the past by a previous government that attempted to pass civil forfeiture legislation which effectively did through the civil process what it couldn't do through the criminal process, and in many jurisdictions across this country, it has inadvertently penalized and pauperized innocent people for activities that have occurred in properties that they own or in properties in which they live.

We will support the bill, but we do believe that there is a larger conversation that needs to be had with respect to the creeping scope of the legislation that we put forward.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on third reading of Bill No. 7?

Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 16 yea, nil nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion for third reading of Bill No. 7 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 7 has passed this House.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: 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 (Mr. Hutton): Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter now before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 2, entitled *Yukon University Act*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 2: *Yukon University Act*

Chair: The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 2, entitled *Yukon University Act*.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you, Mr. Chair. First of all, I would like to thank Michael McBride, who is here — the director of policy and planning with the Department of Education — but he is also here today as the acting deputy minister. With him, and joining me on the floor of the Legislative Assembly, is Bhreagh Dabbs, who is with the Legislative Counsel Office and who is primarily responsible for the drafting of this Bill No. 2.

I would also like to take the opportunity to introduce to you, all the Members of the Legislative Assembly, some guests we have here today for this debate: Dr. Karen Barnes, the president of Yukon College; Clint Sawicki, the associate vice-president; Lacia Kinnear, director of governance and strategic initiatives; and with them is Tom Ulyett, the chair of the Yukon College board at the moment.

Thank you very much for joining us, and thank you, Mr. Chair, for allowing me to introduce everyone.

Applause

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I don't have any opening remarks. We took opportunities at second reading and first reading of this bill to give quite a bit of detail with respect to the highlights. As a result, I'm happy to proceed to answer questions in Committee of the Whole with respect to Bill No. 2.

Ms. Van Bibber: I also don't have very many questions of the minister, but I will just clarify a few items that I gathered together, and I welcome the officials as well.

The Official Opposition is pleased to see the progress on the advancement from Yukon College to Yukon University. We all know that it's the first such facility north of 60. We hope that students from across the north will realize the potential and access the many programs that will be offered at our new facility.

Does the minister know if a concerted effort to include Northwest Territories and Nunavut was in some of the planning stages in the making of this document?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: There was no specific consultation with the Northwest Territories or Nunavut other than to look at their similar pieces of legislation from across the country with respect to the drafting of Bill No. 2, for instance, but what I can say — and I know that our visitors in the gallery would want me to confirm this — is that there has been much work done with respect to other circumpolar universities and colleges across the circumpolar area of our world, and that work will continue and does continue in relation to not only Yukon College, but the transition to Yukon University.

I know that Universities Canada has been a large piece of the work that has been done; work with them has been a large piece of the work that has been done in developing Bill No. 2. More importantly than the specifics of Bill No. 2 — the concept of how working with other universities has influenced the hybrid style of university that is being proposed here — the bicameral structure and those kinds of things. Much research and collaboration was certainly done in relation to determining what would be the best fit for Yukon College and Yukon University. That work will continue.

Ms. Van Bibber: We know the history: the vocational school opening in 1963; Yukon College, which we know today, opened in 1988; and now we will have the Yukon University open in May of this coming year. Is there going to be a major budget increase to ensure that it is properly done? If so, can the minister tell us what and where the dollars will be spent?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you for the question. I think that it's an important one with respect to the phased-in approach of Yukon College becoming Yukon University. Of course, a major piece of that is the passing of Bill No. 2, which will grant the authority for Yukon University to exist.

The first degree program has already begun. It is anticipated to have its first graduates in the spring of 2020, and that is good planning on the part of Yukon College and Yukon University. Then the second program has begun with respect to its own degree-granting authority. I can indicate that Yukon University will be a phased-in transition — a phased-in approach.

In the 2018-19 budget, the Department of Education provided \$1.5 million to Yukon College for transition work. Again in 2019-20, \$1.5 million was provided to Yukon College specifically for transition work, which included the development of degree programs as well as future-looking programming and future-looking staff needs — those kinds of things. The budget for 2020-21 continues to be in the process of development. The Department of Education is working quite closely with Yukon College for its concept of what the budgetary requirements will be.

I can indicate that our discussions have involved a phased-in approach so that there is not a grand lump sum required. Obviously, the budgeting process for the Department of Education — and, in conjunction with that, the Government of Yukon — has to understand the long approach for the phased-in situation to properly fund Yukon University. It is a situation that we will continue to work closely on with the board of the new Yukon University and the current board of Yukon College. Many discussions have taken place with respect to what those

requests will be and what funding is required, and those are certainly ongoing at this stage. The budgetary process for the 2021 budget is in process and will be ramping up as the session finishes. We will continue our discussions with them with respect to their requests and what can be met.

We do anticipate that there will be increased funding necessary. As you can see, since 2018, there has been \$3 million. There is no consideration that it will stop, but certainly the increases that will be needed going forward to properly fund Yukon University will be something that we will work on together.

Members of this House will know that there is federal funding that has been promised with respect to some capital improvements at Yukon College and Yukon University, including a new science building.

I don't think that is a surprise to anyone and that work will continue between the territorial government, the federal government, and Yukon College — or Yukon University — with respect to how that funding will be applied and the contributions that Yukon government will make in that vein as well.

Ms. Van Bibber: One of the components of the college is the admission of foreign students, and that seems to be a win-win situation, with new people learning from our country and vice versa. We know that many questions in the Legislative Assembly surround the cost and availability of affordable housing. It is a serious issue, especially in Whitehorse. Is there adequate housing for the requests made by foreign and local students and their families? Does the college help students find reasonable and adequate housing while they attend school?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I am just checking to see if there is an additional note.

I am able to say that, with respect to Yukon College and Yukon University, housing is a top priority. Obviously, in order to provide full services for students, students need a place to live when they are here attending Yukon University, either moving to Whitehorse for that purpose or temporarily moving to Whitehorse for that purpose. I know that Yukon College is working on a housing strategy that is expected soon in anticipation of not only their current needs, but also looking to the future with respect to Yukon University.

There is housing on-site currently for students, families, and others. I don't have any information today about whether or not there's a waiting list or how those students are accommodated if there are more housing needs than are available, but I am able to get back to the member opposite with respect to that.

I would also ask for indulgence, because part of the question related to the foreign student capacity. I know it's around housing, but it would be interesting to provide you with the numbers of foreign students registered. A couple of years ago, I know there was quite an influx of students with respect to recruiting being very successful in certain parts of the world and a number of students — more than anticipated — coming and registering to come to Yukon College. That has made the student body quite diverse and really an interesting place for students to learn about the north and to spend time together.

I will also endeavour to provide you with some numbers of foreign student registrations in 2018-19 and then 2019-20, this particular school year, going forward — but I'm sorry, I don't have those numbers at my fingertips today.

Ms. Van Bibber: Distance learning has become more common. I am sure many people do online courses and will continue learning through this venue if we keep our systems up and working. Does the minister have the number of people who go online for courses? What is the most subscribed type of study taken online? Will this impact the university uptake of online studies?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Again, I don't have specific numbers, but I'm happy to get them for the member opposite with respect to distance learning and online courses. I think it's a great question — as to what the most popular one is and what the uptake is with respect to that. There are no plans — with respect to anything related to Bill No. 2 — to change that.

I would like to take the opportunity to emphasize the fact that what Yukoners said to us, to Yukon College, and to the Department of Education about the transition and development of Yukon College into Yukon University was in fact that the education that is currently available — what Yukon College does very well — needs to be maintained — that the concept of the hybrid university was an important one — distance learning, adult education, and trades — in addition to the changes that will come with Yukon University — needed to be maintained. That was a top priority for Yukoners, and that is what Bill No. 2 does, and that is what the plans at Yukon College and Yukon University are and will be continuing into the future.

Ms. Van Bibber: In Bill No. 2, the formation of the senate for the university is going to be added and this group is to determine all matters relating to academic governance. It states that 30 percent of the seats must be indigenous, from Yukon or across Canada. Now, if it states — from across Canada — and I am fully aware that we need qualified people to speak to the issue of academics — can the minister tell us if this means that, at any given time, there could be no Yukon indigenous senate members?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I am going to make reference to section 32, which I think is the one that the member opposite is noting in relation to the senate. It is 32(2), which indicates, "The senate must make rules in respect of nominations, appointments, elections and voting..." — under other sections — and "... to ensure that best efforts are made to ensure that at least 30% of the members of the senate are Indigenous persons from Yukon or elsewhere in Canada."

Let me, first of all, speak about that briefly. That provision was initially proposed to be Yukon First Nations only, but in recognition of the fact, as the member opposite has mentioned, of appropriately qualified candidates with respect to the senate — but also in recognition of the fact that Yukon University will be the first Canadian university north of 60 and that, as a Canadian university, there would be benefits to having other First Nation individuals perhaps be members of the senate — and of course faculty, going forward — it technically means that we could have a senate with only First Nation members

from other places in Canada. But there clearly are other provisions in Bill No. 2 — and there has been a dedication at Yukon College — I know that the member opposite is well aware and probably led the charge on many a day — and at Yukon University coming forward — where one of the primary concerns and issues will be appropriate representation by Yukon First Nations and the concept of reconciliation and requirements for reconciliation and acts that are appropriate to reconciliation with Yukon First Nations, which are in fact embedded in this legislation, Bill No. 2.

The college has developed a human resources plan which is focused on attracting and retaining a workforce that is focused on Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nation abilities. I can note that the very purposes of the university in part 2, which is outlined in section 3 — I will make reference to section 3(2), which is that, in carrying out the purposes of the university, it must do as follows — and then in section 3(2)(d), and it says that it must honour and support reconciliation with Yukon First Nations, and it goes on in a number of paragraphs in that section to indicate it includes respecting and honouring First Nation knowledge, world views, cultural and traditional practices, and educational priorities — and it goes on.

In order to answer the question which is technically, “Could we have a senate with only membership from First Nation individuals from outside the territory?” — we could, but that is certainly not the proposal here, and it’s certainly not evident in anything that Yukon College has done to date or will do in the transition to Yukon University. It’s important to note that, while the professionalism and educational credentials of individuals in the Yukon grows — partly as a result of Yukon University and other educational opportunities across Canada — we hope that not only will the faculty members and the senate members become positions held by Yukon First Nation individuals, but everything in this Bill No. 2 points at that being a priority.

I can also note that there is a requirement in the makeup of the board of directors, which I am looking for — section 13 under part 5, which indicates board of directors and an indication that at least three members of the board of directors must be appointed from among persons nominated by at least one Yukon First Nation, and at least three of the members of the board of directors must reside outside of Whitehorse, each in a different community.

Then there are also indications of requirements for a member of the senate, and it goes on — a faculty member, one employee of the university who is elected from other employees who is not a faculty member, student, et cetera. So, there are not only requirements, but ample opportunities for members of the board of directors to also be members of Yukon First Nations. Three is the minimum, but individuals nominated by communities, nominated or residing in communities other than Whitehorse and different from one another — there is the potential there that several members of the board of directors can and will be members of Yukon First Nations.

Ms. Van Bibber: That’s a good point. The board of governors, I do know, has several First Nation members. The only worry about the senate level is that we want to ensure that

local input is kept, to some level. As indigenous people, we’re not all the same across Canada. Even though we’re all coloured with the same stripe, we have very different ideas and beliefs. As I know with most universities, there are going to be many moving parts happening, and I wish all goes well in this transition.

I’m going to wrap up my questions and turn it over to the Third Party, but I thank the president and all the hard work she has done because I know she has put in her resignation and is going to be leaving us in this capacity. I don’t know if she’s leaving the Yukon — but wonderful work that she has done.

I also thank the builders of this bill. I know a lot of work and words needed to be put together, so thank you.

Ms. White: I thank my colleague for the questions that she asked so far and of course the officials for being here. Unfortunately for the minister, they were very good at their briefing and my questions are not as numerous as they could be.

One thing that my colleague, the Member for Porter Creek North, just pointed out was the deserving retirement of the president of the Yukon College — soon-to-be Yukon University.

The only reason I bring that up — there are a lot of reasons to talk about Dr. Karen Barnes, but in particular, in part 7, section 33 it says, “President”. It talks about how there must be a president of the university who is appointed by the board. I wanted to know what kind of planning we are in right now as we get ready to allow Dr. Barnes — I guess we’re not “allowing” her. As she gets ready to retire, what are we doing to make sure that she is replaced?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I don’t doubt for a second that my real critics today are in the gallery and that many of the questions could be better answered by the individuals who are sitting up there, but I’m going to give it my best shot. I do know a little bit about a lot of these things — but nonetheless, I will note that I am well aware that the board of directors of Yukon College, who are good planners — as they should be — have struck a search committee for the replacement of Dr. Karen Barnes, much to our chagrin.

But nonetheless, time marches on, and I think a “deserving retirement” is probably the term that is appropriate in this circumstance. A search committee has been struck by the board. They are actively recruiting. I understand that they have engaged some assistance from a company that normally does such things in the academic world. I think that there has already been a posting with respect to that position, and that process is underway with the well-thought-out plan for not only the transition from Yukon College to Yukon University, but I understand that a date has been chosen — I am going to say early June 2020, if I remember correctly, or maybe it’s May — and that a new president will be properly installed as the transition takes place in spring 2020.

Ms. White: I am just going to go systematically now. I wanted to make sure I targeted this one because Dr. Barnes is on her way out, and I wanted to say nice things before she left. I know that we will have another opportunity, but not one where she can’t defend herself, so here we are.

In section 5 where it says, “Relationship to Government of Yukon” — in section 5(2), it says, “The Minister must not interfere in the exercise of powers conferred on the university, or its board, senate and other constituent bodies...” The reason why I bring that one up is 13(2), which talks about the Commissioner in Executive Council, which is really kind of associated with government, of course, and then section 15, which is talking about remuneration, and it talks about, again, the Commissioner in Executive Council. Then, really specifically, in section 56 where it says, “Degree programs” — in 56(2), it says, “If the university wishes to offer a new degree program, the university must provide to the Minister any information relating to the degree program that the Minister requests.”

I guess I was just looking for the assurance that the government — because we are talking about how it is an independent entity and it’s not attached to government, it is not run by government, and it is not influenced by government — how these different clauses — and I am sure there are others, but those are just the ones that I have highlighted — how that all plays together to make sure that Yukon University can be independent of government.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: The question is the relationship to government — I’m going to make reference at first, as my colleague across the way did, to section 5 in part 2, which indicates that it is not an institution of government. That section is similar to section 13 in the current *Yukon College Act* and indicates that autonomy from government is — it indicates the relationship to government, and it is in line with the concept of autonomy from government, which is typical for Canadian universities.

The relationship is, I’m pleased to see, outlined in section 5 of Bill No. 2. I should also note that, even though that structure — it talks about the structure of the relationship to government. Of course there is a relationship. It clearly is not the case that — section 5 confirms the autonomy of the university from government, but there is a relationship, even though the minister and the department will clearly not interfere with the exercise of powers that are conferred on the university for its board, its senate, et cetera. That is all set out in section 5.

I’m going to turn to 13(2). Before I get there, I’ll say that there’s an obvious situation in which — it’s not that there is no relationship between government and the university, but that it should be set out properly in the legislation — which it is here in Bill No. 2 — for the purpose of clearly explaining what that is.

With respect to section 13(2) and others — with respect to the structure of the board and the appointment of 10 persons appointed by the Commissioner in Executive Council — of the 17 members of the board of governors, 10 are appointed by the government, six are employees, officers, or students of the university, and one additional member who is not an employee, an officer, or a student of the university. It’s striking a balance with respect to that. Again, it is not unusual in the structure of universities across Canada.

The other reference that was made was to the remuneration section for board members under 15. The Commissioner in

Executive Council may prescribe remuneration — the authority, which will come to Cabinet or the Commissioner in Executive Council on the basis of determining regulations that will deal with remuneration, regulations being something that will come as a result of the Cabinet process.

Also, they make the function — in section 56 — of the appointments to the board — and then, of course, senate appointments through the university — a balance. The concept of section 56(2) is to ensure that the government has access to information in relation to new degrees and aids in decision-making of that process going forward. Again, it is partially structured and related to the budgetary process going forward. While there is no relationship or opportunity — nor should there be — for the department of the minister to be involved with those kinds of decisions — the recommendations — as they currently do come from Yukon College, the university can only offer degree programs that are approved by government — which is, of course, similar to the *Yukon College Act*, which is the current state — partly related to long-term planning and the concept of budgets going forward.

I think what I will end by saying here is that the structure of the relationship between the government and Yukon College is a positive one. I expect it to be one going forward, but in the event that someday, in 125 years when none of us are here anymore, it raises a question, section 5(1) sets out precisely what that relationship should look like. It’s not that there is no relationship; it’s that it must be structured, and it’s embedded in the legislation.

Ms. Hanson: I just want to follow up on the question that my colleague asked with respect to the relationship set out in section 56 on the issue of the development of new degree programs at the Yukon University. I understand what the minister has said with respect to a link between operating funds that may come from the Yukon government, but how does that work? When we look at universities across Canada, there are funded programs or philanthropic — or certainly a significant effort is made on behalf of boards and academic institutions to seek funding other than from government as governments are wont to do in terms of cutting educational institutions.

I guess my question is, really: Why would a government have a say? I guess what I’m trying to clarify is: Is this a veto power by the Government of Yukon over the ability of an independent academic institution to establish a new degree program?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you very much for the question. I’m going to see if I can address it in a number of ways.

I want to note first that, in section 3, which sets out the purposes for this act — and more importantly, the purposes of Yukon University — I’m looking at section 3(2)(b), which indicates that, “In carrying out its purposes, the university must do the following...” and subsection (b) says, “(b) enhance the environmental, cultural, social and economic well-being of Yukon by offering a balance of services, activities, training and educational programs that meet the needs of Yukoners...” I can also indicate that further down in that subsection — in 3(2)(g) it indicates that: “(g) so far as and to the full extent that its

resources permit...” the university “... is required to provide educational programs that serve the needs of Yukon communities, and...” then it goes on to say, “... strive to serve educational and training needs of Yukon that may be specified by the Commissioner in Executive Council.” So, there’s a connection there.

But in relation to the concept of developing degree-granting programs and the degree-granting programs having other funding, I’m going to back up for a second to say that, of the two degree programs that have been developed and offered so far, there is a requirement under Yukon College that those programs be approved by the Yukon government. They were approved in their entirety without issue. There is no appetite whatsoever for the concept of interference in that, and I clearly think that Bill No. 2 does not even permit that. It’s a process of understanding the needs that are being met by the university in relation to the community needs.

I should note that this is involved in other Canadian universities across the country — again, based on the former answer I gave with relation to the concepts of universities — partly the funding issue, but more importantly, meeting the needs of the community.

It is common in Canada for a government to provide oversight, and review and approval of degree programs in Canadian universities. It is not uncommon for governments to approve new degree programs or to have a review process in place to ensure that they meet the needs of the citizens and the communities — which is why I made reference to section 3 again. It’s about finding a balance between the autonomy and the accountability with respect to Yukon College and Yukon University. I should note that this development of Bill No. 2 was done with extensive work between not only the two representatives of the team who are here from the Department of Education, but with extensive work done with Yukon College and the input that they had.

It is also section 56, and the requirement for the relationship with government is related to a quality assurance situation. It is a tool that ensures programming meets the needs of Yukon citizens, as I have said. I should also indicate that there is the authority in — I’ll ask maybe to get a section — the authority in Bill No. 2 that the minister could delegate the degree approval to enable further autonomy in the future, but it’s not something that has caused problems in other universities in Canada. It is sort of a common state of making sure that the purposes of the university are meeting the needs of the community through government without the concept of interference.

Ms. Hanson: I appreciate the minister’s response, but it’s precisely because we’re talking about the establishment of a new university in Yukon, and it’s precisely because of what we have seen across this country. When we say “a government may”, “a minister may”, or “the Commissioner in Executive Council may” prescribe, that’s exactly what I’m concerned about. What we have seen — so, when we say that the objectives, in terms of the section the minister quoted earlier — so, the current government has acknowledged and agreed that Yukon is dealing with a whole range of climate change issues.

What we have seen across this country is where governments fundamentally do not believe that and fundamentally wish that they had the ability to go and direct institutions to stop talking about these issues.

So, if you have the ability to say, “No, we’re not going to fund a program somebody has in the north” — we were talking earlier about the circumpolar north, the links between the Yukon University, the Arctic University, and the circumpolar north. What I am looking for is assurance that ministers cannot, in the future, say, “No, we’re not going to fund that degree program” that will benefit, and build on the knowledge that we have inherently — because of where we live and the research that we have been developing over time that would lead us to develop an independent degree program in that area.

It’s not about questioning this particular minister, but it is really about the ideologies of what we have seen. This is not getting to be a more harmonious discussion as time goes on. We are seeing really very distinct and pitted examples across this country — the globe. We talked about this yesterday — the flooding in Venice and the fire ravaging across Australia.

It is a real issue about what is the scope and the reach of a minister into the autonomous operation of the board of governors for Yukon University to deny using this provision — their ability. It talks in 3(2) — the section that talks about — “(g) so far as and to the full extent that its resources permit...”

That is the reason why I asked the first question — because, over time hopefully, we would see similar to what we have seen in other jurisdictions where some of our resource extraction companies reinvest into their local economy and reinvest into the local educational institutions. That kind of model hasn’t existed very much in the north, but it does exist elsewhere.

I just want to make sure that we are not going to be seeing 10 to 15 years from now — god forbid — a UCP government in the Yukon that could cause serious challenges to the integrity of what we anticipate Yukon University evolving into.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I wish that I could reassure the member opposite about all future governments, but unfortunately I can’t. What I can say is that Bill No. 2 is structured on the basis of Canadian universities across the country. The degree-granting approval only is what lives with the minister in this bill and in most other university structures. The bill was arrived at through in-depth research with respect to universities across the country and extensive consultation with Yukon College in their current structure, and their current expert in post-secondary education was the work of — I think I spoke with Mr. McBride about this in the fall of 2016 very shortly after I was provided the privilege of having this job. I know that those conversations have been ongoing extensively.

I can indicate that section 5 is an important one. It indicates that the university is not an institution of government — “The Minister must not interfere in the exercise of powers conferred on the university, or its board, senate and other constituent bodies...” — in — “... this Act respecting any of the following... the formulation and adoption of academic policies and standards... the establishment of standards for admission and graduation... the...” — selection — “... and appointment

of officers and employees...” — and despite the fact that, in subsection (2) — “... the university must not establish a new...” — degree-granting — “... program except in accordance with Part 13.”

So, we have had a conversation about that. I can make reference to section 3(2)(g) again and indicate that the (ii) under that section indicates — I’ll just read (g), which is “... so far as and to the full extent that its resources permit...” — the university is required to — “... strive to serve educational and training needs of Yukon that may be specified by the Commissioner in Executive Council.” That section allows the government to communicate its educational and training priorities to be addressed by Yukon University, but extensive discussion took place with respect to that section and the concept of inserting the word “strive” to serve, because it’s not a hard requirement with respect, but that the board of governors and Yukon University will strive to do that, and there is a communication process whereby there will be consultation.

I would like to go back to something that was mentioned a few moments ago in relation to funding programs and those sorts of things. There’s no requirement whatsoever that the government be involved in applications or the concept of getting funding for programming or research or have anything to do or could have anything to do with how those funds are applied.

In fact, it’s about the degree-granting program only and for the purposes of striking a balance that is set out in section 5 about the concept between achieving the priorities of Yukon University and appropriate levels of government oversight based on the structure of other Canadian universities.

I would also like to make reference to section 31, which deals with the concepts of the senate and the powers of the senate. That section establishes the senate powers and autonomy to govern university academics, and that rests with the senate.

I know that they are all protections in relation to governing the relationship between the autonomy of the university, which is an absolute priority, and the balance and requirement for the government to be responsible for the expenditure of taxpayers’ money without interference in the academics.

Ms. White: I was just going through it quickly. Is there a review clause in this legislation?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: There is not a review clause embedded in Bill No. 2, which by the nature of Bill No. 2, will be the *Yukon University Act*, so it is a replacement for the *Yukon College Act* — obviously not an amendment. It does not exist there.

There was some conversation between the parties. By that, I mean the Department of Education, representing the government, and Yukon College, but it was determined that it wouldn’t be necessary to put it in — or appropriate in these circumstances — but, of course, that doesn’t prohibit a review going forward.

We’re excited about the concepts in this legislation. Yukon College is excited about the concepts — the shift to a bicameral structure with a board and a balance at the board of directors level, as well as the senate responsible for academics.

While it is a new structure going forward for the Yukon, it is not a new structure for Canadian universities. As a result, that decision was made at the table of consultation.

Ms. White: I think this might be the first legislation that I’ve gone over here that hasn’t had a review clause, whether it be five or seven years. That might not be true, either.

The reason why we bring it up and why my colleague was bringing it up is that, when we make decisions here, we are making them in our current situation. We know where we stand, and we know what our viewpoints are. I think what she was highlighting was that there have been some pretty aggressive changes, even nationally, between governments and then the battles that have happened between them and universities about ideology.

The only reason why we highlight those clauses — I will put this on the record now, and we have both put it on the record — is because the minister has said that it is not the intention of the legislation, and that’s important. The reason that I am clarifying or saying it again is that, heaven forbid, we should get to a point where the Yukon University needs to go through what we’ve said in Hansard now as we have been enacting their legislation to understand the intent behind what we were doing.

I say this only in terms of how it’s easy for us to plan in our immediate future and with what we expect to happen, but when the minister said that we wouldn’t be around for 125 years — thank goodness, because it sounds like it would be miserable to be 180 years old, so I hope that I’m not here at that point and that science hasn’t allowed it. It is just to make sure that we safeguard the integrity of the institution into the future. That was the reason why we asked that question and the concern I have about the clause.

I am going to move on, because the minister has told us the reasoning and I understand, but now we’ve both said it and it’s on the record. Hopefully, no one ever has to come back and say, “This is not what they meant when they debated the legislation.” It is there for the future.

I am going to move to section 23, which is the sexual violence policy. When I was in high school, I was in the MAD program when I was in grade 11, so probably in about 1994. It was at that time that Yukon College started putting up — I can’t remember the sign. I would have remembered it probably 20 years ago, but 25 is too far back. They first started putting up the signs saying that they did not support sexual harassment of any kind or violent intentions. I believe that, if I was to ask my colleague, it is very close to the same time frame that there was a murder that happened. There was an artist who had art in the college that was done by that man — who has still not been found, to be honest. He is still at large. The one reason why I want to highlight the sexual violence policy is that, unfortunately, if we had looked at the technology and things that were happening in 1994 when I was in high school, there wasn’t social media, there weren’t electronics, and there wasn’t the capacity to continue the harassment that can happen right now.

I think section 23 is really important because it lays that out, but one of the reasons that I want to highlight section 23 — the sexual violence policy — is that I want to know if there

is an ability for things to grow as technology changes or whether it will have to be brought back here as an amendment on the floor of the Legislative Assembly.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: The short answer to the question is yes, but I want to make reference to section 23, which as my colleagues in this Legislative Assembly will know, is becoming more common but certainly has not been common in the past — to have the concept of a sexual violence policy embedded in legislation — so, a positive move there. I can indicate that Yukon College already has a sexual violence policy. I am going to say that all of section 23 — but section 23(2)(f) notes that further requirements may be prescribed through regulation — and the regulation-making power is 63(1)(c) with respect to that — but this section, in fact, is designed to increase awareness using accessible methods.

It defines sexual violence, which is critical. It ensures — it's designed to ensure prevention, education, and reporting provisions within the policy, and it is also noted to ensure cultural sensitivity and that vulnerable groups will be included within the policy and to ensure the process for complaints within the policy — all important aspects of this section, but really designed to be the foundation of entrenching this type of section in the legislation with the idea that the board has the authority to make the policy and to enforce the policy, but then also to change it, as — if there was some sort of concept that some sort of technological option were to be banned from the college or the use of it in a particular way — it is designed to strike a balance between building the foundation on how this is important, it must live in the Yukon University piece of legislation, and it must be adapted and dealt with by the board and by those who attend and work at the university, but that there is some ability to move it going forward so that it's not a requirement to come back and change the legislation — so trying to build the foundation in that section, but not too many details, so that there is some flexibility in making sure that it is relevant, going forward.

Ms. White: I thank the minister for that answer. There are just a couple of highlights for me — part 9, when we talk about community campuses and the committees that they have and the expectations that they have. I think that's great, laying out what our expectations are to make sure that we still include communities, which in conversations that I had initially with Yukon College, they said it was a really big focus, to make sure that the things that were relevant in communities remained relevant and were acknowledged. I just think that's great work from the organization as they move forward to make sure that is happening.

The second highlight that I would like to make right now is part 10, under student affairs. I really appreciate that it lays out the rights and responsibilities of both the university and the student unions. It goes down and it breaks that in. I just wanted to highlight those as things that I appreciate. Maybe I'll give the minister — if she wants to tell us more, if she wants to elaborate on those, but those are — both section 9 and section 10 are great, because it clearly lays out the roles and responsibilities for both the university and then either the community campuses and then the student unions.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I will take the opportunity to agree with the member opposite and to focus and herald parts 9 and 10 in this legislation among others, but certainly those are the ones we're pointing out at the moment.

With respect to part 9, focusing on community campus committees — these are similar to the provisions of community campus committees that are within the *Yukon College Act*. We know that they are not only important to the communities in which they operate but were a priority for Yukoners who were consulted with respect to this piece of legislation going forward. I think I mentioned it earlier — that it's an important opportunity. Yukoners were keen to support Yukon University going forward but were very keen to make sure that they didn't lose any of the current benefits that they have from Yukon College. They exist differently in different communities — and certainly in the rural communities versus Whitehorse campus and the programs available there. So, it's very important to make sure that was maintained. I know that was a priority with respect to the discussions that took place to get to Bill No. 2.

Also, with respect to part 9, it sets out that rules and procedures governing the appointment or election of members will be further prescribed by way of regulation under the university act. It enables Yukon University to prescribe a governance model and seek advice on community needs where the community campuses exist, including the Whitehorse region and defined community campuses under the definition section — so again, all positive aspects. So, thank you for the opportunity to point those out.

With respect to part 10 and student affairs — again, I'm pleased to see all really important aspects of Yukon University in the transition from Yukon College embedded in this legislation because it is again the foundation for us going forward — and by “us”, I mean the community of Yukon with respect to post-secondary education and the opportunities it presents.

Part 10 establishes the undergraduate student union — again, “undergraduate” is defined and the student union must meet requirements similar to those that are under the *Yukon College Act*, which is positive. The undergraduate student union is an elected body.

Part 10 goes on to indicate the parameters and how it should be properly elected and the responsibilities set out. It also does things like answer questions that could be uncertain. It states that the undergraduate student union must be registered under the *Societies Act* and requires the board of governors to ensure that the undergraduate student union is properly ensured — things that are details, but will resolve questions of financial transparency and other processes in part 10 that resolve those questions so that there is no uncertainty going forward. It goes on in section 43 to note that a graduate student union will be structured much the same way.

Also in 44, there is a provision for an undergraduate or graduate student union, if it does not meet the requirements of the act or if multiple bodies don't meet the requirements, there is an opportunity to resolve that as well with respect to a section that is entitled “Rules respecting recognition of student organizations”. Again, it is something that attempts to resolve

issues that could arise and gives authority and recognition to student unions going forward and the importance they will play in Yukon University.

Chair: Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 2, entitled *Yukon University Act*.

Ms. White: I would like to go to part 12, which is “Financing and Accountability of University” and then the “Grants to university” — section 52. I am just looking for some clarification here. So, 52(1) says, “The Minister may, in accordance with any regulations, make grants or loans to the university out of money appropriated by the Legislature for that purpose.”

The reason I highlight this is that I believe in kind of recent years, the “Legislature” and “Legislative Assembly” have kind of become interchangeable. They have become interchangeable in words, but in legal definition, they are different. Under the *Yukon Act*, section 10, “Legislative Assembly of Yukon”, it says, “The Council established by the former Act is hereby continued as the Legislative Assembly of Yukon. Each member of the Legislative Assembly is elected to represent an electoral district in Yukon.”

Then, under the *Yukon Act*, section 17, it says, “Legislature of Yukon” — “The institution referred to in the former Act as the Commissioner in Council and which consisted of the Commissioner and the Council of the Yukon Territory is hereby continued as the Legislature of Yukon, consisting of the Commissioner and the Legislative Assembly.”

What I am just looking for is clarification on section 52(1), where it talks about how “The Minister may, in accordance with any regulations, make grants of loans to the university out of money appropriated by the Legislature for that purpose.” Then in section (2) it says, “Subject to any terms specified by the Legislature, the Minister may...” So, my question is: Is “Legislature” the word we want? Or is it “Legislative Assembly” that we’re looking for?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I want to note that, in addition to the reference made by the member opposite to the *Yukon Act*, “Legislature” and “Legislative Assembly” are both defined in the Yukon *Interpretation Act* as well. I think that they are congruent, but just to be sure, I will read the definition of “Legislature” in the *Interpretation Act* in which “‘Legislature’ means the Commissioner acting by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly...” So that’s congruent with the *Yukon Act*.

What I can also indicate is that the word “Legislature” was specifically chosen to be placed into section 52. I was aware that this was a question previously, but I can indicate that the way in which that has been chosen to be written was intentional. It is to indicate in section 52(1) that the minister — first of all,

it establishes the financial relationship between the university and the Yukon government, which Yukon College expressed a preference for because of their preference, but also, it’s similar to the *Yukon College Act* which is — the reference to the *Yukon College Act* is in section 11. But it is supposed to indicate that the minister may, in accordance with regulations, make grants or loans with respect to money that is appropriated — meaning that, in an appropriation act of any kind indicating spending authority, the minister could not — that would come from this Legislature or the Legislative Assembly — not necessarily interchangeable, but based on the *Interpretation Act*, the definition is referenced — that the minister certainly could not do anything that would challenge or go against the authority that would come as an appropriation act in the event that this Legislature placed any limitations or parameters or specific spending with respect to matters that come from here.

The ultimate authority of course for any legislation comes from this Legislative Assembly, and that includes the appropriation acts or the budgetary acts and any of the parameters that might occur or details or limitations that occur on the floor of this House. The minister could not, pursuant to section 52, do anything other than what’s directed by this House.

Ms. White: I thank the minister for that clarification. I’m sure she knows why I was asking about it.

Just before I wrap up, I just want to again thank the officials who were very dedicated through the process again. I heard at Home Hardware just how good the process for developing this legislation had been and how the work between the Yukon College and the drafters — as well as the ability to travel out of territory to see other facilities, ask questions, learn, and adapt as we move forward toward this legislation. I just especially want to highlight that work and that commitment from all the people who were involved whether it was through the Yukon College — any number of people there — as well as the department.

I think this is something that we should be very excited about, and I know that, once I hit 65, I look forward to registering at Yukon University free of charge to learn lessons — and anything that I want — without them having to be my career. It is exciting to know that we are giving Yukon students, as well as international students and students across the country, the ability to come here to go to university.

With that, I thank the minister and her colleagues, and I look forward to this becoming law.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I will also take the opportunity — in particular, I know that there is a team of people who work with them, but I know personally how much work went into not only the conversations, but the drafting and the details and the back and forth with respect to the work that Ms. Dabbs and Mr. McBride have done personally to enhance post-secondary education here in the Yukon Territory to provide opportunities for Yukon students, young and old alike. To have us be part of this process — and by “us”, I mean this Legislative Assembly — of progressing education and post-secondary education of all kinds here in the Yukon Territory — it is an exciting opportunity. I know that they have worked night and day — in

some cases, burning the midnight oil — to meet deadlines to have this brought here and to have it address all of the many hundreds of issues — if not thousands of issues — that arise in a conversation like this about how we get from the original school and trade school into Yukon College and now a transition and evolution into Yukon University. I just want to thank them and their teams of people here on the floor of this Legislative Assembly, because I know how much work has gone into it. We appreciate it; Yukoners appreciate it; Yukon College/Yukon University appreciates it — but, really, it is all to the benefit of Yukon citizens and it is a great opportunity to thank them here.

I will do that and take my seat. I don't know if there are any other questions.

Chair: Is there any further general debate?

Seeing none, we will move to clause-by-clause debate.

Ms. White: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all clauses, the preamble, and the title of Bill No. 2, entitled *Yukon University Act*, read and agreed to.

Unanimous consent re deeming all clauses, preamble, and title of Bill No. 2 read and agreed to

Chair: Ms. White has, pursuant to Standing order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all clauses, the preamble, and the title of Bill No. 2, entitled *Yukon University Act*, read and agreed to.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

Clauses 1 to 95 deemed read and agreed to

On Preamble

Preamble agreed to

On Title

Title agreed to

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that Bill No. 2, entitled *Yukon University Act*, be reported without amendment.

Chair: It has been moved by Ms. McPhee that the Chair report Bill No. 2, entitled *Yukon University Act*, without amendment.

Motion agreed to

Chair: The matter now before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

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

Bill No. 200: Second Appropriation Act 2019-20 — continued

Chair: Order please.

The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Hassard: I just had a couple of questions for the Premier just in follow-up to questions I had for the Minister of Highways and Public Works yesterday. I have had a few constituents raise concerns with regard to the questions that I had in Question Period regarding the new YuDriv system. I am just curious as to if the Premier could let us know if there is any update or further information regarding the questions that I had yesterday on the registration of commercial vehicles over 4,500 kilograms — whether they would be required to go to the scales every time they were within a 20-kilometre radius, whether they would be required to run logbooks, and whether they would be required to have safety inspections every six months. I will just leave it at that and see if the Premier has any updates for us.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I thank the member opposite for the question. Again, welcome to Chris Mahar for being here today, the deputy minister of Finance.

A little bit of background on the YuDriv issue: The current vehicle registration mainframe system was developed a long time ago; it was in the 1980s. The driver's licensing system in 2011 and these applications utilized differing technologies. You can imagine — with decades going by, there were increased complexities, time, and expense in being able to obtain system supports to improve each separate system.

In April 2018, Management Board approved a \$3.6-million contract with experience to develop certain systems. It was Winding River, which subcontracted a lot of money to local contractors for phase 1 to begin the first phase of this process.

That was launched on November 4 of this year. The final project completion as an integrated system is scheduled for April 2021. It is great to be having these conversations now on the floor of the Legislative Assembly.

The new system will combine information that is currently stored at several different applications and will store it at a single system. We are committed to improving that service delivery through that modernization and that innovation. We are also in the process of replacing Yukon's various transportation applications into a single, integrated client-centred system.

When it comes specifically to commercial vehicle weight requirements, there is, as the member opposite knows, the National Safety Code standards that establish minimum safety standards for commercial vehicles and drivers, and that is right across Canada. The National Safety Code does not apply to personal use vehicles, so under the *Motor Vehicles Act*, vehicles must be registered using their gross vehicle weight. Motor vehicles use manufacturers' specific weights to determine this value.

Vehicles that weigh under specifically 11,794 kilograms do not have to report to Yukon weigh stations. Only

commercial vehicles are required to keep those logbooks, and those safety inspections are only required for commercial vehicles over 11,794 kilometres in the Yukon. It is not clear where the 4,500-kilometre figure is coming from — if the member opposite can give us a little bit more about that. But the National Safety Code only applies to commercial vehicles weighing more than 4,500 kilograms, not personal use vehicles.

Mr. Hassard: There were a couple of things there that the Premier talked about. I know he meant “kilograms”, not “kilometres”. That’s irrelevant.

I was only talking about commercial vehicles. I understand the National Safety Code. My question was: Under the new guidelines — under YuDriv — will any commercial vehicle over 4,500 kilograms be required to go to the scales and run a logbook? The Premier talked about 11,970 kilograms — I believe it was — so maybe if he can just clarify that for us, please — if only vehicles licensed for over 11,970 kilograms require logbooks, safety inspections, and stopping at the scales every time they are within a 20-kilometre radius.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Yes, kilograms, not kilometres. The Department of Highways and Public Works is really kind of wondering where that number 4,500 kilograms is coming from, because the National Safety Code only applies to commercial vehicles weighing more — I’ll say it again for this.

The National Safety Code does not apply, as we know, to those personal use vehicles. Under the *Motor Vehicles Act*, vehicles must be registered using their gross vehicle weight. Motor Vehicles uses manufacturers’ specification weights to determine this value, and vehicles that weigh under 11,794 kilograms do not have to report to Yukon weigh stations.

Mr. Hassard: I appreciate part of that answer, but I’m not sure if I don’t understand or if the Premier is not understanding when he says that all vehicles must be licensed according to the manufacturer’s recommended gross vehicle weight. I will try to explain it if I can.

If you have a tandem axle dump truck that’s not going to pull a trailer, currently you can register that vehicle for 24,999 kilograms. Now, that same tandem axle truck — the exact same manufacturer’s specifications — that doesn’t have a gravel box on it and has a fifth wheel hitch on it and is going to hook onto a super B load of fuel — that vehicle then must be registered for 46,999 kilograms.

My question is: If all commercial vehicles have to be registered according to the manufacturer’s specified gross vehicle weight, does that mean that all commercial vehicles will have to be registered to that gross vehicle weight? Obviously, there is quite a difference.

If the Premier registers his dump truck for 24,999 kilograms, he’s probably going to pay somewhere in the \$800-a-year range for his registration. If he registers it for 46,999 kilograms he is going to pay probably \$1,700 a year. I’m just trying to get some clarification there. Hopefully, maybe the Premier can clarify that for us a little bit.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, these are some very specific questions, and so I will try my best just with the information that I have here.

Again, we are talking about the National Safety Code right across Canada. With the YuDriv system — to clarify again, as the member opposite was speaking about, in my case, my personal dump truck. We’re talking commercial as opposed —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Silver: Yes, exactly. Just to clarify for the record of the Legislative Assembly, all of these questions that the member opposite has talked about have commercial applications.

Again, the information that I have right now is that, under that *Motor Vehicles Act*, vehicles must be registered using their gross weight, as we have said, and vehicles that weigh under that threshold of 11,794 kilograms do not have to report to those weigh stations. The safety inspections are only required for commercial vehicles over a certain amount.

The member opposite is asking about different thresholds because it comes with a financial consideration as far as those weights go — and, of course, what constitutes a vehicle with what you are towing behind you. We will get the answers to those questions as to what triggers more money for a yearly permit when it comes to that commercial industry.

Chair: Is there any further general debate on Bill No. 200?

Ms. Van Bibber: I have a few questions on Tourism and Culture.

We spoke about — in the last few days or this week — the department is going to create a new advisory body of tourism representatives to advise the minister on implementing the strategy and achieving its goals. It states that it will be established to make a formal channel for the various values and viewpoints related to tourism that need to be heard by government.

Can you tell me, knowing that values and viewpoints constitute quite a broad field, what exactly are the minister and the department searching for that the current tourism boards are not providing?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I think that really what we’re looking at is an initiative from the Department of Tourism and Culture that reached out to all of those stakeholders, whether it be TIAY or the business community. Together, they decided that we need to focus in on a new system. As the Minister of Tourism and Culture mentioned, there really has not been a focused approach to a strategy in tourism and culture in the Yukon government in decades. These pressures are something that the Minister of Tourism and Culture embraced right away and decided that this is an important way of moving forward.

It was quite interesting because, at first, we were pressuring the minister a bit as far as the Financial Advisory Panel and some of the recommendations. It was really under her leadership that we realized that this is not necessarily getting out of the business of doing business or anything in that capacity; it’s more about: How does the government provide those assets, banners, roadside assistance, campground upgrades, and those types of things — you name it — so that the private sector can flourish? You ask the question in a way that makes it sound like everything is fine, so why would you change it? Well, I think the industry itself is who said that

everything wasn't fine. What we saw was a minister who decided to get out into that community, working with the department under their leadership but also with the agencies and associations to get a seven-member task force and to form that, as they did in March, to carefully review — extensive research — best practices on tourism guidance models and to advance the tourism destination market management organization and to use partners not only here, but across Canada to see if any improvements could help achieve those goals that were set by this particular strategy and by the industry.

I think that it is one thing to give the credit to the Department of Tourism and Culture, but I think that the private sector, the stakeholders, and the non-governmental organizations altogether need to be commended for a comprehensive strategy that goes very far in recommending that made-in-Yukon governance model that will incorporate the best of a lot of different worlds — the best of both governance models. So, it's not losing what was working properly or what was working well, but also continuing a line that a department of government can establish by working with the industry through the board and working on recommendations that can be agreed upon by all stakeholders.

Ms. Van Bibber: Now, the advisory board, as was mentioned, was going to work with all the stakeholders, which include groups like TIA Yukon, First Nation culture and tourism, wilderness tourism — and I'm sure that there are lots of local advisory boards — KVA — when we get into the communities. How is this advisory board going to work with all of these groups? What will this new advisory board cost the government? Is there going to be a duplication of services?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I do know that Yukon government provided \$50,000 to establish the task force and to support the research and the meeting costs. There is no money in this supplementary budget. There will be more money coming into the main estimates — and of course we're working on those numbers now. Again, looking at that task force with industry representation that was — and we mentioned this the other day in the Legislative Assembly — Rich Thompson from Northern Vision Development, Ben Ryan from Chieftain Energy and also Air North, two members from First Nations — Marilyn Jensen and Michelle Kolla — and two from Yukon government, and that's Valerie Royle and Justin Ferbey — two deputy ministers — plus an independent chair, Vicki Hancock. Money has been established there through that task force. The work of the task force was completed upon submission of that final report. In the next budgetary considerations, we will be able to talk more about the next budgetary considerations.

Ms. Van Bibber: Thank you for that answer. Is this going to be a permanent board, or do we know how long this new body will be in existence? Is this going to be an ongoing, year-after-year board that is set up for the minister?

Hon. Mr. Silver: We intend on making it permanent.

Ms. Van Bibber: It says that by April 2020, this new advisory board will be selected by a group called "boards and committees committee". Is there a formal process to go through to put a new board in place for the department? Will a call go

out for nominees to sit on this board, and will there be an honorarium provided to the new board members?

Hon. Mr. Silver: This will be the Standing Committee on Boards and Committees to Major Government Boards and Committees, which is an all-party board here. It is the regular process. Again, the establishment of the honoraria and all that is based upon the classifications through that standing committee.

Ms. Van Bibber: I understood that there was kind of a process with this all-party board to agree to put an advisory board on the appointments because it is major boards and committees, so I will have to check on that.

During the TIAY fall conference that was just held in Dawson — and kudos to TIAY for again putting on a wonderful event. There were many interesting and challenging discussions brought up, and I know that, when Question Period came up today, the one session was about the invisible burden of tourism, and the topic presented was on how tourists and visitors impact an area negatively. We market and market to bring them here, but then we don't offset the practices that go along with increased use of our infrastructure and the impact on locals.

I think it was agreed that the highway infrastructure was mostly impacted here. As we know, in Banff, Alberta, the growth in their town was halted, as it was maxed out and they had to mitigate impacts with various measures.

Do we see the same sorts of problems happening here in the Yukon due to the size of some of our communities and infrastructure needs?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I'm sorry — I caught most of that, but I didn't catch the final, actual question — the last sentence, so if the member opposite could — the last sentence. I'm sorry; I apologize — I didn't catch that.

Ms. Van Bibber: Not a problem. I was talking about the invisible burden of tourism. When we encourage more and more people to come and the problems that could happen, do we see the same problems happening in Yukon due to the size of our communities and our infrastructure?

Hon. Mr. Silver: My apologies again. Again, Mr. Chair, I think it is an important concept. We look at a small community like Dawson, for example, where the TIAY conference was held, and I remember, 10 years ago, conversations about UNESCO, for example. It had been a conversation that had gone on in the community for a long time before the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Placer Miners' Association and the community got together to have a real, thorough conversation about it. I remember members of the hotel community in Dawson talking about, "Look, if we're going to start promoting winter tourism, we are not ready for that right now." They rely on a lot of transient population or summer students, so that was a really important consideration. You have to be very careful about how you design a tourism industry inside of all the different specific communities.

If we don't have more avenues for these conversations, it stops at these concerns — where the hotels will say, "Look, we don't have workers. You are going to put us in a situation where it's not going to be financially advisable or whatever if you just

start randomly putting things in the winter without a comprehensive strategy.” That is why it’s so important to have these strategies. That was an important conversation because, from that, we really wanted to take a look at how we can extend the seasons and how we make sure that we are maximizing our seasons in a way where we start opening up earlier or ending later — those types of initiatives. That is really important.

As a government, for example, we try our best when attracting conferences. Different departments will have PTs or different opportunities where we showcase the Yukon through government funding through NGOs or through government initiatives. We try to make sure as much as we possibly can — if we have any ability — to not put everything in the summer because what, then, are you attracting? A lot of times, the hotels are busy and they are already full. So, you really have to think strategically about these considerations.

Now, if a government alone was the only one thinking strategically, that would be one thing. But to have the private sector, First Nation governments, municipalities, and other stakeholders all putting their heads together in a comprehensive strategy — that is where we are going to see the best bang for our buck.

That is where we can make sure that we address the frameworks that are inside of the sustainability of tourism, and if we look directly in the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*, on page 8, this is considered where we are talking about the establishment of a framework within two years that measures that sustainability piece of tourism and development — not a new concept, as I am explaining, Mr. Chair.

These conversations have been going on in the communities — as we see very intelligent entrepreneurs who are trying to eke out and work really hard to make a go of it in these rural communities. We are looking at Teslin really expanding in that capability and capacity. We are seeing it in all of our communities. So, to be able to have a tourism strategy that focuses in and within the first two years — “Through research and engagement, Yukon will become a leader in destination management by developing criteria to measure and monitor sustainable tourism development.” Not my words, Mr. Chair — that is a direct quote from page 8 of the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*. Continuing that quote: “This ensures that tourism growth supports healthy communities, preserves our natural environment for future enjoyment, and ensures tourism benefits Yukoners for generations to come.”

So, it’s a really important question. Of course, TIAY is going to be having this conversation — very topical — and it is good to see that the development strategy has a grasp on the extremely important part of our development of this industry.

Ms. Van Bibber: Due to all this talk about the impact of visitors — there was a discussion on whether visitors are paying their fair share while visiting tourist areas. Studies done show that visitors to an area use eight times more water and also put an added carbon load on the region. That of course will definitely affect us. So, even collecting carbon tax and redistributing the money doesn’t stop the impact.

How is it going to be addressed by the government, and are there new plans to help residents and businesses mitigate these issues?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Chair, as the member opposite knows, the carbon pricing is not a tax it is a pricing mechanism, and businesses do have that rebate coming back. That would be one example of us as a government making sure that, when it comes to that extra pressure of usage or carbon, that money is being collected, but also being transferred back to the industries. Again, that’s part of it.

We do recognize that, when you put a price on carbon, that does add some pressures, but again, we think that we have done a thorough job of identifying all those issues and determining how we can best work with the private sector and make sure that we are rebating that money back. Again, with the way that things are rebated, the more energy efficiently that businesses plan, the more — if their assets are based on certain criteria — they will be getting back.

On this side of the Assembly, we do support a nation-wide price on carbon emissions. We are seeing a huge shift in global thought when it comes to this. I was reading just the other day that Ford F-150s — there will be an electric version of that. They are working on that as we speak. We see Petro Canada and energy companies of today transitioning and promoting vehicles that have zero emissions. Again, being on the right side of a technological advancement and being in an area where tourism will flourish — people will want to come here because of the initiatives when it comes to our environment.

We heard stories today in the news of a gentleman travelling through up to the north with a Tesla, borrowing our charging stations and our vehicles. Again, this promotes that tourism piece as well — so much so. Again, when it comes to carbon pricing and carbon emissions, this is just one most cost-effective ways of reducing emissions and driving innovation toward that low-carbon future.

I am open to suggestions from the members opposite if they can come up with a more energy-efficient way of dealing with carbon emissions and dealing with carbon. Again, we are going to be reviewing that system a few years from now, so I am all ears for those suggestions.

There are a multitude of fees — and the member opposite spoke a bit about that — surcharges and taxes within the tourism industry that have been in place across the country for decades. In spite of these fees, tourism continues to grow almost everywhere in Canada. Tourism is extremely strong. It’s robust and it can withstand change.

In 2008, for example, British Columbia implemented the first broad-based carbon tax — carbon pricing — in North America and demonstrated that it is possible to both reduce emissions while growing the economy. I can’t recall how many times I have heard Premier Horgan at these national tables dispel a lot of myths and say, “Look, this is not new to us. We have been doing it for years.” In his province, there is no direct correlation between those pressures and the economy suffering. Between 2007 and 2016, British Columbia’s real GDP grew by more than 19 percent, while net emissions declined by

3.7 percent. Again, BC's experience has shown no negative impact on tourism.

We are always paying attention to make sure that we can provide and help the tourism industry as much as we possibly can but, at the same time, having a critical eye when it comes to technologies and technological advances — by being on the right side of history when it comes to a transition off of fossil fuels. I guess the Member for Lake Laberge doesn't agree with that and wants to stay back in the past, I guess. But it's exciting to see that transition, and we recognize the value of tourism and sustainable growth of the industry.

Ms. Van Bibber: Again, going back to this conference, we had some wonderful topics, and this is just a thought that I felt I had to bring up today.

One example was from a tour operator from Iceland. They have approximately 55,000 residents in Iceland, and it's similar to Yukon in their quest for visitors and having a short season. They said that their department of tourism invests in infrastructure and not so much on the marketing. For example, he approached his government with an idea to improve his business, and they assisted him and partly paid for a reliable tour bus so that visitors had a better experience and safety and comfort.

Does the Premier think that the Department of Tourism and Culture shifting its focus from strictly marketing to assisting local entrepreneurs with more tangible options could improve visitor experience?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I appreciate the question from the member opposite. One thing that I'll say right off the bat is that the Department of Tourism and Culture doesn't work in a silo; it works with the Department of Highways and Public Works; it works with our procurement team. It works with many departments — Economic Development — and is always looking at ways to expand and make sure that we provide — I don't want to be repetitive — the best bang for the buck when it comes to our approach to tourism.

The new *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* identified, as I said, a whole-of-government approach to tourism development as one of those seven priorities that are planned by strategic steering committees. These priority plans have been included in the new mandate letters that I gave to the Minister of Tourism and Culture. As a result, the department is reviewing best practices that make sense for Yukon. They are doing that, again, by approaching tourism practices that are from other jurisdictions around the world. I absolutely look forward to these discussions continuing through that stakeholder engagement process.

When it comes to the core values of the tourism strategy, Yukoners are very proud of this territory that we call home and the specifics about what it is about this community. What is it about the Yukon that makes us different? We are proud of what makes us unique. We are eager to share that with the world.

At Premier Fentie's celebration of life, it was great to see past slogans and initiatives that came through his government — Larger than Life — and to see where we've come from tourism opportunities in the past and where we are today. We have to make sure that we don't forget about best practices, but

also that we take a look at the international community and move forward with the business community and NGOs to make sure that we are getting this right.

The big thing is that we spend a lot of time outdoors. We really value the wilderness. We value our vibrant communities and, most importantly, our northern way of life. We want to ensure that these are preserved for generations to come. One of the most important core values from the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* is recognizing that tourism plays an important role in growing and strengthening our economy, businesses, and organizations of all sizes in our communities and provide them with benefits that will extend the well-being of employment in general. The member opposite gave us one example from one remote area on the planet, but we do have other options and other areas to look at as well.

As the strategy moves on and we collect more information from our stakeholders, that is extremely important — to add to those conversations with these other jurisdictions.

When it comes to the actual assets and the infrastructure, it is really important to take a look at the work that we are doing here while we look at best practices in other jurisdictions. Roads in communities, for example — safe, reliable roads and community infrastructure — are extremely important not only for us as residents, but also for the tourism industry. Maintaining those current assets while exploring opportunities for new and improved infrastructure such as pullouts, viewpoints, waste management, wireless technology and connectivity — all of these are infrastructure supports that we are currently endeavouring to make. Tourism and Culture does not work in a silo.

The amazing work that Highways and Public Works has done to secure \$157 million to expand our highways in the northern region is so important. That is a lot of money that is going toward not only the communities and the mining industry, but the tourism industry as well. I have been on the north Klondike Highway a few times where those RVs were coming at me, and the roads get pretty small. Actually, I was talking to the Chair just the other day about both of us returning from our communities in the north and watching the new barricades coming up on the highway. These are extremely important endeavours to make sure that safety is maintained, but it goes past those roads. It goes into the wireless technologies and increasing that, working in partnership with the telecommunication companies. Signage is another example of how the Department of Tourism and Culture has really focused this government in on prioritizing our infrastructure to suit the needs of our tourism industry — improved signage to better support businesses, communities, and also just visitor experiences in general right across the territory. We are working in partnership to incorporate traditional territories, the traditional languages, and also local artistry into signage. That's definitely a signature that comes directly from the minister herself and how important it is that we focus in on tourism and culture.

This is one of these really important areas where you really have to do this with integrity. You don't want to be "using" culture in our tourism; you want to be showcasing our amazing

artists and you want to be showcasing what we are as a people. I believe that the Minister of Tourism and Culture has an excellent ability and background from her experiences working in First Nation governments and working with industry to be able to showcase not just a specific part of the Yukon, but many different areas of our communities.

Airport facilities, Mr. Chair — another great example of how Tourism and Culture is working whole of government with other departments — an extremely important role when it comes to visitors — having modern airport facilities. That can leverage the competitive advantages of Air North, Yukon's airline. We are also fostering partnerships with other carriers to ensure convenient and affordable air access to and around the Yukon.

Every time I talk about airports, I think about when I head down to Skagway. I love to go down there in the summer and play tourist a bit. A lot of times, I will bug the tourists as they come off the cruise ships and I will ask them, "So, are you going to have an opportunity to get to the Klondike on your trip of a lifetime?" A lot of them look at me, pretty confused, and they think, "We're here." To me, that is a huge opportunity to say, "Well, you're close. You're at the foot of the Chilkoot, but you know, there is so much more past those mountains. There is so much more culture and opportunity there."

To see what we are doing here with Mayo and the upgrades there — to see what we're doing with Dawson City as well and the minister's commitment to improving aerodromes right across the Yukon — these are huge opportunities for the government to use assets that can be enjoyed — not only just necessarily by specific companies, but also all Yukoners — that help support not only our mining industry, not only the people who live in the communities, but also our tourism industry as well.

It is about ensuring convenience and affordable access, and that is the good work that the Department of Tourism and Culture has been doing.

One last thing to add as far as assets — wilderness and heritage. When it comes to assets, this is extremely important — to better manage access to our trails, to our lakes and our rivers, our historic sites, and our heritage resources — that is extremely important. We need to do that, again, in an extremely respectful, sustainable, and safe way.

You don't need to look any further than Montana Mountain and to take a look at the good work that is being done there where it is not just about — it is great to see people from the Silicon Valley who come up and they want to go biking. They say all the time, "We want to keep on coming back to the Yukon. We want to go to Montana Mountain this week, but we want to go to Dawson City the next week. We want to go to another community next week." Because it is not just about their experience of getting on a bike and feeling that adrenaline rush, it is about, "How can we connect to this community and the people of this community?"

When you start telling the story about how these trails were made and who made them — I don't know of any Yukoner who can't be proud of the good work of the youth of these communities, whether it's Carcross, Dawson City, or other

areas. I am so amazed to see that work continue. Just in my community of Dawson, watching the young crews from Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in working on the brand new paths that go from the Dome all the way down — they just extended those trails right down to the ball fields in Dawson. I was jogging by one day, and I just heard all this yelling. It was these youth in Dawson, saying, "No, you are not jogging by; you are coming down here." They were so proud of the work that they were doing and explaining the significance of those trails. It filled me with a lot of pride for these young entrepreneurs. They are young stewards of our land. These young individuals really — when we take a look at how we can best supply the communities with the assets and the infrastructure that they need, to me, it's all about those youth. It's all about these young entrepreneurs, whether it's young Mr. Kyikavichik in Old Crow and his pride of explaining the community to tourists, or it's the Marshall Jonases of the world in Dawson City explaining the trails and the significance of the trails that his grandfather and grandfather's grandfather designed years before him. That is the money that is very well spent, and that is the tourism experience that an individual will take back to a community that they came from. That will be tenfold the advertising that we need for this industry.

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

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Silver that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

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

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Silver that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Hutton: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 2, entitled *Yukon University Act*, and directed me to report the bill without amendment.

Committee of the Whole has also considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

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

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

The following sessional paper was tabled November 14, 2019:

34-3-20

Standing Committee on Public Accounts Fourth Report
(November 2019) (Hassard)

The following documents were filed November 14, 2019:

34-3-22

PWC — Review of the determination of security for reclamation and closure of the Wolverine Mine (Pillai)

34-3-23

Privatization of Yukon government services including Queen's Printer and Central Stores, letter re (dated November 12, 2019) from Penny Goldsmith to Liz Hanson, Member for Whitehorse Centre (Hanson)



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 24

3rd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Monday, November 18, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
Don Hutton	Mayo-Tatchun

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King
Liz Hanson	Whitehorse Centre

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Dan Cable
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Monday, November 18, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

Withdrawal of motions

Speaker: The Chair wishes to inform the House that Motion No. 110, notice of which was given by the Member for Porter Creek Centre, was not placed on today's Order Paper as the action requested in the motion has been taken in whole or in part.

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I would ask the Members of the Legislative Assembly to help me in welcoming a number of people who are here today for two tributes. I will do my best to ensure that I have everybody here today.

With us today are: Wendy Kitchen, Barry Kitchen, Heather Burrell and her little guy Warren, Ryan Gandy, Liz Smith, Wayne Schneider, Kaitlin McDougall, John Fox, Carolyn Relf, Hugh Kitchen, Steve Israel, Graham Downs, Kevin Smith, Jeff Faulkner, Andrea Lavin, Adam Scheck, Wendy Tayler, Leif Austad, Rob Carne, Matt Turner, Kelson Willms, Matthew Dumala, Joan Carne, Richard Drechsler, Andrew Carne, Jack Morton, Adam Coulter, Patrick Sack, Michael Durham, Sean Munro, Atlin Shopland, David Moynihan, Esther Bordet, and Thomas Branson as well. I hope I got everyone. Thank you for being here today.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Silver: I apologize if this person was already announced, but I wanted to give a shout-out — I see Sean Munro is in the gallery today. For the record: My first day in Yukon, I stayed at Sean's house.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors? Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In remembrance of Shawn Kitchen

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, today I rise on behalf of all parties to give tribute to Shawn Thomas Kitchen, a beloved pilot who passed away this summer on August 6 at the age of 24. Shawn Kitchen, son of Barry and Wendy Kitchen and brother to Evelyn, was very dear to the Yukon and to all those who knew him.

Shawn was a dedicated aviator. He began working on his personal pilot's licence while in high school at F.H. Collins and then went on to Okanagan College to get his diploma in commercial aviation. Upon completing his schooling, Shawn came back to the Yukon to work and had worked at Alkan Air for the past four years.

Shawn's first job at Alkan Air was as a dispatcher. He then worked as ramp support while he built the flying hours he needed to become a first officer, flying medevacs in the Yukon and beyond. Shawn became interested in bush flying, and soon after, he started flying into some of the most remote strips around the Yukon.

Shawn had a passion for the performing arts. We will remember him for his work and his contributions to Whitehorse's theatre community. Shawn was well-known for his roles in *Pirates of Penzance* and *Cats* as part of Wood Street Centre's Music, Arts, and Drama program. Shawn was an energetic member of the cast and stage crew of the Frantic Follies for several years, where he made frequent appearances as Sam McGee. His outstanding performances left incredible impressions on his teachers, fellow students, community, friends, and family.

At only 24 years old, Shawn was committed and enthusiastic about everything that he did. He had strong community values and was passionate about giving back to the youth of the Yukon. At the age of eight, Shawn became a Cub. As he got older, he became a Scout, Venturer, and Rover. Through Scouts Canada, Shawn travelled around the world, including spending a bit of time in Madagascar helping to build a school. It was important to Shawn that youth have a voice in programs geared for youth. Within Scouts Yukon, Shawn took on leadership roles, including assistant Cub leader, area youth commissioner, and most recently, area commissioner.

Shawn had incredible people skills with an ability to connect with all of those around him, from young Cubs to senior business executives. Shawn had an adventurous spirit that took him around the world and around the Yukon. You would frequently find him hiking along one of the many trails in the Yukon, often with his camera in hand. He was known to be exceptionally down to earth and caring, which are merits in their own right. Shawn Kitchen's unforgettable warmth and passion are dearly missed by all.

In remembrance of Julia Lane

Hon. Mr. Pillai: On behalf of all parties, I pay tribute to Julia Lane, a highly respected exploration geologist who passed away this past summer on August 6. Julia was a graduate of the University of British Columbia and a registered professional geologist in BC.

Julia will be remembered for the key role she played in the discovery of Canada's first Carlin-style gold deposits, which are among the largest gold deposits in the world. Julia helped to lead both the technical team that demonstrated that gold in the Rackla belt was analogous to that in Nevada's Carlin Trend and the business team that attracted companies like Barrick Gold Corporation and Newmont Mining Corporation to the territory.

She had a unique ability to manage large drill projects, juggling the needs of 70-plus employees, dealing with complex logistics, and overseeing the technical requirements of the work to meet a high professional standard. Even with such pressure, she always remained cool and she was adored by everyone working at her camp.

Julia's passion for geology extended beyond exploration and discovery. She was a great supporter of research and she generously provided access to the property to facilitate geologic studies. This included support for the Yukon Geological Survey that mapped the Rackla belt and surrounding area between 2010 and 2014. Our survey's work was greatly facilitated by Julia's willingness to provide access to her camps and logistical base and to share company data. She extended similar support and enthusiasm to the university researchers from the University of British Columbia, Harvard, McGill, and Dartmouth universities, among others.

She also gained international attention for her written papers and conference presentations. With every conference presentation that Julia made, she attracted the attention of audiences with her technical knowledge and her infectious enthusiasm.

At only 33 years old, Julia had already made exceptional contributions to the field of geology and to Yukon's exploration sector. This is the second time that I have had the opportunity to tribute her here in the Legislative Assembly. During this year's Geoscience Forum — where Julia's absence was acutely felt — I wanted to honour her. Julia Lane was so young and so esteemed in the community. She is certainly missed by all.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, there are three lessons that I've learned while preparing for these tributes: There's always time for the people closest to you — no matter what your job is and what your responsibilities are; your age does not matter when you unconditionally give, because the impact can be so positive; and, in closing, the little things in life matter more than the big things.

Speaker: Tabling returns and documents.

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Speaker: Under Tabling Returns and Documents, the Chair has for tabling the Yukon Human Rights Commission 2018-19 annual report and financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2019, which is tabled pursuant to section 18 of the *Human Rights Act*.

Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 7 of the *Hospital Insurance Services Act*, I have for tabling the annual report for the Yukon health care insurance plan and the hospital insurance plan for fiscal year 2018-19.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with communities to create available developed land banks to keep lot prices affordable.

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

THAT it is the opinion of this House that:

(1) the use of firearms in the commission of a crime should be punished to the full extent of the law; and

(2) licensed owners should not be subject to forced confiscation of their lawfully acquired personal private property without just cause.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?
Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Renewable energy

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, Yukoners are passionate and engaged when it comes to energy — particularly in how we generate electricity. Yukon is unique in that we are not connected to a major southern grid and so we are self-reliant for our energy needs. We are fortunate to generate the vast majority of our electricity through renewable means. However, increasing demands on our electricity system require us to plan ahead and weigh the various benefits and trade-offs that come with having a reliable, safe, and environmentally responsible system.

As part of this planning, we want to provide a venue for the public to ask questions, discuss their ideas, and learn from experts who have a strong background in electricity and the unique situation that our communities face. That is why we have put together a renewable electricity panel to lead four public meetings this week. The renewable electricity panel is made up of four individuals who bring a wealth of experience and expertise to the discussion on renewable energy.

Ravi Seethapathy is the Executive Chairman of Biorsirus Inc., a smart energy advisory company. For over three decades, he managed leading portfolios in research and development, innovation, smart grids, energy storage, renewable energy integration, and asset management.

Dr. Michael Ross is the National Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada Industrial Research Chair in Northern Energy Innovation at the Yukon Research Centre at Yukon College. His applied research program addresses the needs of the northern energy industry through academic partnerships with all three colleges in the territories and through industry-driven direction with support from all four territorial electric power utilities.

Chris Henderson is Canada's pre-eminent clean energy advisor to aboriginal communities. He advised chief and council indigenous groups and aboriginal economic

development corporations on how to effectively secure and leverage partnership positions in clean energy projects across Canada. Mr. Henderson also guides utilities, financial firms, corporations, and governments on engaging and partnering with aboriginal communities.

Finally, John Maissan is a renewable energy consultant who previously worked for 14 years for the Yukon Energy Corporation, where he was the driving force behind the Haeckel Hill wind turbine energy development program. His expertise is primarily with respect to wind energy, cold temperature, and wind farms. His clients have included grid-connected wind farm developers, remote mines, utilities, and independent power producers.

Mr. Speaker, these four talented individuals are looking forward to taking questions and discussing ideas about opportunities and challenges in building a renewable, reliable, and affordable electrical system. They will help Yukoners to develop a better understanding of the range of renewable options, including wind, solar, hydro, geothermal, and biomass. The renewable electricity panel will be producing a report based on the conversations. This report will be used to inform Yukon government's final climate change, energy, and green economy strategy and Yukon Energy Corporation's renewable electricity plan. The events will take place in Whitehorse tonight from 7:00 to 9:00 at the Westmark Whitehorse, in Dawson City on November 19 from 7:00 to 9:00 at the Downtown Hotel, in Watson Lake on November 20 from 7:00 to 9:00 at the Northern Lights Centre, and in Haines Junction on November 21 from 7:00 to 9:00 at the convention centre.

We are excited to see what these conversations bring, and we look forward to the insight that the whole energy group gains from this process.

Mr. Kent: Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to respond to this ministerial statement.

This renewable energy panel is an interesting idea, but we have concerns with how it's being advertised to Yukoners. Currently, if you go on engageyukon.ca, which is the government's central database of ongoing consultations, there is no mention of any consultations being conducted by this panel. There is no information on when and where to go. The minister announcing this in the Legislature only six hours before the beginning of the first of four public consultations is not an adequate way to ensure that Yukoners know about these meetings. I would also note that all of these meetings are scheduled to be completed by the end of this week, so for Yukoners finding out this afternoon — or more likely tomorrow morning via the media — this is hardly a useful way to encourage Yukoners to participate. Further, I will note that the consultation that begins in six hours is the one and only consultation scheduled for Whitehorse. For Whitehorse residents, who will find out about this ministerial statement perhaps on the radio tomorrow morning, they are out of luck.

How have these panels been advertised to Yukoners? We were not able to find a news release on the Government of Yukon's website. We did find a Facebook event page, but not all Yukoners use Facebook regularly of course or will see this

event. What efforts did the government take to ensure a strong turnout in this week's meetings? Why did they wait until the last minute to make a public statement advertising these consultations, and why rush them out the door and not give people enough time to participate?

I also have questions about why there are only four of these meetings taking place in the territory — one in Whitehorse, one in Dawson City, one in Watson Lake, and one in Haines Junction. There are a lot of other communities with Yukoners who would be interested in providing their input, but unfortunately the Liberals are leaving them out of these discussions. We would ask the government to reconsider this consultation process to include all of the communities and to extend it so that people have time to provide meaningful input.

With respect to the future of renewables in the territory, I do have some questions about the plan going forward. On the topic of connecting to the BC grid, it was about two years ago that the minister announced at the Mineral Exploration Roundup in Vancouver that Yukon would connect to the southern grid. Since that time, he has spent a lot of money to redo feasibility studies that had already been done and, as a result, came to the same conclusion as the previous study — that the project wasn't feasible — so the idea was scrapped. However, this summer, our Premier suggested that connecting to the BC grid was still on the table when British Columbia Premier John Horgan was visiting. We are wondering if the minister can give us an update with respect to that project.

With respect to current energy plans and capacity, earlier this Sitting, the minister indicated that his government rented four diesel generators in 2017 for backup power; in 2018, they rented six; and in 2019, they are renting nine units. This year, the price tag for the rentals is \$2.2 million, and we are curious as to if that is the final cost associated with these rentals and if the minister can provide us with the figures for additional shipping and O&M costs as well. Also, is the minister able to provide us with the total price tags associated with the 2017 and 2018 rentals of the diesel generators?

When it comes to increasing demand for electricity and a growing population, where are all these new renewable energy projects to meet increased demand? Has the government identified projects? When will they be online, and how much energy will those projects produce?

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will close my remarks.

Ms. White: The Yukon NDP is supportive of public consultations that allow Yukoners to provide input into decisions and policy that matter to them. The individuals who make up this panel provide a diverse cross-section of expertise and experience in renewable electricity generation. We were, however — like our colleagues — discouraged by the lack of lead time prior to these meetings being announced.

As far as we can tell, tonight's meeting was first advertised less than a week ago. Today's ministerial statement only provides a six-hour heads-up to those Yukoners who are listening.

Can the minister please tell us what advertising was used and when it was posted to let Yukoners know about these

important meetings? We feel that the lack of advertising and lead time does a disservice to those experts who are here to share their knowledge and expertise, but also to those Yukoners who may not be able to participate in these meetings on such short notice.

We're also curious about how the meetings will be structured and what the intended outcomes of the panel discussions will be. I raise this because this government has brought in very capable experts before and then held meetings with unclear objectives. The recent "Paving the Future" meeting held at the Beringia Centre is a good example. Highways and Public Works brought up subject matter experts to attend a public meeting with unclear objectives. This lack of clarity left many Yukon citizens frustrated and unsure how their input would be later reflected in future government policy.

As the minister well knows, Yukoners are passionate about renewable energy and will be bringing a wide diversity of viewpoints and expectations to these meetings. Without a cohesive structure and starting point for the discussion, these meetings could quickly go off the rails.

We would like to hear from the minister how the panel discussions will be structured, what the parameters for discussions will be, and how those discussions will then inform the development of future Yukon government policy.

Mr. Speaker, we look forward to seeing how these conversations led by renewable energy experts are trapped into Yukon government's 2020-21 budget.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I'll do my best. There are quite a few questions that have been tabled.

Quickly going through to answer — my understanding is that social media outlets as well as local media were used to advertise. I'm more than comfortable getting back to the opposition on what advertising was done previous to this event. I do know that part of the challenge was that we as an organization or a series of organizations — Energy, Mines and Resources, Yukon Development Corporation, Yukon Energy Corporation — we knew that it was extremely important to have a very respected group of individuals. Some of these individuals have come to the Yukon previously as invited from different NGOs. I know that the department had a very difficult time trying to get the critical mass together because all of the groups are so busy and have been asked to be in different parts of the country or the world, and people's schedules continue to move.

The good thing is that there is opportunity for anybody in the Yukon in any community to continue to talk about renewable energy until January 17. We just launched our plan. There's a large portion of our climate change plan that focuses on clean energy. So, not only is there the opportunity this week to maybe take in one of these events, but we'll be taking feedback on people's perspectives on renewable energy right through the next number of months — so they do have that opportunity.

Concerning the BC grid question, I just want to correct the record. At no point did I say that we were going to connect to the BC grid. At the Roundup conference — when I first made

comments, I said that I think there's an interest to look at it and then we did work. We didn't find out the same answer as the previous government because the previous government wanted to build something and sell energy. I was looking at purchasing the energy and shipping it up, so it's a totally different model. Of course, that was connected to the well-publicized next generation project, which cost millions and millions of dollars.

The work that we have done cost about \$140,000. The work is still relevant. As other jurisdictions across the country talk about energy corridors, this continues to be something that we keep our eye on even though we have a domestic responsibility to make sure we keep energy available and Yukoners safe.

That actually goes into the other part of the questions, which was — this is the first time that Yukon Energy had ever rented a backup — which is the N-1 scenario — understanding that, if your biggest asset went down, you could still make sure people are safe. I think that is a valid expenditure. I will absolutely — on the information about advertising and the information concerning the cost — 2017 and 2018 final numbers and 2019 — it's a good use of money at this particular time as we look at building out other projects.

Will this year's budget reflect concepts and ideas about renewable projects? That's usually led by the Yukon Energy Corporation, so it wouldn't be reflected in this budget. If we're using the independent power production policy, that wouldn't be reflected because that is ensuring that we provide self-determination to communities to build projects and then we buy their energy. Tonight — just quickly; I know we're closing out — there is an independent facilitator. Her name is Jane Koepke. She is an extremely well-respected Yukoner who knows how to handle discussions like this. We will have a chance for the expert panel to share their thoughts. It's more important that we collect the ideas and perspectives of Yukoners.

Speaker: This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Radon testing

Ms. McLeod: Testing conducted in Whitehorse Copper, Pineridge, Wolf Creek, Spruce Hill, and Cowley Creek found that radon levels were much higher than Health Canada's guidelines. Twenty-two months ago, we wrote the Minister of Health and Social Services regarding this specific issue, and we still have not received a response — 22 months and no response from this minister.

In the letter, we asked the minister to provide free test kits to all residents in these areas so that they can check to see if their homes are safe. Last November, I asked the minister if she would commit to providing free radon test kits for these areas. She claimed that the government was providing free test kits; however, the claim was quickly shown to be untrue when people called Yukon Housing Corporation and were told that the minister was wrong.

Can the minister commit to providing these test kits and supports to those who need these mitigations?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to thank the member opposite for raising the issue around radon, because November is Radon Action Month and it is critical that we look at encouraging homeowners to test their homes. We have a campaign — we do every November — and that is to work with Yukoners.

With respect to radon kits — my understanding from the department is that we have free radon kits in our rural Yukon communities. The kits are available here in Whitehorse. Those are supported through, I believe, Home Hardware.

I can answer further questions should the member have further questions on that.

Ms. McLeod: I will just remind the minister that the question I asked last year was about whether her government would provide free test kits for these areas in the south of Whitehorse like Whitehorse Copper and Wolf Creek.

Last year, the government did testing of radon in daycares and day homes. On November 21, last year, I asked the minister whether there were any daycares or day homes that tested with high levels of radon that would require mitigation. In response, the minister confirmed that yes, there were. So we asked how many there were, and the minister was unable to say at the time. That was one year ago, so I am hoping that the minister can now provide an answer.

Can the minister now tell us how many daycares and day homes in the territory tested above the recommended safe levels of radon when her department went out and did the testing?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Certainly, the Department of Health and Social Services is keen to work with the daycares — the health and safety of our children is paramount in anything that we do. We are working with our licensed child care programs. That is a priority, so that is why we rolled out a new initiative and that is to look at considering the regulations requiring all licensed child care programs to have proof of radon tests with results below 200 becquerels per cubic meter. That is recommended by Health Canada.

As of August 22 this year, there was funding provided for radon mitigation currently to licensed programming. We will continue to look at the majority of licensed childcare centres in the Yukon and ensure that they are all tested and that remediation efforts are in effect, being implemented, and acted upon.

Ms. McLeod: Last year when we asked about the radon testing in daycares and day homes, the minister did confirm that her department was working with daycares and day homes to deal with mitigation. Her exact comments were: "... we are working with the daycares and the day homes that have been identified as exceeding the rating numbers that require mitigation."

At the time, we asked the minister if this meant that the government was providing day homes and daycares with financial support to cover the costs of these mitigations, and she was unable to answer the question at the time. The last response that the minister gave addressed some funding, but it was not clear where that was coming from.

Is the government providing financial support to daycares and day homes that tested above the recommended levels for radon? How many of these facilities that tested above recommended levels have now been successfully mitigated?

Hon. Ms. Frost: With respect to the specific numbers, as of the fall — at the end of August — we had 65 licensed childcare programs in the Yukon, of which 53 were in compliance. My understanding is that there are currently nine that have been mitigated. We will continue to look at testing some of the new daycare centres that are coming in.

We are also looking at retesting. We are always looking at working with the program areas and working with the daycare centres and childcare centres to support the obligations as defined under the national requirements. So yes, we are working with the childcare centres, and we will provide whatever supports we can, as defined. I indicated that we have provided \$22,332 in funding for radon mitigation to licensed programs.

Question re: Mineral staking

Mr. Kent: My question today is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources regarding mineral staking in the Yukon.

At this morning's Yukon Geoscience Forum, the Yukon Geological Survey said that we are at an 18-year low this past season in new claims that have been staked in the territory. As we discussed last week, there are approximately 170 different withdrawal orders in the territory, covering approximately 150,000 square kilometres or about 52 percent of the land mass of the Yukon. So more than half of the Yukon is off limits to prospectors searching for the next discovery that could generate wealth and prosperity for future generations of Yukoners.

Currently, the method for staking claims is often done using a process known as "free-entry" staking. Does the Liberal government support the free-entry system — yes or no?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Yes.

Mr. Kent: Of that 52 percent of land withdrawn from staking in the territory, a significant portion is part of the traditional territory of the Kaska — in the neighbourhood of 63,000 square kilometres, if I recall correctly.

Last week, I asked the minister to update this House on any progress toward lifting those withdrawals. In October of last year, the Premier told this House that, at the time, he anticipated the staking ban in Liard First Nation to be lifted by April 30, 2020. Can the minister or the Premier confirm if negotiations are on track for this staking ban to end by April 30, 2020?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I can confirm to the House that those conversations and negotiations are still underway and that the team at Aboriginal Relations continues to do that work. We continue to monitor and understand that it is a very significant part of the Yukon that could lead to some great potential. When you look at the work of the Yukon Geological Survey in southeast Yukon, the data shows that there is a tremendous amount of potential. As we look at commodities that are part of a green tech future — such as palladium, cobalt, and items like that — we are seeing anomalies pop up in other parts of the

Yukon, and I think that a lot of people would like to continue to do work.

It is important to note that the existing claims that are in southeast Yukon in that traditional territory continue to be worked on in the sense that some of the exploration projects — and we have Kudz Ze Kayah, which is moving through the environmental assessment process and is on track, looking to be one of the next newest mines in the Yukon as other mines reopen. I think that it's appropriate, as the member opposite has requested, that, as we have new information concerning that particular situation, we bring it to the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Kent: Again on the topic of staking withdrawals in Kaska territory — recently, it was reported that the Ross River Dena Council is working to create an indigenous protected area within their traditional lands. If it proceeds as planned, it will encompass 25,000 square kilometres, an area that includes significant historical mineral resources. The Kaska's vast traditional territory is home to many deposits like Selwyn and Kudz Ze Kaya, as the minister mentioned.

As Ross River is without a final self-government agreement under the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and its traditional territory overlaps with a number of settled Yukon First Nations, such a large area also has the potential to affect neighbouring First Nations and other established land use planning processes.

Has the government been asked to provide input or support for this proposed park? If so, what was their response?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, what has been asked of me here — it's an extremely complex set of questions. To be fair, I know the member opposite has spent some time dealing with these particular situations. Of course, the Ross River court cases happened a number of years ago and some of the responses that we talked about in earlier questions today is really the work that was required after those legal cases had been completed.

My prerogative is that you have to look — I have to seek guidance from the Minister of Justice on case law that exists in this country when it comes to nations that are governed under the *Indian Act* versus modern treaty. We continue to work through those complexities and conflicts when they arise. It can make things very difficult, but those are the cards that are dealt, and we want to respect those treaties because there is so much good that comes from them.

With that being said, on the land planning process, our prerogative is that the regional land planning process and sub-regional and local area planning is the way to go and not for other processes to happen in that particular area that could lead to more confusion.

Question re: Emergency room visits

Ms. White: In the year ending March 2019, the Yukon Hospital Corporation recorded over 32,500 emergency department visits to Whitehorse General Hospital alone, so that would be just about one visit for every Whitehorse citizen.

With the current family physician shortage across all of Yukon, we know that individuals requiring prescription updates, regular medical attention for chronic conditions such

as diabetes, or something as simple as a medical for a driver's licence — these people are left with the emergency department as their only option.

We know from previous reports that over 60 percent of visits to emergency departments are not emergencies. This is an inefficient use of the emergency department — the most expensive form of medical care for non-emergency issues and a huge health care cost.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell us what these non-emergency visits to the emergency department cost our health care system in 2018?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to start off by just speaking a bit about collaborative care and speaking about our approaches to collaborative care in rural Yukon communities.

Now, we have looked at the nurse practitioner, as a good example. We're going through a comprehensive review right now. We have incorporated the EMR supports to the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter. So, we are taking various measures in which to address the pressures that we are seeing at the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter in relation to Whitehorse General Hospital and such.

Now, we are working also on all of the hospitals. I do not have the specific numbers that the member opposite is requesting. I will endeavour to get that. But we are very proud of the work that we are doing with our clinicians and the excellent care they are providing to the emergency department.

Ms. White: Well, that's disappointing because I asked the same question this spring, although at that point in time, I didn't know it had been 32,500 visits to the emergency department. I just knew that there were a lot.

Emergency department visits are among the most expensive costs to our hospitals. We know that over 60 percent of emergency visits are not emergencies. For this minister to not be able to talk about those costs is disappointing.

Yukoners without family doctors do not have any real options when seeking medical care and attention. With family doctors not taking new patients, citizens are left to rely on whomever they can see at the emergency department or they can try their luck with a walk-in clinic.

This is not appropriate, nor is it the best use of our resources. The fact that this has been going on for years without a plan to address it is shocking.

Mr. Speaker, if the minister is unable to tell Yukoners how much the 60 percent of non-emergency emergency room visits are costing, can she tell us what concrete steps have been taken to remedy this issue?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I'm very proud of the work that the department is doing — the collaboration with Community Services as we look at reducing some of the pressures. I appreciate that the member opposite wants us to get her specific numbers, and that work is happening as we speak. Of course, we are looking to the comprehensive health review to look at cost drivers. At the same time, we are delivering initiatives in the city and in rural Yukon.

The efforts with the "find a doctor" program — the objective there is to eliminate pressures at the Whitehorse emergency unit. Now, we are looking at also the nurse

practitioner initiatives and working with the Yukon Medical Association. There are many, many initiatives happening right now. We have worked with the Whitehorse Referred Care Clinic as well.

So, we are looking at acquiring the numbers at the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter in relation to Whitehorse General Hospital. We just got some numbers recently and we will continue to track that. I would be happy to report back on that once we acquire accurate information — and that accuracy will come from the partners. That means, of course, that we need to do the due diligence. Of course, we want to track; of course, we want to quantify, but ultimately we want to ensure that Yukoners have access to the necessary services.

Ms. White: While we do appreciate the new online registry for family physicians, it doesn't begin to address the shortage of family doctors in the territory. In 2012, Yukon government passed the *Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act*, and this gave nurse practitioners the ability to work to their full scope in clinics, health centres, continuing care facilities, and hospitals.

Although we do appreciate that there is a nurse practitioner in Mayo, we would like to see it happen in other communities. Nurse practitioners can provide essential health care, renew prescriptions, refer for tests or procedures, and in some parts of Canada — notably, Ontario — there are nurse practitioner-led clinics that offer a collaborative approach to patient care. Here we have emergency departments flooded with non-emergency patients for unknown costs, and health care providers, including nurse practitioners, are not working to their full potential.

Will Yukon government consider creating nurse practitioner-led clinics in Yukon to better serve Yukoners for their health care needs?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to just maybe emphasize that Yukoners — should they require services at Whitehorse General Hospital's emergency department — should they require services then and there — we are not suggesting in any way that we should divert that. That pressure will always be there.

What we are doing for communities and accessibility to services across the Yukon, I think, is really essential. We have to look at what we already have, what is necessary, and what we need to do as we collaborate and we look at what hasn't been there for many, many years. Nurse practitioners are one initiative, and I'm very proud of that. I want to acknowledge the communities for stepping up and of course the Yukon Medical Association for participating in that collaborative effort. We will take that pilot initiative and we will look at its feasibility and potentially implement that throughout the Yukon.

The member opposite made some really great points about the nurse practitioners and what they are able to do in terms of scope of practice. So, we're really proud of that and we want to look at the possibility of integrating that through the health care centres across the Yukon.

Question re: Affordable housing

Ms. Hanson: Every MLA in this House has heard from Yukoners about the impact of the affordable housing crisis in Whitehorse and in communities around Yukon. This crisis is apparent in the enormous rise in both cost to buy and the lack of available, affordable residential lots.

At one time, the policy of Yukon governments was to develop and sell lots at development cost or market price, whichever was lower. Because this would not be a money-maker for government, it ensured that reasonable prices were passed on to buyers. For some reason, lost in time, this all changed when the policy was flipped to the higher of development cost or market price.

Mr. Speaker, would the minister agree that this government's decision to charge the higher market price rather than development cost means that Yukoners will continue to face ever-escalating costs for housing?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I think that there was something about which I will have to go back and check to be absolutely certain, but I don't believe that the policy is to charge the higher rate. I believe that the policy is to charge either of those. One of the reasons, as I understand it — or as the policy was explained to me — is because in our rural communities, sometimes the development charges are really much higher than what the fair market price would yield, so we wanted the lower one. But I will actually go back and confirm that.

One of the goals related to home ownership in the housing action plan is to provide a variety of different sized lots to private developers in municipalities to encourage the construction of smaller, more affordable homes. We saw a great example of that earlier this summer when we released a whole number of lots in Whistle Bend, which ranged from duplexes to townhouse lots. They were much, much smaller. I again will have to check on the numbers, but I believe that, for some of the smaller lots, the average price for that lot was in the neighbourhood of \$60,000.

We worked with the City of Whitehorse — the people who are doing the planning — and this was exactly — the design was to get more dense lots, again, with a range of prices in order to support affordability.

I appreciate the question. I think it's a very important question, and I'm happy to get up again and speak further to it.

Ms. Hanson: I think that, if the minister checks, he will find that it was \$58,000. It was per unit in a multi-unit lot. Currently in Whitehorse, the least expensive lot available is \$227,000, plus GST. Reviewing what is available in the communities makes it clear that lots are a little bit less expensive, but again, there are not many available.

With so few lots available in Whitehorse and the communities — especially single-dwelling residential lots — the consequence is higher prices and a higher return for government. Instead of lots priced according to the development costs, they go for market value. With demand for available lots exceeding supply, prices will only continue to rise.

Does this government believe that responsible government can and should have as an objective making sure that factors

under its control — such as the pace, supply, and price of land — for housing are done with a view to affordability?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The answer to the question is yes, we do believe that it is important. What I will note is that, in our first two years in government, we spent more in lot development — in other words, work to get more lots out — than in the previous four years. This year, we have increased that investment again. I am looking forward to the day when we actually get to the debate on that here in this Legislature in the supplementary budget.

It is incredibly important that we work to get those lots out, and I thank the member opposite for noting that it was \$58,000 per unit. Of course, they are for townhouses, Mr. Speaker, but ultimately, that will help bring the prices of those townhouses down, which will help to create affordability. We see housing as a spectrum. Lot development is a critical piece of that spectrum, and we are working to make sure that there are a range of sizes of lots available to Yukoners in order to try to keep the prices as low as possible.

Ms. Hanson: In a recent approach to making land available, the government tried a new tactic. This time, the government decided to sell residential lots to the highest bidder — in effect, an auction. Anyone could have predicted that this approach would see an even further increase in the price of lots. One lot went for \$23,000 over the government's minimum bid for an unserviced infill lot. In a housing market that is already overheated — due in no small part to the government's ad hoc approach to development and release of lots suitable for a range of affordable housing options — we echo an editorial comment from last June. Mr. Speaker, the question is: What justification is there for government-authored escalation of lot prices in the current environment, and does this government intend to continue down that path?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What we have been doing is investing heavily in lot development. The reason is, with the economy being so hot at this moment — this is one of the critical factors for us as a territory, the availability of lots and the affordability of housing in general — we agree with the member opposite that we absolutely need to invest. I would not call the work that the department has been doing “ad hoc” at all. In fact, what I have just said here in this Legislature is that, in the previous two years, they doubled their output, and this year, we will be doing even more than that.

What I want to say is that this is a critical factor. It is very important that we invest heavily in lot development. Our objective is to strike a fine balance in maintaining a healthy supply of lot inventory in both Whitehorse and rural communities while not adversely affecting the current market.

When considering the price of lots, we look at development costs and market values and base decisions on both the current market conditions and the cost of development and recovery.

Question re: Mineral staking

Mr. Cathers: Thursday in Question Period, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources told us he had worked very well with the Yukon Prospectors Association and went on to

talk about listening to Gary Lee, who is a member of that association and a well-respected Yukon prospector.

That was a surprising claim to hear him make since, that very day, Gary Lee was in our office asking us to raise an issue on his behalf that fell on deaf ears when he raised it with government. Mr. Lee asked us to raise this in the Legislature and to use his name. He has run into difficulty with the government not following the law and requiring work that the regulations say is not required.

As the minister himself acknowledged, Gary Lee is an expert in his field and well-aware of what the law says. In a letter, he explains the laws being broken by government. His letter states — quote: “Now we get to the 3rd law EMR is breaking.”

Can the minister explain why he did not fix the problem and why he is ignoring the very serious issue raised by this well-respected Yukoner?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I would like to thank the Member for Lake Laberge for bringing this forward. I'm always open to have a discussion with Mr. Lee or any of the members of the Yukon Prospectors Association.

I was wrong. It wasn't on the weekend; it was Friday afternoon that we had an opportunity to get together. To be very open to the Legislative Assembly, I'm not aware of this particular concern, but I will endeavour to find out exactly what the problem is. I respect the individual's perspective. I can't say if that is exactly accurate, but I will reach out and pull together an opportunity to get together.

But I think it is important to say: Whether there are times that the individual is not happy with me, I still respect their advice. I took Mr. Lee's advice on looking at how we could look at non-mechanized activity. A class zero was what was brought to this Assembly over the many, many years. That's work that we feel that we can get done. We'll be talking about it further.

Once again — absolute respect for him and the association — always tough conversations in this industry. Anybody across the way who has been a Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources would well know that. But you always have to respect the other view and work to come up with solutions.

Mr. Cathers: I do want to note for the minister that Gary Lee asked us to raise this in the House after he contacted government and got nowhere.

The minister has a duty to follow the law as well as to ensure that his department is following the law. According to the letter written by Mr. Lee, EMR failed to follow the law by refusing to process his application for renewal. As noted in his letter: “Under the *Quartz Act*, I can either renew the claim with assessment work or pay in lieu of before the lapse date.”

He explains how, by refusing to process his application and allowing the claim to lapse, the government is — and I quote: “... breaking the law!” He also states that “... EMR broke the second law. EMR presumed I was guilty of not doing my reclamation... They presumed me guilty without giving me a chance to prove my innocence.”

Can the minister please explain why the government has ignored Mr. Lee's serious concerns and has cancelled his claim

on Calder Creek even after Mr. Lee pointed out that the government was not following the law? Since the minister himself has acknowledged Mr. Lee's expertise, will he commit to take action on this issue?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: First of all, to the Assembly, I am not aware of this particular concern, but I have committed to looking into it.

The Member for Lake Laberge is very well aware that, when there have been constituent concerns that have come to his attention, we have worked together in a collaborative manner to solve those problems.

I get it — it's the Monday of the Geoscience Forum. It's a great time for some theatre and to try to throw some at me — and that's okay; I get it. I would just say that I am committed to finding out what the issue is and having discussions together, and coming up with collaborative solutions usually is the best way to solve these challenges and issues. I will, today, reach out to the department to find out what this situation is about, get their perspective, and follow up with Mr. Lee.

Once again, thank you for bringing it up. Part of the role is, of course, to ensure that we follow policy and regulation and — in my mind — come up with solutions for the problems that need to be solved.

Mr. Cathers: I do have to remind the minister that Mr. Lee contacted the government many times before he contacted us, and he himself asked us to raise this in the Legislative Assembly, and we committed that we would do that.

Legislation and regulations are binding on the Yukon government. They are put in place to protect the rights of citizens and to avoid people's legal rights being up to the whim of the government of the day. Mr. Lee has been in contact with the minister's department many times over the last six months and has explained in detail how the government is ignoring its own laws.

He has provided us with copies of letters that the government received from him, including one dated June 9, 2019, and one dated September 30, 2019. The minister has been aware of the problems, to the best of our understanding. He himself has acknowledged Gary Lee's expertise, but the letters from Mr. Lee point out that the government has deprived him of his legal rights and is ignoring the wording of the regulations, and they are not being acted on. The minister has an obligation to protect the legal rights of Yukon citizens. Will he agree to do the right thing and fix the problem?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: To be respectful to the member opposite — okay, I thank you for clarifying that there have been lots of conversations with the department and that it seemed as though it was a last resort to go to the opposition. That's the beauty of this system of the Legislative Assembly, in the fact that — we never want people to have to resort to going to an opposition member, but it is a way that it could be brought to the Assembly. It has been and I am now aware that there is an issue. I will do my best with working with the department to investigate this.

The member opposite said that I was well aware. I'm here being very open to my colleagues that this comes to me as something that has not been on my radar. We deal with a lot of issues. I will look into it. I do respect Mr. Lee's expertise. I'm not aware of exactly all the details, but I will dig into it. If the right thing is there to be done, then I will do it.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 6: Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009 — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 6, standing in the name of the Hon. Ms. McPhee.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that Bill No. 6, entitled *Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 6, entitled *Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: The House has had a thorough discussion and covered a significant amount of material in detail during the debate of this Bill No. 6. I would just like to take a few minutes to highlight the bill and its context before the vote.

As I mentioned at second reading and discussed during Committee of the Whole, the tabled amendments to the *Corrections Act, 2009* are critical in order to align Yukon Corrections with international best practices and minimum standards of care for those in custody.

With these proposed amendments, the Government of Yukon is taking steps to improve the legislative framework and policies that define and regulate segregation as well as restrictive confinement within our correctional system.

The Government of Yukon is not proposing to abolish segregation, Mr. Speaker, as segregation is a necessary tool that is used as a last resort to manage risk within the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. In order to ensure that segregation is used appropriately, the proposed amendments carefully differentiate between disciplinary and non-disciplinary circumstances. Further, the use of non-disciplinary segregation will be required to meet the criteria delineated under section 19.05 in Bill No. 6. Specifically, an inmate may only be placed in non-disciplinary segregation if the inmate poses a serious and immediate threat, the inmate poses a risk to a disciplinary process or criminal investigation, or the inmate himself or herself is at risk. In addition to meeting those criteria, the Correctional Centre must demonstrate and document that they have exhausted all other options to manage the inmate.

The amendments to the *Corrections Act, 2009* will entrench in legislation the requirement for Corrections to utilize the least restrictive measures for managing all individuals in the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. The amendments will set

specific circumstances for the use of segregation, provide external oversight for the use of segregation, prevent vulnerable persons from being placed and held in segregation, and enhance access to interventions, programs, and mental health care.

I would also like to note that the proposed amendments contain regulation-making authority that will allow government to reduce the timelines contained in the definitions, including the timeline for segregation if appropriate in the future.

Our government sees these amendments before us today as necessary changes that will ensure that Yukon's legislation provides for rehabilitation that works to reduce recidivism. Reducing the use of segregation and restrictive confinement will in turn improve conditions of imprisonment for inmates.

I would like to note, Mr. Speaker, that as part of the work done on Bill No. 6, the Department of Justice received support for these proposed amendments from the Correctional Investigator of Canada and from Mr. David Loukidelis, who was contracted and conducted an investigation into the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. They have recognized and conveyed that the reforms of segregation proposed in Bill No. 6 would set a new legal standard for our country and perhaps even internationally, specifically ending the practice of confining inmates for 22 hours or more a day without meaningful contact and for establishing prohibitions on the use of segregation with vulnerable persons and independent oversight of the process.

Mr. Speaker, the goal of Bill No. 6 is to ensure that inmates have access to the interventions, programs, and mental health care that they need to safely return to general population status and to make progress toward successful rehabilitation and reintegration. The changes will promote a safe correctional environment that focuses on and fosters individualized care by providing access to services for those inmates who must be managed with access to additional tools and services. The amendments will further improve the management of the Whitehorse Correctional Centre and enhance the conditions for people who are housed within that institution.

Mr. Speaker, the proposals set out in Bill No. 6 are forward-thinking. They are improvements very necessary to our *Corrections Act, 2009*, and they are forward-looking and leading-edge here in this country.

In conclusion, I request that the Members of the Legislature support the passing of Bill No. 6, *Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009*, as a means to ensure that Corrections provides a safe and secure environment conducive to inmate rehabilitation, staff safety, and the protection of the public.

Mr. Cathers: I will be very brief in speaking to this at third reading. We do understand where this legislation is coming from. We do continue, as well, in the Official Opposition, to have some outstanding questions about how government, with the passage of this, will take steps to ensure the safety of staff, other inmates, and those on remand if there is an issue with an inmate who may pose a risk to them through violent actions. We also recognize the importance of protecting

the rights and mental health of individuals in the Whitehorse Correctional Centre.

As well, we do have questions that the minister has still not answered about the capital and operation and maintenance costs associated with this legislation, since we have been advised that there will be renovations required and that there will be operational costs.

In conclusion, I would note that we appreciate the work that staff of the Whitehorse Correctional Centre do. We thank them for the work that they do. We know that it can be challenging at times, and we are confident that they do their best to do their jobs in a responsible and compassionate manner in the conduct of their duties.

Ms. Hanson: In rising to speak to Bill No. 6, I would like to say at the outset that we have, as the New Democratic Party, outlined in debate at various stages of discussion of this bill, outlined that we have had and do have serious reservations about Bill No. 6 and about how it demonstrates a selective approach that has been taken by this government to the Loukidelis report's recommendations. Those recommendations came out of the May 2018 independent inspector's report on the Whitehorse Correctional Centre.

A primary example was Mr. Loukidelis' reflection that Whitehorse Correctional Centre is designated as a hospital under applicable legislation and, as he said in his report, "No one interviewed believes this is appropriate, and the Supreme Court of Yukon has strongly recommended that WCC's status as a hospital be revoked." He said and he recommended that the government should immediately revoke that statutory designation regardless of what else they do in the other 39 recommendations in this report.

Mr. Speaker, the government chose not to follow that recommendation. At its core, Mr. Speaker, is the issue of whether the amended *Corrections Act, 2009* is window dressing — an attempt to indicate some institutional response to the comprehensive and detailed recommendations made in the independent inspector's report. It's unfortunate that the option of having Mr. Loukidelis appear before this Assembly during Committee of the Whole was not proffered. I say this because it may have alleviated any perception that government departments and institutions — the institutions involved — are resistant to change — a perception reinforced by a number of factors, including the initial response to the Loukidelis report by the Department of Justice in its August 2018 recommendation matrix in which the majority of the recommendations that were accepted by the government were process-related — forming committees, looking at this a bit more, thinking about it, et cetera — and those that dealt with the systemic issues that gave rise to, among others, the Nehass case, and ultimately the inspection report was labelled "under consideration".

Absent Mr. Loukidelis' presence as a witness, members of this Assembly were left to rely on third-hand reports of comments made by the author of the report.

Throughout Mr. Loukidelis' report, he was emphatic on matters with respect to segregation. We heard through third-

hand reports that he may be satisfied with his recommendation that at no time should there be in excess of 18 hours of segregated confinement. When we look at all of the various forms of confinement that are provided for — alternate housing, disciplinary restrictive confinement, disciplinary segregation, non-disciplinary restrictive confinement, non-disciplinary segregation, restrictive confinement — they all come back and are rolled into — because we are referred every time to look at the definition of “segregation”. Mr. Speaker, this is where our profound unease comes from — because that “segregation” means “subject to... any type of custody where an inmate’s association with other persons is significantly restricted for, unless a shorter time is prescribed, a period or periods that total, in a particular day, 22 hours or more.” Mr. Speaker, we are essentially talking about solitary confinement by another name.

As I indicated in Committee of the Whole on October 31, the critical issue that arises from the proposed amendments is the notion that segregation has moved — the concept or notion of segregation has moved from a place to a condition. When somebody is isolated, separated, or segregated or has restricted contact for 22 hours or more a day for periods of time — and I will get to that in a second — it is really difficult to see how that is a condition and not a place. It sounds to me like we are playing semantic games.

We indicated on October 24 — when we were debating this bill again — that this is a pretty difficult concept. What does it mean, and how will it look? What is the impact?

Mr. Speaker, I am not intending to reiterate my comments from October 31. I believe that we laid out in considerable detail the facts relating to the proposed amendments — those that are contrary to the recommendations of the Loukidelis report — and that, contrary to the recommendations of the Loukidelis report, the government has chosen to provide legislative approval for segregation that may be 22 hours or more per day and — word play aside — 22 hours-plus — that means 24 hours — for a legally sanctioned maximum of 15 days at a time, with the option for that to be extended to 60 days in a year broken up by five-day break periods.

We believe that this does not meet the spirit nor the intent of the recommendations in the Loukidelis inspection report.

We ask, Mr. Speaker, to keep in mind that these sanctions will apply to both individuals who have been sentenced to jail — or to the Whitehorse Correctional Centre — and those who have not — those who are at Whitehorse Correctional Centre on remand.

The amendments presented to this House are premised on the establishment of new regulations to guide the transformation from what looks like, on paper — the bill presented — a replication of previous Correctional Centre rules and policies. However, Mr. Speaker — and this is where it really is difficult because — as we have seen to date — there have been a number of significant amendments made or new legislation — not a number, there have been — I can cite five — pieces of legislation that have come forward, two of which are amendments and three of which are legislation, the

implementation of which cannot happen without regulations, and we are still waiting for those regulations.

So, we are being asked to believe — and the inmates, the families, and the communities in this territory are being asked to believe — that this transformation is going to occur sometime in the future. But we have not seen regulations put in place with the *Lobbyists Registration Act*, amendments made to *ATIPP*, the *Condominium Act, 2015*, the *Coroners Act*, the *Societies Act*, or the *Securities Act*.

All those pieces of legislation that we debated in this House are pieces of paper until the regulations are completed and the acts are therefore enacted — because you have the whole body of what is required to give them effect. To date, we have seen that this government has been slow to bring forward regulations, as I said, on any of the legislations or amendments to existing legislation passed by the 34th Legislature.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, when opposition MLAs were briefed on this legislation and we asked the question, the response was that there had not been a lot of consultation on the legislation. At the time of the briefing, it was not established how or with what form or when consultations on the regulation might occur. What we’re saying, in effect, is — we’ve had an interesting exercise in talking about what might be in another world, but what we don’t have is any clear message about how and when things will really change at Whitehorse Correctional Centre.

Absent the certitude that properly crafted regulations would bring to the stated objectives of these amendments to the *Corrections Act, 2009* and combined with the fact that, despite the recommendations made on the independent inspections report, this government has retained the practice of segregation that can exceed 22 hours a day, we are forced to vote against Bill No. 6 as proposed. We urge the minister to ensure that the process of developing regulations for the proposed amendments is done in an open manner, that best practices are openly considered — including the possibility of returning to this House with further amendments that more clearly line up to the principles of the *Corrections Act, 2009* — an act intended to govern a community corrections facility and not a super-max prison.

So, Mr. Speaker, as a matter of principle, as I said, I cannot and will not be voting in support of Bill No. 6.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on third reading of Bill No. 6?

If the member now speaks, she will close debate.

Does any other member wish to be heard?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I will just make a few comments in response to those made by the members opposite.

I certainly appreciate comments from the Member for Lake Laberge. Staff at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre are in fact experts in safety and in corrections. Their own safety and the safety of inmates are a top priority for their work every single day.

I can note that, with respect to the comments made by the Member for Whitehorse Centre, I’m woefully disappointed in

her serious reservations because I appreciate her point of view, that the report and the recommendations from Mr. Loukidelis — which I will speak about in a moment — are critical. They are the driving force in respect to this process and these changes that are contemplated by Bill No. 6.

She has heard me say that Mr. Loukidelis is in support of these. He certainly wasn't aware that the Third Party would be interested in having him here as a witness. That certainly could have been arranged, but no request came to us about that — or certainly not to me about that. Mr. Loukidelis was already here as a witness, Mr. Speaker, as you may recall, last year. All of the questions put to him were answered and welcomed both by him and by the Department of Justice and our government, because these are important changes that he has made recommendations about.

There is progress happening with respect to the recommendations made by Mr. Loukidelis — all 39 — or some people count 40 of them. There is an implementation working group that was struck almost immediately. They make quarterly reports in writing to the Deputy Minister of Justice. Those are put on the Justice website immediately upon their availability, and we will continue to do so. We spoke recently about having that work continue, but not without end. There needs to be a work plan finalized by the implementation working group so that the rest of the changes recommended can go forward.

What you and other Members of this House may recall, Mr. Speaker, is that when the implementation working group was struck, they were given one mandate and one mandate only, which was to make the recommendations happen and to figure out the best way to make those happen. They weren't given a long set of terms of reference. They weren't given those — they were given one job, which is the job they are working on. That work is underway. It continues to be underway. There are many changes — real changes — happening. We are not talking here about semantics. We have the Correctional Investigator of Canada and the author of this report both saying that this is progress, this is change — this is real change in Canada, and Yukon is leading the way.

The fact that the Third Party is unable to support that is very disappointing. I think it is more disappointing because I believe that their interest is in making progress, making things better at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre, and making progress for inmates there. Never have we talked about a maximum-security institution. What we are talking about here is individualized programs. We are talking about using segregation as a tool when necessary and as a last resort. We are talking about making sure that the last resort concept is put in legislation, where it does not exist now. We are talking about independent oversight. We are talking about putting independent oversight into the legislation where it currently does not exist.

This is all real progress — entrenching those concepts as well as a list of individuals who are often at risk who cannot, for any reason, ever be put in a segregation status. I think this is real progress; I believe it to be.

I share the concerns in the past about the way in which the Whitehorse Correctional Centre was implementing the

situation of dealing with inmates. I share the concerns about the *Corrections Act, 2009*, and we brought here changes that will make that piece of legislation better.

Unfortunately, with respect to the comments regarding regulations — the process requires us to have legislative authority to make regulations. I appreciate and I'm sure that the member opposite will not be surprised by the fact that I have said it here many, many times. We talk about it as a government; we talk about it as a Cabinet and as a caucus. The pieces of legislation — many, many pieces of legislation — real pieces of legislation that affect Yukoners — are not valid until the regulations come with them, and that work is being done diligently by members of the public service. I know, across departments, that the policy work and the work on regulations is being done on a daily basis and that — I don't disagree at all — those regulations must come forward. But in order to have the authority to make those regulations, we must bring a piece of legislation here. I thank the work of the individuals who work not only on the drafting of these pieces of legislation but the policy work that goes into it, the regulations that come after it, because I know how hard they are each working on this to make these laws real for Yukoners.

Change is underway, as I've said. I appreciate the — I'm not sure it's fair criticism, but I certainly respect the right of the member opposite to make it. We are not bringing forward here anything that looks like "window dressing". The experts in the field have seen this information — have seen this bill. They have recognized it to be valuable and they have recognized it to be real, positive change going forward and have recognized it to meet the international standard of the Mandela Rules, which currently no legislation in Canada meets.

I am proud of this piece of work. I am asking the members of this Legislative Assembly to support it.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. White: Disagree.

Ms. Hanson: Disagree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 16 yeas, two nays.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion for third reading of Bill No. 6 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 6 has passed this House.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: 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 (Mr. Hutton): Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before Committee is general debate on Bill No. 4, entitled *Act to Amend the Elections Act*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 4: *Act to Amend the Elections Act*

Chair: The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 4, entitled *Act to Amend the Elections Act*.

Is there any general debate?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I am extremely pleased today to speak in Committee on Bill No. 4, *Act to Amend the Elections Act*. I would like to introduce Maxwell Harvey, our Chief Electoral Officer, and also Lawrence Purdy, legal drafter. I thank them for their time and support here today.

I would also like to acknowledge specifically the work of Maxwell Harvey, Chief Electoral Officer of Elections Yukon, who recommended the amendments to Members' Services Board as part of the important ongoing work of Elections Yukon to review our elections process and to ensure that these proposed changes are well prepared and in place for the benefit of all Yukoners.

Again, I want to acknowledge the work of the individuals of Members' Services Board in reviewing the recommendations and developing the amendments that we are looking at here today. I appreciate the thoughtful comments and support of members during second reading as well.

As a brief summary, these proposed amendments are designed to strengthen our democracy and to ensure the

integrity of the elections process, access, and convenience and to support the foundations — the fundamentals and the basic rights — to vote in a democratic system. This will modernize Yukon's registration and voting processes and make them more accessible and convenient for Yukon voters.

The amendments are focused on three areas: (1) providing access to information needed by Elections Yukon to implement and operate the new permanent register of voters effectively; (2) aligning the voter registration process and timelines better with the new system, making it clearer for voters; and (3) increasing access to special ballots for all voters and making special ballot processes and timelines clearer and better aligned with the new register and processes through the election period.

As mentioned when I presented the bill in second reading, the transition from enumeration to a permanent register was provided for in the 2015 changes to the act. The whole point was to move from an in-person, door-to-door enumeration process — which is inefficient, labour-intensive, and very time-consuming — to a more modern and up-to-date system. Because it is an electronic database, the register can receive data from multiple sources and be continually updated as new information becomes available. That data is used to cross-check and to verify the accuracy of the information on the register.

There are two key amendments focused on improving the information available for the register. The first is to authorize direct information sharing between Elections Yukon and the public bodies, such as the Government of Yukon departments, without the requirement of individual voter consent. This would expand the sources of information that the Chief Electoral Officer may access for the register for electoral purposes. This would include Elections Yukon obtaining information from Yukon public bodies — such as the Department of Highways and Public Works, for example. This will allow Elections Yukon to directly obtain information from other public bodies, which is much more efficient. Electors will have the right to opt out of information sharing — versus the current opt-in process.

The second is to designate Yukon First Nations as electoral authorities under the act. Right now, Elections Canada and municipal governments are electoral authorities under the act, which allows them to share their voters lists and information with Elections Yukon to have them included in the official voters list. This allows voters who are registered to vote by one electoral authority to be registered to vote by another.

With new amendments, Yukon First Nations could make arrangements with Elections Yukon to share their voters list information to include it in the voter register in the same way that a municipal government can. These amendments are consistent with data-sharing best practices used across Canada to support the electoral process.

Yukoners' personal information will be used only for electoral purposes and specifically for the permanent register to create lists of voters that are used by election officials and candidates. Those lists of electors will only contain names and addresses. These changes will ensure more complete, accurate, and up-to-date registers and voters lists, meaning that more Yukoners will be registered to vote. This also ensures that their

information will be current and that the voting process at the polls will be a faster, more efficient process.

I want to talk a bit about registration processes and timelines too. The second key areas of amendments are to align the timelines for the voter registration and revision during the election period. This will provide for better consistency and integrity of the voters list that needs to be produced, as well as a more accessible registration process for voters. Changes will provide more opportunity and flexibility for voters to register or revise their information within and between election periods when applying for special ballots at advance polls on election day.

The amendments will allow voters to register or update their information online. It will extend the full revision period — including online, mail, e-mail, registration, and corrections — from day 19 to day 21 after the writ is issued in order to produce the revised list needed for advance polls, which will be on day 23 and day 24. The amendments will also provide for a full revision until day 21, as well as up to day 28 at the returning officer's office for special ballots at the advance polls and on polling day. It will also remove the current special revisions period, which is from day 20 to day 28 and which only allowed electors to add their own names. This provision is not necessary as voters can revise all of their information right up until election day at the polls.

One of the most significant changes in this package of amendments is aimed at expanding access to voting by special ballot to all Yukoners, with one clear deadline for applying. Special ballots allow more flexibility for persons who are not able to or do not wish to attend advance polls or regular polls on election day.

This is especially beneficial for Yukoners who work in remote locations for extended periods of time or who are travelling or studying out-of-territory. Currently, voting by special ballot is restricted to certain voters, and the process is confusing, with different application deadlines and special conditions. The amendments will open up special ballots as an option to any eligible voter and establish a single, consistent application date for anyone applying for a special ballot. This will be day 28 of the election period or the last Friday before election day — whichever is later.

The amendments will also establish two categories of special ballots — in-district and out-of-district. Anyone can vote by special ballot in or out of their voting district. For those voting by special ballot who might be outside of their district while they obtain their ballot, they could now move between districts and return a special ballot to Elections Yukon anytime before the close of the polls. Previously, a voter would need to return their ballot within their district by day 24 of the election period. Applications can be made in person, online, or by mail, and all special ballots can be returned right up to the close of the polls on election day. For the special ballot vote to be counted, electors can return their special ballot by mail or in person to their returning officer in their district or to the Chief Electoral Officer in Whitehorse. Special ballots, as for previous elections, cannot be accepted at the polling stations.

There are several additional amendments in the package to clarify and to improve special ballot processes, including to clarify that those in correctional centres and those in districts of less than 25 people — registered electors — must vote by special ballot. For small polling divisions required to vote by special ballot, the threshold will be set at 25 or fewer registered electors. If there are more than 25 registered electors in a community, a polling station will be provided.

As well, the amendments will work to further safeguard the secrecy of the remote voters by setting out the confidential process used by Elections Yukon for recording the vote.

Finally — this last one is very important — we continue to recognize the needs of rural voters here in Yukon. Our process and the *Elections Act* allow for voting by remote voters by special ballot by phone, unlike Elections Canada. With this flexibility, we will be able to provide rural Yukoners with more options. We saw this play out in the federal election, Mr. Speaker, in my riding.

I would like to sincerely thank, again, Mr. Harvey for his hard work, Members' Services Board for their diligence and cooperation on developing these amendments, and all members for their time and valuable contributions to the discussion around the act and the amendments again here today during second reading and when Mr. Harvey appeared as a witness last week. Taken together, this modest but important package of amendments that we have before us will bring the permanent register to life and improve the registration and voting process for Yukoners.

Again, I need to stress, Mr. Chair, the integrity of the electoral system and improved services in the voting process are what this package of amendments is focused on.

With that, I will cede the floor and field some questions from the opposition.

Mr. Cathers: The Premier's speech was largely repetitive; we have discussed this before. I would just note in speaking to this at Committee of the Whole that, while we believe that this legislation should be amended rather than proceeding in its current form, we know very well that the government is going to vote against that, so we would be wasting our time in doing that. In the interest of debating other matters, we will not go through the formality of proposing amendments that the government will vote against.

What I do note though is that the Premier and this Liberal government are breaking the tradition which has long been in effect in the Yukon of reaching an all-party agreement before proceeding with changes to the *Elections Act*. As the Premier knows very well, the last time the legislation was changed — I was then the Minister of Justice — we not only shared the text of the bill with all members of Members' Services Board, but we received their agreement. The Premier himself — the then-Leader of the Liberal Party — and the then-Leader of the NDP were right alongside the Premier in the press release announcing these changes had been agreed on. In fact, we went so far as to tell the then-Official Opposition and the then-Third Party that, if they did not support the bill, we would not even table it. So, this is a departure from that tradition of reaching an all-party agreement.

I would note that changes that are being undone in this legislation, including the changes around early voting for special ballots, are ones that the Premier supported last time, as did the New Democratic Party. They were well aware that those were proposed within the bill, as they went through those parts of the bill with the Chief Electoral Officer of the day and the legislative drafter.

Again, I do want to just put a few points on record before moving on with debate in Committee of the Whole, but I note that the Yukon Party has been clear that we believe that there should be a sincere attempt to reach an all-party agreement before changes are made to elections legislation or before an electoral reform process is embarked upon.

We note as well that we respect the views of the Chief Electoral Officer and note that we recognize that there's a philosophical difference between the current Chief Electoral Officer and the previous Chief Electoral Officer, since the last Chief Electoral Officer proposed the pre-writ special ballots that are currently contained in the law. We respect the views of both of those individuals, but as I stated previously, it is my view and the view of our caucus that democracy belongs to all Yukoners. It does not just belong to politicians or to bureaucrats, no matter how well-intended they may be. We believe that, if significant changes are being made to laws affecting either the manner in which people cast a ballot or their opportunity to vote, the people do have a right to be consulted and to have their views heard and for those views to be fairly considered.

As I've noted before, there are 206 people, according to the information from Elections Yukon, who made use of the early voting which is being eliminated by this legislation tabled by the Premier. Certainly, that could have materially affected the outcome of the last election, since I believe it was roughly 10 seats that were won by 60 or less votes. Of course, some members of the Premier's own Cabinet were elected by margins of 14 votes or I believe seven in another case. Again, this is about the principle around who democracy belongs to. We know that if we were to propose amendments, government would vote them down based on what they have said.

I also want to note that, if the public were consulted on the proposed changes to special ballots and supported it, we do not have a problem with the concept of it. But we do fundamentally believe that the public has a right to be consulted before this change is made and before a major change that reduces the ability to vote and that, last time, could have potentially disenfranchised 206 people.

Again, none of us in this Assembly, including the Premier and all members, are aware of how many of those 206 people would have found another way to cast a ballot, but the important thing is that there is only one party in this Legislative Assembly that is saying that we need to ask the people first.

I would note that, for the Liberal Party, which ironically ran on a campaign slogan of "Be Heard", their refusal to support our request for public consultation on the proposed changes is disappointing, and it's certainly not what Yukoners expected when they elected this Liberal government. I think it's fair to say that anyone who believes the Liberals' promise that

their government would be all about the public being heard would have expected that, if changes were made that could disenfranchise any voter, they would have the right to be heard from before those changes were made.

With that — unless there are further comments that require my response from across the floor — we recognize that the government is going to ram through these changes. It's just disappointing to see them fail to live up to their campaign commitments to the public and to choose to break the tradition of reaching all-party agreement on changes to elections law.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I think one place where we can agree to disagree is that there was long-standing practice from Members' Services Board when it came specifically to *Elections Act* amendments to have all-party consensus. The member opposite can break the confidence of those committees by talking about that process the one time, but, Mr. Chair, the Yukon Party opened up this act a few times in their mandate — several times, actually. What I would say would be a diversion from a former practice would be a consultation stage once the bill was being debated in the Legislative Assembly — or an opportunity at that time. I don't recall the Yukon Party offering up that consultation process in the past. I might be wrong on that, but I don't recall that. It certainly didn't happen when I was in the Legislative Assembly in opposition with Members' Services Board.

Again, it is great to get consensus on all matters that the Members' Services Board deliberates upon, but I do not recall a process or a procedure where we agreed that we would go forward with all-party consensus. It did happen in that case. I will agree with the member opposite that, when the previous amendments were being debated by the Members' Services Board, we did come to consensus, but one time does not basically determine that there was a long-standing practice.

Again, it's not a question from the member opposite — more of a criticism, which I will take — but at the same time, I think we will disagree that there was a long-standing practice there. I'm happy to answer any specific questions that the members opposite have to these amendments.

Mr. Cathers: I would point out to the Premier, as well, that the previous time the elections law was changed, in 2008, it also went forward with all-party support.

I do just have to mention — he was trying to suggest that I have breached the confidentiality of the Members' Services Board. The Premier knows that, in fact, the comments that he and the Government House Leader have made have breached confidentiality of that committee. I have been very careful, in speaking, in how I frame my statements and have simply noted that — when talking about Members' Services Board and the positions that we have put forward regarding this legislation — Yukoners can be confident that the Yukon Party's position, in this Legislative Assembly and behind closed doors, is consistent and that the positions that we take forward in committees — that we are not allowed to speak about because the government refuses to waive confidentiality — are consistent with the statements that we make in the Legislative Assembly.

Again, the Premier was elected after doing much to criticize the previous Yukon Party governments and promising to be more open and transparent, literally running on a campaign slogan of “Be Heard”. We provided the option and suggestion that this specific change that would reduce the opportunity for people to cast a special ballot should go out to public consultation first. There is no reason that this couldn’t have occurred, and the Premier instead is choosing to deflect and to suggest that some changes in the past weren’t consulted on, but I have to remind the Premier that those changes opened up people’s opportunities to vote. They increased people’s chance to cast a ballot, and there is a big difference between steps being taken to expand people’s right to vote versus narrowing their opportunity to cast a ballot. In the latter case, we will continue to argue — although the Premier is conveniently forgetting his own campaign commitments — that people fundamentally have a right to be heard on this issue before this change is enacted.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, the member opposite is not necessarily portraying these changes accurately. He is making it seem that, because we have changed the special ballots, now it is harder for people to cast their ballot, and that is just absolutely incorrect.

The member opposite is also making it seem that, based on the amendments that we are deliberating here in the Legislative Assembly, fewer people are going to vote in general with this new process. I think that Mr. Harvey did a spectacular job of identifying that, just by having the voter registration alone, thousands of Yukoners — not a few hundred, but thousands of Yukoners — now are going to be part of a permanent list, where we did not know if they were voting or if they were registered in the past. Special ballots will now be open to any Yukoner as opposed to specific Yukoners — that again increases the opportunity for voters — absolutely — especially the 200-some who the member keeps on referencing.

I am not going to spend a lot of time debating with the member opposite. I think that he’s wrong. The numbers speak for themselves when we take a look at all of the progressive changes that have happened in this legislation to allow thousands of people on a registered list. I believe that all of these systems that we are debating on the floor of the Legislative Assembly help the integrity of the list and therefore the integrity of the process. I will just keep it at that. The member opposite can criticize us on our platform commitments, but we believe that this particular bill and this particular legislation is a positive and progressive pathway forward for all Yukoners.

Mr. Cathers: The Premier can call it a “positive and progressive pathway”, but it is true that he doesn’t want Yukoners to have an opportunity to express their views on it before the House passes it into law.

The Premier can try to say that it is not reducing voting opportunities, but the legislation is quite clear. The provisions that were in effect in the last election, which allowed people to cast special ballots three months before the writ was dropped in the 2016 election — that early voting opportunity is being dropped. The Premier can try to say that reducing that window

isn’t a reduction, but it is. Fundamentally, as I have said before in this House, what is the harm in asking the public for their view on this legislation before it comes into effect?

Again, the Premier, I would expect, is going to spin and bluster and pretend that they are not breaking their campaign slogan of “Be Heard” by ramming through these changes, but Yukoners can judge for themselves and see the facts in black and white.

Ms. Hanson: I am happy to rise to speak to Bill No. 4, *Act to Amend the Elections Act*. At the outset, I want to thank the officials for being here, particularly Mr. Harvey.

Mr. Chair, I think the exchange that we just unfortunately had to bear witness to speaks to the absolute importance of having independent officers of the Legislative Assembly appear in the Legislative Assembly when we’re talking about things such as the amendments to the *Elections Act*, which really reflect the essence of democracy and all of our responsibilities as members of this Legislative Assembly.

Regardless of whether or not the process to get here came partially through a board of the Legislative Assembly that is made up of representatives of this Assembly, ultimately, the Chief Electoral Officer is responsible for the *Elections Act* that governs the activities not just of us as elected members, but us in seeking to become elected members and of the citizens — setting out the citizens’ rights and responsibilities with respect to participating in that fundamental process of elections in the Yukon.

Having had that opportunity to have the — what it does do is it takes away the perception that there’s an armament or whatever around what’s being proposed — because it’s a bill that’s tabled by government. In my view, having had that opportunity to question the Chief Electoral Officer, we were able to hear — he was able to speak on the merits and outstanding issues and to explain the rationale for some of the proposed changes and other related questions that were raised to him.

I think that it’s no surprise to most members of this Legislative Assembly that, when the review was done in the Legislative Assembly, having a minister there — it’s different because the person is speaking through the minister as opposed to speaking directly to that official who has charge of the bill ultimately and how it’s executed.

I would argue, Mr. Chair, that very few, if any, of the extant members of the previous Assembly would have thought that a government would hang around for five years and that the provision that was put in there for some reason about being able to vote by special ballot after the November of the fourth year. That was probably considered anomalous and considered by most of us as, “Really, that’s not going to happen.”

The notion that somebody would be voting a year in advance for something just runs, as I said before, contrary to the notion of an informed vote, which is the essence of the democratic process. Keeping in mind, Mr. Chair, that we also got rid of proxies — again, if people want to hang on to what was done in the past — well, that’s fine, but we don’t do proxies anymore. We agreed to that.

I think that the changes that have been recommended are important. The timing and the timeliness of getting this done cannot be overstated because there is a lot of work to be done regardless of when an election is called. We have heard from the Chief Electoral Officer about the significant amount of work that's ongoing now and that needs to be done in order to "be election-ready". At the same time — to run in parallel — we have these distinct — and I would argue limited in terms of the number — they're not limited in terms of scope, but limited in terms of number — amendments to the *Elections Act*. But we, as members of this Legislative Assembly, need to anticipate that there will be further changes coming and that we need to be ready to participate fully in that conversation.

We were quite happy to see these amendments go forward and that the necessary processes be put in place to give them effect so that the Chief Electoral Officer and his office are indeed ready for an election at any time.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you to the members opposite for their questions. Interestingly enough, as we talk about change and modernization — this is all about integrity. It's about increasing the options for Yukoners to vote, but it's also about the integrity of that process.

As the Member for Whitehorse Centre has said, proxies are no longer — this is the first year that we're not going to have those proxies. But at the same time, there is modernization as well.

This is also the first time that we have an online registry as a new option that provides a much more convenient process for Yukoners to ensure that they are registered to vote and that the information is accurate and up to date. Yukon Elections will be rolling out that new system and other improvements in the coming months to enable that online registration for new voters and for updating information of existing voters.

When we talk about where we are today in these modernizations, it's important to remember that the amendments are primarily focused on the implementation of that permanent register — which was established in 2015 under the previous government, but it wasn't fully operationalized at that time — and also worked to bring in these standardized processes across Canada.

It is interesting that, again, when that register was considered by a previous government, there wasn't a consultation process at that time, either. What does happen is — you know, you take a look at the review and preparation by Yukon Elections between elections — you take a look at all of the recommendations from the Chief Electoral Officer that is based upon countless hours of working with the returning officers, the political parties, and Yukoners in general.

I know, myself personally — being around the Elections Office in Dawson — lots of great opportunities for the electoral officers there to feed in from the public what they hear at those times. But, again, it is important to note the importance of these changes — the importance of modernizing them and the importance of also bringing us on speed with other jurisdictions in Canada.

So, again, thank you to the members opposite. We will see if there are any more questions.

Chair: Is there any further debate on Bill No. 4?

Hon. Mr. Silver: If not, I do think that it is important to just run through a few of the special ballot changes in general. I won't take a lot of time here, but it is just really important for Yukoners to know about these changes — especially about who can vote by special ballot. It is now available for all Yukoners to vote — and this is greatly expanding those options and provides more flexibility to Yukoners, as currently, only certain categories can vote by special ballot.

So, the question of: When can I get that special ballot — those will become available at the time of the writ being issued. This is the day that the election is called, and those special ballots are available until the Friday before the election, as we said, or the 28th day of the writ — whichever one is latest. Voters can apply for special ballots before the writ is issued; however, the ballot will not be provided to the voter until after the writ is issued.

So, I just want to clarify those new determinations.

Chair: Is there any further debate on Bill No. 4, entitled *Act to Amend the Elections Act*?

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

On Clause 1

Clause 1 agreed to

On Clause 2

Clause 2 agreed to

On Clause 3

Clause 3 agreed to

On Clause 4

Clause 4 agreed to

On Clause 5

Clause 5 agreed to

On Clause 6

Clause 6 agreed to

On Clause 7

Clause 7 agreed to

On Clause 8

Clause 8 agreed to

On Clause 9

Clause 9 agreed to

On Clause 10

Clause 10 agreed to

On Clause 11

Clause 11 agreed to

On Clause 12

Clause 12 agreed to

On Clause 13

Clause 13 agreed to

On Clause 14

Clause 14 agreed to

On Clause 15

Ms. Hanson: I just want to ask a clarification question. I believe that this section deals with remote electors. It is my understanding that Yukon has provisions to allow for remote voters to phone in or video in their vote and that they will not get a special ballot. Is that correct?

Hon. Mr. Silver: In a nutshell, yes. The voter must be on the registered list, but that phone call is enough so that we

don't have to send out a kit for a special ballot. As Members of the Legislative Assembly will remember, the phone call that came in — or the satellite conversation that happened with voters in Dawson City — with basically the Chief Electoral Officer bending over backwards to make sure that someone had the chance to vote — it was great to see a process where these two had a chance to exercise their democratic right, but we saw that the Canadian government said, “Well, no, we can't do that.”

What a great news story — for the work in this amendment — that special ballots are here which allow remote people to be able to make that phone call — and, I believe, in that case, it was a FaceTime conversation that actually determined the clarification of those voters through that process.

Clause 15 agreed to

On Clause 16

Clause 16 agreed to

On Clause 17

Ms. Hanson: I just have a question. Section 136 has been replaced, and section 136(1) says, “Any person may, before the end of the 21st day... apply for the inclusion of an elector in, the removal of a person...” So, what constraints are there in terms of “any person may” apply to see somebody's name removed from the electoral list?

Hon. Mr. Silver: This is, for example, if there is a deceased person on a list, and let's say that there is nobody in the Yukon who is a relative, but if there was somebody in the rest of Canada, that would be the “any person” consideration. Anybody can make the call and say, “We would like to have person X taken off of a list because they are deceased.” That's why it's “any person” as opposed to a Yukoner or that type of thing. Again, the due diligence is there, and the onus is on the Elections Office to make sure that these individuals have, in fact, passed, but that's why it is open to say, in this change, “any person”.

Clause 17 agreed to

Unanimous consent re deeming all remaining clauses and title of Bill No. 4 read and agreed to

Ms. White: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all remaining clauses and the title of Bill No. 4, entitled *Act to Amend the Elections Act*, read and agreed to.

Chair: Ms. White has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all remaining clauses and the title of Bill No. 4, entitled *Act to Amend the Elections Act*, read and agreed to.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

Clauses 18 to 24 deemed read and agreed to

On Title

Title agreed to

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Chair, I move that you report Bill No. 4, entitled *Act to Amend the Elections Act*, without amendment.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Silver that the Chair report Bill No. 4, entitled *Act to Amend the Elections Act*, without amendment.

Motion agreed to

Chair: The matter now before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 200: Second Appropriation Act 2019-20 — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Mr. Silver, you have eight minutes and 38 seconds.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will cede the floor to the member opposite.

Mr. Istchenko: I want to welcome the staff here today who will be aiding the Premier and those who are listening on the phone and will be providing some answers and also aiding the Premier.

My line of questioning here is going to be about the Yukon *Wildlife Act* proposed regulation change proposal that just came out this week. I want to start — when you look at it, there are a lot of pages here. I want to talk about the survey on surveymonkey.com on the proposed regulation changes. When you go to the survey and you first get to it, it tells you a bit about it. It says that, if you want to know more about the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, you can go to the website to find out about the board, and that this survey is “... your opportunity to be directly involved in the sustainable management and conservation of Yukon's fish and wildlife...”

It talks about when you need have your comments in, and it has to be by 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 8 — which is, I believe, less than a month away. If you want to learn about how the regulation change proposal timeline can be found, you can click here. Then you enter your name and then you head off to the survey.

Now, there is the index of proposals in the survey, which is one through — actually, there are 14 proposals and then some administrative changes. I will speak to many of these proposals here in a little bit. But you go through — so you tick all of those off — and if you don't know to tick all of those off because it's a little vague — you go to that, and if you don't tick all the boxes off and then you just click “end survey” and your comments — you miss out on a bunch of stuff. So, the surveys are a little bit jaded, I believe, that way. I guess one of the biggest things is, when you go to the survey and you go to the next question on it, it tells you what the proposal is, why the

change is proposed, and additional information to support this change. So, the additional information to support change number 1 — it's a one-liner. Then you get to comment and continue on to the next one.

Now, you can't do — I'll go previous here. You cannot be involved in — like it says, you get your comments in and you get to be helping and adapt its work and whatever — but you can't have that if you don't have any information. So, if you look at the first proposal — which is a moose regulation proposal — adaptive management, and it is proposal number 1 — it says a bunch of information in here. But the biggest question that most of the people want to know is — they want to know why and they want to look for the data.

So, I guess at a very high level — I'm going to get a little in-depth. Does the Premier believe that — for all of these recommendations — we have the data for Yukoners who fill out this survey — the correct amount of data for them to make a sound, correct decision — science-based decision — when I talk about data, I talk about surveys and the science — up-to-date surveys, survey numbers, the science behind it, traditional knowledge, and where the concerns come from — this is out there on the survey so that people can make a sound decision?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Yes, I do. But if the member opposite is noticing that there are some glitches in that system, then I appreciate the comments on the floor and I will make sure that the department reads over the Blues and has an opportunity to take a look to see if they are getting impartial engagement and, if so, look into it to see if there is something that we can do to make sure that — again, we have been doing a lot of engagements. This will be our 69th public engagement that we have done in the last three years — so, lots of engagement out there — a brand new website — always looking to make sure that the system is streamlined so that it reaches the most Yukoners possible.

Mr. Istchenko: So, in proposal 1, it says, "Moose Regulation Proposal — Adaptive Management of Moose in Yukon". Who has proposed the change? So, my questions are — and these are changes proposed by the department. The first one says, "Amending Wildlife Regulations enable Ministerial discretion to determine moose harvest by game management subzone or groups of subzones".

I have been asked a lot of questions since this survey came out on what this means. Does this mean now that the minister can determine moose harvest in game management subzones or groups of subzones without going through the regulation change proposal? Is that one of the reasons that this is being proposed?

Hon. Mr. Silver: So, again, as the member opposite knows, there is consultation happening as we speak. There were great conversations in Dawson just this weekend. We will be bound and determined by those recommendations that come out of that process.

In regard to the very specific question about ministerial control — if the member opposite can re-ask the question. I am not sure that I completely understand what part of that ministerial control he is worried about.

Mr. Istchenko: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the Premier for that.

So, what I'm getting at is — with this regulation change proposal, will this mean now that the minister can make changes to how we harvest moose and make changes to the *Wildlife Act* without going through the regulation change proposal process?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I will have to get back to the member opposite about that specific question.

Mr. Istchenko: Okay, I look forward to that. Some of the other proposals here — one of them is: "Enable threshold or registration hunts across Yukon". A threshold and a registration hunt are two different things. My question would be: Is he asking for which one is better from those people? Are we going to do both, or are we just going to do one? A threshold or a registration hunt are two different things. It says, "Enable threshold or registration hunts across the Yukon". Does it mean that one area might be a registration hunt and one area might be a threshold hunt? Or will it all be threshold or will it be both in one area?

Hon. Mr. Silver: In terms of going through every one of the questions on the engagement survey and asking very technical, specific questions about what we are trying to garner from that information — I think a better process would be, if the member opposite has specific questions to that process, he could send them all. I can't answer them on the floor of the Legislative Assembly. I didn't design the survey myself personally, yet, I would love to be able to answer the questions — maybe if he had a list of questions for the department on the specific questions and what their intent was on those questions.

Personally, as I look at these questions, I think that they are self-evident — what the questions are trying to get, which is an engagement from the communities to make sure that, when we are looking at sustainability issues, we are getting it right and engaging with all of the stakeholders and governments as well.

To ask me about the specific intent of questions from a survey from another department — it's hard for me to answer those questions on the floor of the Legislative Assembly other than to say that we are looking at proposed regulation changes that would allow greater responsiveness and flexibility when it comes to the management of our species. These questions are designed specifically to garner that information and some suggestions and recommendations from the community that this affects.

Mr. Istchenko: For the Premier, if you look through the proposals — the reason I am asking the questions — these are the questions that some of the people will be able to maybe get answered at the public meetings. There might just be a question that goes.

A citizen in Dawson might say, "Which one is it: threshold or registration?" The local chair of the resources council who is chairing that meeting and the management board members who are there say, "It sort of depends on what you guys say." Right? So, it goes forward. I understand that.

But the folks who are doing it online — not everybody goes to public meetings. Sometimes, for public meetings, the only way people show up is if we raffle off a chainsaw or

whatever. People are enthralled in their lives and they have kids and families, and a lot of those middle-aged folks take their kids to hockey or soccer and everything else and this is the last thing they want to go do, but they say, “Geez, I better fill out the survey really quick.” They go through it, but they don’t have a lot of information and data.

That’s why I’m saying that — and the next one on it says, “Enable ability to apply ORV restrictions to a subzone or group of subzones across Yukon”. We are doing a process for ORVs — this government is doing it right now. So, is this going to be a separate restriction, or will it follow the process the government is doing right now?

Hon. Mr. Silver: We haven’t been hearing a lot of complaints on the engagement process on the online service. The member opposite did present a hypothetical situation where yes, absolutely — in that case, I could see this being problematic. If the member opposite has some constituents or others who have voiced their concerns, the department is more than willing to engage with these concerned citizens to run through those specific questions, but for me to speculate as to what that concern is going to be — it’s hard for me to answer those specific questions on the floor of the Legislative Assembly.

Again, we will speak with the department and see if there have been some issues with impartial surveys or questions not responded to because people didn’t understand the full capacity of the question, and we will endeavour to get back to the member opposite to make sure that Yukoners who are trying to be involved in this process feel that they have given adequate information and also have received adequate information.

Mr. Istchenko: It would be interesting to find that out, because a “one-government approach” is what we hear quite a bit from the members across the way, but when they talk here about ORV restrictions to a subzone or subzones, there might be a two-government approach then, maybe. That’s what people are unsure about when they read the survey or they go to the public meetings.

It can’t always be the chair or the people who are chairing those meetings who have the information that the government holds. If you look for why the change is required, it says, “Currently, the challenges we face include known harvest rates in many Moose Management Units... to be at or above levels that are sustainable.” It says, “There is uncertainty in the level of total harvest and many First Nations have identified concerns over increasing hunting numbers in their traditional areas. We are also increasingly aware of the request to address issues of hunter congestion and... overharvest in areas where access is increasing.”

If you continue on through the proposal, the information that you get in this proposal 1 for you to get your decision — so you are the one who is helping with better moose populations — there are the 2016 science-based guidelines for management of moose in the Yukon, and they outline the principles required to effectively manage moose over the long term, and it is laid out in chapter 16 of the *Umbrella Final Agreement*. But there is not a lot of data in there. The only data that you see on this regulation change proposal is the 2018 harvest pattern reports

outlining increasing trends in moose harvest in recent years and human population in general in the Yukon. Other harvest trends include increasing resident moose seal purchases, but a slow decline in licensed harvests and resident success. So, we are bringing this proposal forward because we have data from 1995 to 2014, and it’s just on harvest numbers by licensed hunters.

In here, it says that they are “... engaging with First Nation governments through staff on a technical level and across the territory through the Yukon Forum.” So, you are engaging with them, which is wonderful. But we are not privy to those, and the people who are filling in the survey aren’t privy to finding out exactly the concerns the First Nations have, how we can help — there is no harvest data. They haven’t surveyed a lot of these areas. They haven’t been surveyed in a long time. So, how can I or even the Premier make a sound decision if he doesn’t have all the right information? If he doesn’t know that, over the past 20 years — you know, we survey every five years. If you look at the department’s budget — I could see that if they had gone out and done a survey and saw a decline in moose populations — the Premier probably can’t provide this on the floor of the House today, but I would like to see basically the past 20 years of surveys on moose in the Yukon and when they were done.

Quite often, we will have the department come and tell us that we need to change something and survey it, but we always ask, “What is your solution?” Nowhere in here is there a solution that discusses if there is enough food for the moose to eat — habitat. What about the predators? This is just one tool.

In here — quite a bit throughout this document — it goes on to say “tools in the toolbox”. But tools in the toolbox are only and always limiting hunting opportunities — no other tools where we will do habitat enhancement or ungulate enhancement. So, I guess, can the Premier commit to maybe putting a hold on some of this while we get some information?

There will be public meetings. There are public meetings in Dawson. When the public meetings come here, many Yukoners want to go and they’re going to ask for that. They’re going to say, “Where is the data to back this up? Where are your surveys?” I understand that you have all the licensed harvest and resident success harvesting moose from 1995 to 2014, but that’s all we have to go on. Is the population lower in the Mayo or Haines Junction area?

I’m just wondering what the Premier’s thoughts are on that — if he could make a decision. Could you make a really good decision as a hunter with the information that you’re getting right now?

Hon. Mr. Silver: This is exactly what we’re doing. We’re trying our best to make sure that, through consultation with fish and wildlife management boards or RRCs or stakeholder groups — that these individual groups and organizations and First Nations with traditional knowledge will all guide what we are doing. That’s what we’re emphasizing. We’re trying to get new management tools because it’s critical in everything that we do to make sure that we blend together the scientific data with traditional knowledge as well. I think that the department is doing an excellent job of that.

Mr. Chair, the member opposite knows that decisions are being made with partners, and this includes discussions on data analysis. This includes gathering information from all the hunters, as he says, and includes online surveying. But again, online surveying is one tool. There is much more going on here than the member opposite is making it seem. These questions — we don't believe that they're vague. We believe that they're well-thought-out from the department. But we will give his feedback to the people who drafted those questions.

We work really hard on the data and the data management with our partners and we're doing all that in good faith. It's extremely important. As the member opposite knows, when we're speaking about game management zones, we are talking about pressure areas. That's exactly what we're talking about. That's how we identify where these particular areas have more pressures — whether that be the food that is provided for those animals or the pressures from hunting. Data is required, and that's exactly what the department is doing. They are working on that and they are — I believe, more so than ever — being able to work through the Yukon Forum to continue with a traditional knowledge background as well.

Analysis and historical data were shared with the RRCs this weekend, for example, so there is information-sharing going on. I do believe that the community is getting the best possible information. Can it get better? It can always get better with more engagement and with more conversations.

We have to move to ensure that we take measures now. The member opposite wants us to pause on this — no. I think we are talking about some protected pressure areas that need leadership and need decisions to be made about them. That data is obtained through our permit hunt. It is incorporated into this data, and it helps us and our First Nation partners and hunters to have the best data possible. We are going to continue to move forward on the engagement process. We are going to continue to move forward on engaging with the boards and committees and the RRC to make sure that we have the best possible information that we can have for Yukoners.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the Premier for that. It says in here: "Information to support this change? (includes scientific, local, traditional knowledge)". That is key, and you get that at the local community level. It says in the document — and it's only three lines that we have to pretty much gather, read, and figure out how we're going to comment on it — in one of the paragraphs that: "Yukon government has been engaging with First Nations governments through staff on a technical level and across the territory through the Yukon Forum. State of current moose inventory work and harvest opportunities for both First Nations and licensed hunters are concerns frequently brought up to department and staff." We all hear it. "Yukon Forum is a joint working arrangement with Yukon First Nations governments in recognition that greater level of stewardship of the land also requires a full suite of information for decision meeting." But there is no information. There is no full suite of information.

I am just wondering: Is there is a document somewhere with this information that people can look at? Is there a document that is being provided at, for example, the meeting in

Dawson City? Was there a document provided with some information in it? It says that it "... requires a full suite of information for decision meeting." I totally agree — we need a full suite of information to make these decisions. So, I am just wondering if there is a document somewhere.

Hon. Mr. Silver: As the member opposite knows, with the Yukon Forum, those conversations are in camera, but at the same time, as we work with the working groups — the more than 16 working groups that are happening right now — and JSEC as well and the conversations happening there through the agenda — information does come out of those meetings, but we are not at the place right now where — if it hasn't been announced already from the fruits of the labours of the Yukon Forum, we're not at a place to share in those conversations, because that is two forms of government coming together and sharing that agenda and having fantastic conversations.

I would just say that having the Yukon Forum actually sit four times a year as opposed to it not sitting is generating an awful lot of conversation. It's generating a lot of goodwill, and it also allows us to work better, as government, to make sure that data is provided in this process. We're always taking into consideration our best way of taking historical data analysis, but also taking the current input, and as information becomes readily available, we share that. We don't hide it; we try our best to share that as quickly as we possibly can. But we have to make sure that we're working in partnership with the First Nation governments on those announcements and on sharing those documents.

Chapter 16 or chapter 11 or chapter 13 — these are where critical decisions are being made. Even the heritage act — chapter 16 as well — we want to make sure that these conversations are succinct, and we're doing it with partnerships. This current process — as we talk about harvest data and reporting, for example — I think that we're doing a lot of good work. This is all about a sustainable management system of our fish and our wildlife populations. I know that this is extremely important to the member opposite. It requires the information from a number of sources, and that includes everything from harvest data itself or, as he has mentioned, the Yukon Forum. There is also science-based knowledge; there are on-the-land observations; there is the First Nation perspective; there's traditional knowledge. There's a plethora of different inputs in which we are continuing dialogue.

Last December, we did release the *Licensed Harvest Trends in Yukon* report, and this report presents 35 years of licensed harvest data. There is lots of data out there. I can understand that the member opposite wants to know what's going on in the Yukon Forum conversations, but the fruits of those labours come out in different areas all the time when both levels of government are ready to use that information.

Harvest data from that 35 years, on six big game species in the Yukon — that's available on yukon.ca. That report helps us with seeing not only the data, but the trends in data over time — for example, the number of licensed hunters — those increases from 2007 to 2014 — and moose continuing to be the most popular species of harvest — this information we get from that particular reporting mechanism about mandatory hunting

reports submitted by licensed residents and also non-resident hunters as well as other surveys other than the one that the member opposite is referencing as well.

Again, we will continue to engage on a multitude of sources to make sure that we have the most accurate harvest data. But again, it is important to note that accurate harvest data is only one piece of that puzzle. We also rely on data from wildlife population inventories and information provided in collaboration with First Nations and other management partners — and that is what the conversations were continuing on about in Dawson. I will check in with the minister and her team to see what the next steps are from those meetings in Dawson. But again, sharing harvest data is one of the issues that continues. Those conversations are going to continue and information will come out as it is available.

Mr. Istchenko: So, the Premier just said that the Yukon Forum is two governments coming together to share ideas. Interesting — because sometimes there seems to be some non-government MLAs in the House who get to sit in on those.

But, anyway, staying with what the Premier just said — I agree 100 percent with what he just said. He talked about inventories, but again, here we go — it says, “Information to support this change? (includes scientific...)” Harvest data is just one piece, one tool in a toolbox, one piece, but if you don’t have any of the other from the regional biologists and surveys and numbers of actual animals — how many are we allotted per population? There is a percentage that is set out in the *Umbrella Final Agreement*. But if you have half of the information, it is pretty hard to make a decision. That is what I am getting at. The Premier, I think, alluded to that when he said, you know, we are going to get some more information when it comes to inventories and numbers. But that needs to be there up front so that people can see that.

I am going to move on to moose regulation proposal 2. One of the things that was brought to my attention and highlighted is: Why is the change proposed? It says here, “The 2013 South Canol moose survey identified licensed harvest alone appears to be at sustainable harvest level for this Moose Management Unit. Accounting for First Nations harvest within this MMU... suggests...” — the key word being “suggests” — “... the likelihood of harvest rates well above sustainable levels could place population in this unit at high risk of decline.”

So, again, it says, “As area has been surveyed once...” — when was it surveyed? — “... there is uncertainty in total harvest and no current information on population trend.”

How can we make a decision? The department is telling us that they don’t have any information — but make a decision. That doesn’t even make sense.

Can the Premier maybe give me some thoughts on that? You get a suggestion and could place a population in a high risk of decline, but it says here it was only surveyed once, and the total harvest — there’s not current information on population trends. How can I make a decision? Or how can you make a decision on this?

Hon. Mr. Silver: The member opposite — being a former minister of this department, I’m sure he shared the same frustrations at the time, because it’s not like we lost any

information. We would have had all the information he had at his disposal at that time, and now we’re trying our best to make sure that we continue down that path and provide more information, not less.

Mr. Istchenko: I actually believe that, if the department was going to bring some of these proposals — and they come from the department — and bring them forward, they would provide some acceptable data for people to look at — I’m just going to leave it at that.

The Premier did talk about First Nation harvest levels, estimates, and whatnot. Can he give me an update on — I guess it would be through the Yukon Forum — how that is going? When they do these processes, are they committed to give their harvest numbers so we can, like I said, get all the data — all the tools in the toolbox? How’s that work coming?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Out of respect for the First Nation governments who share the agenda of the Yukon Forum, I’m not going to talk about the agenda there. What I can talk about is that it’s a long process of repairing damaged relations, and in doing so — when we start talking about traditional knowledge, you can’t talk about a more sacred topic with First Nation governments than traditional knowledge. We must respect those governments to make sure that, as we have this conversation — which is to the benefit of all Yukoners — if our scientific knowledge includes the fact that traditional knowledge is scientific knowledge, and we need to do better to make sure that we’re engaging with our First Nation communities and governments — it’s the conversation of how we use that data, which is sacred, that is really a hard conversation. We have to respect the fact that we’re going to continue down the road of engaging.

I have had this conversation with leadership a few times. We have a good relationship with our First Nation partners, and they are very much part of our sustainable plan moving forward. But I’m going to respect those governments and the sanctity of those conversations at the Yukon Forum, which I honestly believe are healing damage. They are moving us forward on reconciliation.

I can see that the member opposite wants to hear more about those conversations, but with all due respect, I am going to continue to flow that information as it becomes readily available by both governments.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the Premier for that. I appreciate his comments.

I am going to move forward to proposal 3 — and I’m just going to get back to numbers again here because this is frustrating.

Proposal 3 is “Moose regulation proposal — Sustainable Harvest Management of Moose in the Sifton-Miners Range Moose Management Unit”. It says, “Information to support this change? (includes scientific, local, traditional knowledge)”. It says in here, “We conducted a late-winter survey of moose in the Sifton-Miners Range... in February 2011. The main purposes of this survey were to estimate the abundance, distribution, and age and sex composition...” — so they were doing a pretty in-depth survey. It says, “We attempted to count all moose in survey blocks covering approximately 31% of the

area. We saw a total of...” — I don’t need to put the numbers of moose, but this is what they saw. Then it goes on to talk about population estimates. Then it says, “Long term survey results suggest that moose numbers in the area declined between 1982 and 1993...” — and they have those results, which is good.

But if you read through the rest of it, it says, “... reported licensed harvest in the Sifton...” — in the range — “... is well above the 10% harvest guideline of 13.2 moose...” — for so many bulls in that area, and it doesn’t include the harvest by First Nations. But 2011 was the last time that they surveyed — and here we go again. That was eight years ago. Here we go again. Is that sufficient information for me to make a decision? Does the Premier believe that this is enough information for us to make a sound decision on this regulation change proposal?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I believe that the department, working with First Nations and other stakeholder partners, has done a great job of providing more information. In doing so, I think that those pursuits are producing fruit and actually helping us to sustain these populations into the future.

We keep on going back to: Is there enough information, or are the First Nations sharing enough data? To be quite frank, Mr. Chair, some First Nations do provide it, and some do not, and they do not intend to in the future. I don’t know what the member opposite wants us to say about that, but I need to respect that others provide it in good faith and they do it for collaboration.

It’s a complex issue, and the member opposite might be saying, “Is this enough information? Should we push the First Nation governments to provide more information?” This is going to remain a significant challenge in wildlife management. It was an issue when he was in government. It’s an issue where we’re trying to do our best to be respectful in our dialogue. I believe that we are doing a significantly good job in making sure that we have the most information that we could possibly share and, at the same time, engaging with all of our partners to make sure that we can do our best to manage these extremely important populations.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the Premier for that.

I’m going to move on to proposal 4, and one of the things it says in there under “What is the proposal?” is — and this is in the moose management unit in the Mayo area — “Change opening date of moose hunting season in the Mayo... from August 1st to September 1st to avoid an early-season rush of hunters harvesting moose at a time of year that is becoming increasingly warmer and therefore having a higher risk of meat spoilage.”

So, I’ve been an avid outdoorsman — and just about everybody I grew up with and many people are. The way I read this is that there is an issue in the Yukon with meat spoilage. If it is warm out in August, we don’t go hunting. We watch the weather, because you have to deal with the meat. Most Yukon hunters are very ethical, and they do care. We harvest because it feeds our families, and we like the 100-mile diet or to be able to eat food that we have harvested traditionally from our garden.

So, I’m just wondering if there is an issue with meat spoilage. Is there some documentation? Have there been a lot of charges lately under the *Wildlife Act* for meat spoilage in the Mayo area?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I think these comments are more based on the fact that there is a changing climate, as the member opposite mentioned. I don’t know of any increases in meat spoilage specifically in Mayo, but I can look into it and get back to the member opposite.

Mr. Istchenko: Just adding on to that, there is always going to be a bad apple out there in every group or anything. I think I remember six or seven years ago hearing about somebody getting charged because they didn’t take care of their meat. Good on them — you have to take care of your meat. It’s really important. That’s not how we’re supposed to treat our animals.

I want to move on but stay with this harvest management in Mayo. This proposal 4 says, “2017 survey of moose in Mayo ... indicated a declining trend in moose abundance during previous 11 years — 2017 population estimate in Mayo... survey area was about 2/3 of the 2006 estimate. Numbers of both bulls and cows declined during this period. Estimated number of bulls compared to number of cows has been...” less.

It says, “Local knowledge interviews ...” — and it’s great that we have the traditional knowledge. There’s a lot of good stuff in there, but in the other proposals, they actually have graphs that show a little bit in numbers, but for this proposal, they just have a map of the area that we’re talking about. I’m just wondering if the Premier could provide for me a copy of the 2017 survey and the 2006 survey or a link to where I can find those surveys so that I can share it with concerned residents and Yukoners who want to know where they can read up on this so that they can actually — so we do have some data. It’s from 2017, which is very recent, and that’s good. That is why this proposal is coming forward. This one kind of makes sense because we have some data, but can we get the data? Can we actually look at the survey?

They put a few high-level numbers in here on one page, but it’s pretty hard for a hunter who actually goes out on the land and maybe hunts in that area to see: “Okay, that could have been me” or “Yes, that makes sense” or whatever if you can’t actually see the survey. I am wondering if he can commit to the House to provide the 2017 survey and the 2006 survey — or if not, just the link to where we can find it. I am having a heck of a time with the new website. Sometimes pages are “404 — error” when I was trying earlier today.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I don’t have that information here in general debate of the supplementary budget, but we will look into that. You know, with the data that we provided — the member opposite already commented on this. You are not going to get consensus among hunters about the current status of moose populations — you’re not. We will do our best to make sure that we provide as much data as we possibly can, as we are all concerned about future harvesting opportunities. We will make sure that we get the most updated information, but there is always going to be push back from licensed hunters

wanting more evidence about the current situation. We hear that. The department is aware of that as well, but again, it will be hard to get consensus.

I know from the people who I have hunted with or people from Dawson or even people from Whitehorse coming up to different areas — even their anecdotal information is different from year to year. Some people will say that there are huge pressures in Hunker, and some will say that they don't see that at all.

Again, for a government to be able to provide as accurate information as possible, working with First Nation governments, that's our plan — to make sure that we can continue to provide great information and work with people who have been living on the land for thousands of years. Knowing traditional routes is so extremely important, as well, when we consider this data and these numbers.

Mr. Istchenko: The reason that I bring this up is because, when they go out and survey an area — like I read into the record a little bit about the previous area that they surveyed — that 31 percent was surveyed. Hunters who go in this area and want to comment on this area, if they don't know where they surveyed, that's a pretty big area. If you can look — so they surveyed the area where I go, and there's a decrease in moose populations, and they look at what time of the year they surveyed — because moose move, and all animals move. That's the reason why I'm asking for this — so people can look at it. A good example — and I have never been in the Mayo area, but guys who ask me about the Mayo area said, "Well, did they survey the area that most people travel and hunt in? Was it surveyed when the moose aren't there and the moose move to the high ground after the rut or whatever?" People just want to have that information so they can make a better decision.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Here in general debate on the supplementary budget, I don't have those background materials in front of me, but the member opposite knows, the Department of Environment knows, and the public servants therein know — there's lots of expertise. I'm definitely not necessarily assuming — I can bet dollars to donuts that they're not going to do a sample size of an area that doesn't make sense — for example, doing it in or outside of the rut, if those things are going to determine those numbers. Specific to sample sizes, 31 percent is a very substantial amount of space when you are talking mathematically about sample sizes.

I'm confident that the people who are developing these surveys, dealing with the data, and working on the land have the expertise and knowledge and knowhow to make sure that their numbers are statistically relevant.

Mr. Istchenko: Can the Premier commit to providing, at a later date, where we can find the surveys? I think that's what I had asked in my first question. There were two surveys. I tried to find them on the website — the new website and the old website — and I don't know where I can find them. Can the Premier provide a link or something to me or the Legislative Assembly?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I did already answer and I said that we will look into that to see if we can get that information for the member opposite. Sorry.

Mr. Istchenko: I am sorry if I missed that. Thanks to the Premier for that.

Proposal No. 5, then, moving on, is "Caribou regulation proposal — Enable sustainable management of the Hart River... area. There is a lot of stuff — threshold hunt, permit hunt, and different stuff. But one of the things that popped out to me right away was that the majority of that area — of the Hart River caribou — is in the Peel watershed. I am just wondering how the Peel watershed implementation of the plan is going to affect this proposal.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, as a government modernizes and changes policies — all of those things, I could anecdotally comment on what we think may happen, but what we know is going to be affected by land use planning is more certainty — certainty in the land use, certainty on who is where — but, again, I think it will be a positive effect on these surveys.

Mr. Istchenko: Can the Premier basically — how do I want to word this? I wonder if the Premier can elaborate a little bit. Can he commit to Yukoners who are filling out this survey — who are going to make recommendations on the regulations proposed for that — that, when the Peel watershed plan is implemented, it doesn't trump the changes to the regulations and hunting opportunities?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Maybe I will get the member opposite to elaborate. This is an engagement process here, whereas the Peel watershed land use plan is based upon the *Umbrella Final Agreement*.

What situation, exactly, is he talking about — with about one trumping another — a survey of recommendations compared to a land use planning process? If he could be more specific about what is his — maybe not necessarily — "fear", but what particular mechanism or part of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* — or specifically the Peel watershed land use plan — is he talking about or is he concerned about?

Mr. Istchenko: I guess what I was just getting at was, when the Peel watershed plan goes through to implementation, there will be changes to how everyone operates in the Peel watershed now.

I'm just wondering if any of those changes will affect this proposal, which is a hunting opportunity of the Hart River caribou. That's all that it is getting at. I know that the Premier probably doesn't have both plans in front of him, and we can't go like this — but that is just something that was brought to my attention and that I thought about. We can comment on this proposal, but then there could be an area that is just totally closed after the implementation of the watershed plan. It was almost like a highlight that there could be an issue.

Hon. Mr. Silver: As the member opposite knows, with protecting areas inside the Peel — on the one hand, what you will have is what I believe would be more of an opportunity for a flourishing of our species that are at risk, for one. Second, we are now in the process of implementing the Peel plan, and as we do, that engagement — if there are issues that come up or concerns that are specific to the hunting community that the member opposite knows of, then he can provide them for us. I know that the department is going to continue to engage with the RRCs and the fish and wildlife boards to address and

mitigate any issues that come up with new policies through the *Umbrella Final Agreement*.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the Premier for that.

Proposal 6 is the caribou regulation proposal also. It's the "... Nelchina Caribou Herd Adaptive Harvest Management" — and that is up in my area. Understandably so, the caribou haven't been there for a while, but this is if they do — it says, "Would enable a season when Nelchina caribou are present..." When the caribou are there, then there would be a season — but it says again in here that you would either be able to hunt them by "... threshold hunt, open (with season manipulation) or by permit hunt allocation..." Are we then asking those people who are commenting on this — whether it is by SurveyMonkey or at a public meeting — which one they would prefer?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I don't think it's a matter of which one they're picking. The board is the one that's doing the consultation here. I think the question is pretty straightforward as to what the engagement process is looking for.

Mr. Istchenko: For the Premier, it says it's going to "enable the season", and it says basically "... either by threshold hunt, open (with season manipulation)..." — which is probably dates; I don't know what it is. I'm trying to figure out what each one means — "... or by permit hunt..." So, throughout this whole process here and throughout this document, there is no information on — and most resident hunters understand the permit hunt allocation and how it works. It has been a hot topic over the last few years — but threshold hunt, not so much — and "open" but "with season manipulation" — what does that mean?

This is my point — we want to be able to make a sound decision and make a comment on this, but if you don't understand what a "threshold hunt" is, or what "season manipulation" is, how can you make that decision? There should be some more information on what the three of these actually mean so we can comment wholeheartedly on, you know, "I have an issue with the threshold hunt. I have always been a big fan of the permit hunt, so go with the permit hunt." But if you're not really understanding the threshold hunt — it goes on in the document with why the change is proposed. It talks a lot about how the herd is growing, and it goes back between two borders. It talks about the First Nation and community input and lots of other stuff, but it doesn't have just basically a threshold hunt — and you can probably look up "threshold hunt" or look up the word "manipulation" or "season manipulation" to see what that means, but it would be better if there was more information in there to make a sound decision.

I'm just wondering what the Premier's thoughts are on that.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Right on yukon.ca — you know, I mean, a simple search gives all that information for the member opposite. Anybody who is doing an online survey can — obviously, they can use either the yukon.ca portal or Google or others, but all those definitions — if you're going to be doing the survey, then you have the tools right in front of you to be able to figure that out.

Again, this is the board's process. Asking about some different tools for management of moose in different zones

instead of having — anyway, specific questions here — you know, we can provide this feedback to the board that the member opposite is giving us.

It's great feedback, but the board itself is the one that is going through this process. That's why I don't have the answers to the member opposite's questions as to specifically how these things are determined, but when it comes to knowing what a threshold hunt is — I did a quick search, and I can send the link for that search to the member opposite, but this is readily available information.

Mr. Istchenko: So, I think that to make a decision on whether — and I do understand that you can find that on the Internet and find out basically what a threshold hunt is.

The "open (with season manipulation)" — I'm not sure what that means, because it doesn't say. You can't find that on the Internet. "Permit hunt" — you can find that and how that works.

But in that area, there is one road. It's the Alaska Highway and it goes up there. Before when you used to be able to hunt, it was usually by snowmobiles in the winter, so it's going to make a big difference. If we knew the time of year that they are talking about — because, basically, it's pretty much a swamp and mountain permafrost through there, so a summer hunt is going to be virtually impossible. Most of the time — like they do with some of the other caribou herds that we're seeing today and where there is a hunting opportunity — people go up later in the season or go in the wintertime. So, that's just why I'm saying that if there was a little bit more explanation on the actual time that they would look at opening a herd, a guy could make some easier and better comments. I'll just leave that at that.

I'm going to move now to proposal 7, which is "Carnivore Regulation Proposal" — "Enable adaptive management of roadside hunting for Grizzly Bear". One of the things that it says in here is: "Why is the change proposed?" It says, "Regulation changes are required to create the mechanism by which harvest along the roadside could be limited where proposed and supported at the community level."

Can the Premier explain to me what it means to be supported at a community level? Who does this include? Which parts of the community does this include — to be supported at a community level?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, that would mean all members of the communities. I don't think that there is a part that wouldn't want to be a part of that process. I guess I'm not really understanding the member opposite's question.

Mr. Istchenko: What I'm getting at is support at the community level — supported by the First Nations, by the renewable resources councils, and by the community members through public engagement. One of the things that it says in here is, "Information to support this change? (includes..." — like it says in all the proposals — "... scientific, local, traditional knowledge)". It says in here, "... we proposed changes to enable currently open roadside harvest to be closed following demonstrated support for doing so at the community level." I'm looking for that data, basically, to move from having open roadside hunting to closed. Will that information be —

because there's nothing more in the proposal. I haven't had a chance to go to any of the public meetings because one was just held in Dawson and now they're starting. Will that information be there for the public to see so they can make a sound decision and comment on it?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, all that information would be provided by the local renewable resources councils that will be at those meetings.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the Premier for that.

When it comes to grizzly bears, grizzly bears in Canada have been documented. Scientific studies and reports, including status reports for species, are part of SARA and COSEWIC listing processes that are generally available on websites. You can find a lot of information on grizzly bears.

In the proposal, it says that it doesn't need to be elaborated on here.

My question, I guess, for the Premier would be: What data do we have? What numbers do we have? When is the last time that grizzly bears in the Yukon were surveyed, or have they been surveyed? Has there been a comprehensive survey of grizzly bears in the Yukon? I know that Parks Canada did a survey — started a survey — and it went 11 years, but I don't think it was finished in my riding. I'm just curious if the Department of Environment — for the Premier, they have surveyed what many Yukoners believe — but have they actually surveyed the grizzly bears to get some data so people can make sound decisions?

Hon. Mr. Silver: In partnership with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, there was a 60-day public engagement period that was held last year on a draft grizzly bear conservation plan. I think that a lot of the data that the member opposite is looking for would come from the fruits of that labour. In January 2019, the board recommended the draft plan to the Government of Yukon, and we recently finished the consultation with First Nations, the Inuvialuit, and transboundary aboriginal groups on this draft, and we're now in that process of finalizing the grizzly bear conservation plan.

Mr. Istchenko: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. I almost didn't recognize you — things have changed — way younger.

What I was asking for was when was the last time that the Department of Environment surveyed grizzly bear populations in the Yukon.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I don't have the dates as to when the last time was, but the numbers right now are that Yukon is home to an estimated 60,000 to 70,000 grizzly bears.

Mr. Istchenko: What are those estimates based on?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Not to be flippant, but they are based on data. The current processes are the same as when the member opposite was the Minister of Environment. It will be very similar processes to the department's endeavours at that time. We use our best guidelines and input from all stakeholders to get these numbers.

Again, back to the reasons for us having that conservation plan: it is for us to be able to look at these numbers and at the polarizing conversations about hunting and to make sure that we have a sustainable hunt that supports the plan. We use data, we use support from indigenous communities, we use anecdotal

information and also our councils and our boards that spend an awful lot of time collecting this type of information. So, it is very similar to when the member opposite was the minister.

Mr. Istchenko: I will move on to proposal 11 and, I believe, it is proposal 12. Proposal 11 is "Habitat Protection Area — Off-Road Vehicle restriction" and proposal 12 is "Surface Disturbance Thresholds in Critical Habitat for Species at Risk in Habitat Protection Areas". We know that they are established through chapter 10 of the *Umbrella Final Agreement*, and there are some awesome areas that they have picked. My question, I guess, would be: If you are going to deal with off-road vehicle restrictions or surface restrictions, are these off-road vehicle restrictions going to basically mimic some of the new off-road vehicle legislation, or will it be something completely different for the rest of the Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, you know, you have this survey that the member opposite is quoting from, being from the board, and again, a process with off-road vehicles being a government initiative from another separate department as well — we are going to allow the consultation stage of that particular initiative to guide and to determine those restrictions, regulations, et cetera.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the Premier for that.

I just want to talk a little bit about traplines. Can the Premier give me an update on work being done on trapline compensation?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I don't have anything new to inform the member opposite about that isn't already currently available on the website. I can understand the member opposite's interest. There have been a lot of topical news broadcasts — international broadcasts — about the pressures on the industry.

Again, we support the industry. But I don't have anything new. If there is anything specific that the member opposite is looking for, then maybe he can ask me in a supplementary.

Mr. Istchenko: Nothing really new to report. I am just wondering — like I said, again, because we are not really privy to the conversations at the Yukon Forum. I know that trapline compensation, from a lot of trappers in my area — with the forest industry and with the growing population — lots coming out and stuff like that — it was always a concern; it was always a topic of conversation with previous governments. I am just wondering if that is a topic of conversation, I guess, as one of the priorities with the First Nations and government-to-government relations?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, as the member opposite mentioned, from his time to now, in the department, traplines are being managed through local RRCs and First Nations as well — nothing new to report necessarily at this time — but again, no different from when he was in this role.

Mr. Istchenko: There are some administrative changes, and there are a lot of good administrative changes. They are making it easier for trappers. I am an active trapper. Back when I was the minister, I placed third in the trappers competition in Dawson City on setting traps up. A good friend, Ryan Sealy, was about 18 seconds ahead of me.

I have a question about when it comes to generic seals, online registration of seals, and e-licensing. Like I said earlier

— and I think the Premier and I talked about how great online services are — and I think there is a bit of an issue with hunters not being able to do their hunting reports online, like I said before. Can he just confirm — in “Proposed Process for Purchasing Seals”, it says, “Hunters may renew or update hunting license by registering seals on their Environment ID account, pay appropriate seal fee + complete required administrative process determined by Minister to validate seal, and hunting license...” through that. Will the trapper then be able to basically just do the majority of the stuff online, or will he still have to go in and take all of those seals to the CO’s office and have them written out and inspected, or is this to get away from that and to actually have it more online?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I am going to have to get back to the member opposite about that information as far as the intent from the new modernization of the policy.

Mr. Istchenko: E-services started with the previous government, and a lot of it started when I was Minister of Environment. That is such positive — it’s time to get with the program in the 20th century. When it comes to that, you would think that your average trapper — if you have a look at some of them — wasn’t too tech savvy, but they actually are pretty tech savvy. They can do stuff like that, so I think that’s a good thing.

I think that one of my last questions — and then I will turn it over to my fellow colleague to ask some questions as we move on here — is about the “... hunter education requirement for trapping concession holders...” I think this is a key thing. It says in the proposal here, “Environment Yukon is proposing the removal of requirement for Yukon hunting license eligibility for trapping concession applicants in subsection...” — blah, blah — “... of the Trapping Regulation.” For Hansard, subsection 6(1)(d) — because I know that Hansard likes things to be — they will just come back and ask me, and I’ll be like, “I don’t know what ‘blah, blah’ is of the trapping regulations.”

“Appropriate hunter education training is an eligibility requirement for big game hunting license holders” — which we get. “Applicants such as First Nations beneficiaries who aren’t subject to licensing should not be prevented from obtaining a Yukon trapping...” licence.

My question is: Will this also apply to just all our youth, basically, who want to go trapping? They don’t have to get a Yukon hunting licence requirement to go get a licence, or would youth just be able to go and trap under an assistant — because it’s a little vague in here. It might be hard — the Premier might have to get back to me too, but it’s something that we have heard a lot — I’ve heard a lot over the years — that if we’re doing administrative changes, it would be nice if youth — because I spend a lot of time with youth, and we’re out on a trapline. Unless they have the actual trappers course — like a hunting licence — they’re not allowed to partake in anything to do with trapping, so how do we — it’s just something that needs to be updated.

I’m hoping that this administrative change is the one that’s going to fix it, because then we can go out with our youth, our Junior Rangers who we do a lot with and they can actually touch the snares and traps — because right now, they can’t; they can just watch. You can’t rebuild an engine if you’ve never

had a 9/16 wrench in your hand and done some of that stuff. I’m just wondering if the Premier can comment on that or get back to me with information.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Whether it’s our intent, as a government, to move toward online and streamlining those processes or other recommendations from the member opposite on youth and permitting — all good recommendations. I don’t have a definitive answer for him right now, although I will comment that, sometimes, I do — as far as his “blah, blah, blah” comment, sometimes I search the Blues just to make sure that Hansard doesn’t write that where I’m speaking — or “yada, yada, yada”, for example.

I don’t have that information for the member opposite right here. But again, all of this is to say that the board and the engagement that they’re working on right now — and also the departments — they are trying to modernize as best as they possibly can.

Mr. Istchenko: My final comments here are that I do really appreciate the hard work that’s done in those departments for modernizing when it comes to e-services — and with the new website, it’s challenging, but those people who are working to try to make it work should be commended.

Just a final comment — and maybe the Premier can add to it. I started doing the surveys on SurveyMonkey. The Premier has probably heard — and just about every MLA has heard — about issues with the surveys and how there is maybe not enough information on there or maybe there are jaded questions. So, for the Premier and his caucus, are they taking some of these concerns that we would bring up in the House during Question Period — and/or just constituents in every riding writing in complaining about how the survey process is done — are they actually taking that and looking at changing how they do surveys to adapt, I guess, from constructive criticism?

On that, I would like to thank the staff who are here today and everyone else mentioned in the Premier’s first comments.

Hon. Mr. Silver: In general, I would say that our government prioritizes connecting and engaging with Yukoners so that those policies and legislative decisions that we make represent their views. That is fundamental to this government. We believe that Yukoners provide valuable insight and that the time that we take to gather their input leads us to better overall outcomes.

I am very proud of the work done through the Executive Council Office and the whole-of-government approach when it comes to our commitment to better and more meaningful public engagement, because Yukoners deserve to be heard on the issues that matter to them.

I believe that our engagement process does well. I don’t think that it’s flawed. I believe that we are doing much more engagement than ever before. Since 2017, citizens have participated in, I believe, 69 public engagements from the Yukon government. Recently, we completed a public engagement on the Yukon parks strategy, on the *Whitehorse and Southern Lakes Forest Resources Management Plan*, and we have our climate strategy out there.

Again, there are all of these opportunities to ensure that Yukoners have their way to be engaged in those surveys. This particular survey that the member opposite is talking about is being conducted by the board itself, which is different from our engagement process, but we believe that the government and the boards — when we get out and engage, we are using the best tools that we have at our disposal and will continue to engage with Yukoners.

Mr. Cathers: I am pleased to rise today and take off where my colleague left off. I would just note that, again, the Premier repeatedly dismisses the concerns that my colleague, the Member for Kluane, brought to his attention, that I have raised, and that others of our caucus have raised. Surely, the government is hearing the same concerns that we are from Yukoners about the format of the surveys, which we hear regularly.

People are concerned that the questions are biased. There is often not a lot of detail in terms of what government is actually considering, and people have also criticized that it is effectively like a referendum where you can vote as many times as you like — that government is seeming to be making decisions in many cases on the basis of the percentage of support for a particular question, but we know — and the Premier has not been able to provide any credible argument against the fact — that, even if multiple responses from the same person are intended to be filtered out by IP address, since there is no request for someone to put their name down — and names previously, as the Premier will know, were protected by ATIPP. But since there is no attempt to determine if you are dealing with an individual person, it is completely possible for somebody who has multiple devices — as many people do, including every member of the Liberal Cabinet — to fill out that survey multiple times, and there is really no way of tracking those duplicate, triplicate, or perhaps even more — in the order of five times that someone could potentially comment without actually being able to track it.

The fact that the Premier doesn't seem to get that this is an issue is concerning. It is also something that I have heard from Yukoners who are concerned that, in a format where, if surveys are largely being used as the basis for a decision, it ignores the fact that people who are more directly affected by a particular policy change or question should potentially have their voices given a little more weight.

If someone who doesn't really understand an issue and is simply commenting because one of the questions is providing their off-the-cuff thoughts, that is certainly not as useful or, I would argue, important as someone whose life or livelihood is deeply and directly affected by a proposal and who may have thoughts and well-considered views on the matter that they wish to express. To move forward with a policy where effectively the people who are most affected by something are potentially sidelined and overwhelmed by people who are not as directly affected or as well-informed is just not a credible way to do public policy development. I would encourage the government to reconsider their approach. I'm sure that we'll hear another dismissal from the Premier.

I'm going to move on to another area. That is in terms of — earlier today, I brought forward an issue that a long-time Yukoner had asked us to raise at this Assembly after his letters to the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources about an issue that he identified and that he firmly believed — and it seems to us that he is correct — that government was not following the law as it pertained to his quartz claims.

Another issue that we've heard from placer miners and quartz miners as well as people dealing with land applications is that government is not always following the legally mandated timelines for issuing a decision document. As the Premier knows or should know, under the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act*, in many areas, there are very clear and legislated timelines for things including that government is limited in how long it has to issue a decision document of the decision body, and we're hearing multiple complaints from people that government is ignoring that legally mandated timeline and often issuing the decision document outside that process.

Can the Premier tell us just how many times within this government's mandate — broken down by year, so for the last calendar year — that government has failed to follow the legally mandated timelines for issuing a decision document under YESAB?

Does the Premier have any explanation of how he can justify that this is anything other than a case of government just choosing to ignore the law?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I will do my best to just avoid all of the rhetoric, personal attacks, and all that other stuff and just try to get to some questions of importance to Yukoners — if I can cede that away from all the rest of it.

The bottom line is that we are following timelines. They are only extended to allow for completion of meaningful Crown consultations as required under the law.

Mr. Cathers: Asking the government about whether it's following the law is not a personal attack. It is in fact our obligation as MLAs, when we are advised that the government has not been following the law, to bring up those changes.

The Premier said that when they are not following the legally mandated timelines under YESAB, it's because of Crown consultation being required with First Nations. We agree and acknowledge that there are obligations of the government at certain stages with regard to any development applications to consult with First Nations, but I would challenge the Premier to point to anywhere in the law — in the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* — that allows the government to do what it has been doing. If the Premier thinks I am wrong, I would challenge him to tell us what clause of the act allows the government to do what it has been doing. It appears to us — and it certainly appears to industry — that government is simply choosing to ignore federally legislated timelines.

Hon. Mr. Silver: It's very interesting, coming from the member opposite — talking about ignoring when it comes to the mining industry. What we won't do is ignore the First Nation governments when it comes to the mining industry. The previous government got into a lot of trouble for doing that.

One only needs to look at Bill S-6 and the members opposite, with a five-year review of YESAA — which took five years, which was not necessarily the intention of a five-year review — but to unilaterally decide that they know best about four amendments and not, in good faith, having those conversations with First Nations, self-governing First Nations, and First Nations in general. To be lectured on the floor of the Legislative Assembly by the member opposite on policy when it comes to mining — under the last five years of the Yukon Party it didn't work out so very well for them. We saw a reduction in mining. So again, I don't necessarily think that Yukoners want us to take direction from the Yukon Party as far as how we engage with the mining industry or First Nation governments.

Again, we have modern treaties, and these treaties need to be upheld, and we're going to continue with that process of making sure that we engage with the First Nation communities and look at how we best approach regulatory process improvements.

I know from the conversations I have had this weekend that the industry understands. They understand the history that got us to the place where a lot of the Yukon is held up, where you can't do staking. The members opposite know exactly why that is. One only needs to look at the Ross River Dena Council court case, which got us to a place where the previous government made some decisions that they shouldn't have, and in that case, the law — the law system, the court system — told them that they were wrong.

My Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources had a huge task in front of him from the first year on. How do we get this industry back on track? How do we repair the damage of a government that thought that they knew best and that they could just go and unilaterally make decisions? We saw it with the Peel plan, as well — a government that, during an election campaign, decided that we can't talk about what our opinion is even though they had made their opinion up. After the election, all of a sudden, a new plan surfaces — with the Member for Lake Laberge's signature all over it. It's just so interesting to now be lectured on the floor of the Legislative Assembly by the member opposite about how we should move forward on improvements to the regulatory system.

On this side of the House, Mr. Deputy Chair, we recognize that a healthy and active mineral sector is a driving sector of our community and our economy. We're so proud to have the — I'll go ahead and say the "legendary" mining individuals and companies — junior companies and support to the majors as well from people who have decades and decades of opportunities and experience within the industry. Our government will continue to strive to ensure that mineral exploration and mining projects are permitted to proceed in a timely manner while ensuring high environmental standards and aligning with Yukon First Nations and Yukoners' interests.

The member opposite made it seem like today the minister was avoiding the question, but the member opposite was referencing concerns without actually telling us what those specific concerns were. He started talking about the law and breaking the law and yet didn't talk to us about the content of the letter that he was using as a prop.

As the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources continues to engage with the prospectors or different organizations and agencies, they have never shied away from dialogue. They have never shied away from times when there is a divergence of opinions in these particular initiatives. But I think most people out there know that we had a big task of turning around the engagement process — turning around and starting again on how we improve the regulatory system. The MLII process alone — my goodness, what a mess that was left in. So, I'm really proud of the department and the Department of Environment as well and the minister therein.

To have the minister from Vuntut Gwitchin — from Old Crow — at the table when she has spent decades of time working with First Nation governments — what a benefit to the industry to have an opportunity to really get down to the real questions and then to be able to, from there, build up support within the First Nation communities so that we can go back to the table and say — something like a 49.1 in concept, we agree, is a good concept. But we disagreed with how the previous government decided to just try to ram that through. So, something that really could have — if the approach was different in the past — been a policy that continued — what we're seeing is: How do we now repair that damage and start again and get to a place where those relationships are repaired? So, we do that all the time.

For example, the Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations have established a collaborative process through the mining memorandum of understanding to explore and to advance improvements in all aspects of mineral exploration and development. This has been a lot of work; it has been a lot of conversations and meetings. When we talk to the industry and they talk about "How do we engage? We want to engage" — we see a lot of very progressive companies and individuals who really want to get in and agree that more conversations with First Nations are extremely important. I know that they are a bit frustrated that the conversations may seem slow, but they also understand what was up in front of us, and the reason why this process has been so slow is because we have to start from a place to build the respect back up and build those relationships up.

With the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act*, we have an oversight group therein as well. That continues to move forward on shared priorities. Industry has identified amendments and renewals of previously assessed projects and timelines for assessment and decision-making as top priorities, and we are listening to the industry.

The minister — I don't think he slept this weekend — was basically going from meeting to meeting engaging and making sure that he listened to the concerns of industry. There were lots of chiefs and councils. It was great to see their participation at the Geoscience Forum all weekend long, starting with the opening ceremony comments all the way through. I am sure that we will see some of those folks there tonight at the awards as well. It is really great to see more of a presence of First Nation governments at the Geoscience Forum, at Roundup, and at different industry opportunities.

When it comes to these oversight groups or the memorandum of understanding — this is real work. This is real work that, at the end of the day, we are moving toward these improvements. We have environmental stewardship at hand. We have the connections with the First Nation governments, which because of modern treaties, are at the table and should always have been at the table, and now they are.

In the interim, our government is exploring how to clarify the requirements for amendments and renewals for projects within current legislation, and we will be engaging with other regulators on a streamlined approach. That is extremely important to us here in the Liberal government.

I know that it wasn't as much of an issue in the past, but we really believe that these conversations need to build those foundations. Another area where we're seeing a lot of industry buy-in — and I saw it again just at the placer miners luncheon when I came in and gave some comments there, but just before me were the folks from the mineral development strategy — individuals with an excellent background and understanding of industry. I think this is another amazing initiative that is bringing Yukoners together over our mining industry, which is such a crucial industry for our communities.

We're working with Yukon First Nations within the final agreements to approve a recommendation from the mining memorandum of understanding main table to develop the Yukon-wide mineral development strategy. What I'm hearing from industry is that this is a good initiative.

As part of that process, our government and Yukon First Nations with final agreements have established an independent panel as directed through the mining memorandum of understanding appeal process. That panel was launched in September and is working to engage with First Nations, with industry organizations — like I just commented on, and their presence was seen all weekend at Geoscience and will continue, I imagine, as we go through the next few days — and with key stakeholders and interested Yukoners — their doors are open for all engagement — and also with the Yukon government regarding mineral development in the Yukon. These are the processes that we're going to engage in to continue down that road to make sure that we have a vibrant industry here in the Yukon.

That independent panel — and it's really important to point out that this is an independent panel — will provide a balanced and transparent process for the development of this strategy and ensure that it represents the views and the comments of all Yukoners.

The panel will provide independent advice for further review and consideration by the Government of Yukon and also Yukon First Nations. This may include advice on potential programs, policy, and legislative changes as well. It's really exciting work. We had an opportunity early in that process to engage and to meet with the individual members of the panel. I remember leaving that meeting and commenting on the breadth of knowledge from all of these members.

It is truly inspiring to see Yukoners on these types of strategies and panels really giving back with their knowledge, always with the aim of helping to provide jobs and strengthen

and diversify our economy. At the same time, it's about respecting environmental stewardship.

I remember having an early conversation with one of the members of the strategy about how government needs to involve First Nations more in these processes. We have the *Umbrella Final Agreement*, which is constitutionally protected by the federal government. I went off about my opinion, and I remember this particular individual said to me — and this was several years ago — it was probably in 2012 when I had this conversation when I was in opposition. That individual's comments after I was done were: "Are you finished? Well, it's good to know that government officials are starting to catch up to where industry already is, with an understanding that the stewards of the land are the First Nations governments whose traditional territories are being affected." It's good to see that this involvement is recognized and understood by so many individual junior companies that have spent so much time in the Yukon. It is no surprise as to why certain companies have stood the test of time, Mr. Deputy Chair.

When it comes to the development strategy and the supports therein for the development of that thriving and prosperous economy, it's extremely important to also comment on the fact that this is to the benefit of all Yukoners. This recognizes and respects that Yukon First Nations' special relationship with the land and the resources of their traditional territories is an extremely important context, and again, we need to make sure that we are communicating that over and over again.

The member opposite has spoken about industries' concerns about being excluded — perhaps that is too harsh a word — but not involved in the discussions at times around the mineral development strategy. We have enduring priority commitments that we have to adhere to: continue to advance reconciliation; to uphold the spirit and the intent of final self-government agreements; and to collaborate with Yukon First Nations on shared goals to advance Yukon's economic and social development. I firmly believe that if we continue down this road as opposed to antagonizing and instead work with First Nation governments when it comes to the mining industry, then we will be able to make more decisions here in the Legislative Assembly, more decisions government-to-government at the Yukon Forum, and less conversations about litigation and less decisions being made in the courts.

Our goal is always to work as much as we possibly can at whatever level — whether it be the federal government and looking at policies therein when it comes to the regulatory process or First Nation governments, also involving municipalities where there's overlap in those areas. We believe this approach is working. We're in our third year and we'll continue down this road, because we believe that this is the most positive way forward to making sure that we not only have a good and thriving economy but also that the environment is considered in our decisions.

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

Deputy Chair (Mr. Adel): It has been moved by Mr. Silver that the Deputy Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Deputy 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 the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Adel: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 4, entitled *Act to Amend the Elections Act*, and directed me to report the act without amendment.

Committee of the Whole has also considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and has directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

The following sessional papers were tabled November 18, 2019:

34-3-21

A Year in Review — Yukon Human Rights Commission — 2018-2019 Annual Report and Yukon Human Rights Commission Financial Statements Year Ended March 31, 2019 (Speaker Clarke)

34-3-22

Health Care Insurance Programs — Health Services - Fiscal years 2009-10 to 2018-19 — Annual Report April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019 (Frost)

Written notice was given of the following motion November 18, 2019:

Motion No. 114

Re: Requiring radon testing in licensed daycares and day homes (Hanson)



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 25

3rd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Tuesday, November 19, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
Don Hutton	Mayo-Tatchun

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King
Liz Hanson	Whitehorse Centre

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Dan Cable
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Tuesday, November 19, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, we have a couple of individuals who are here for our tributes this afternoon for Geoscience Week. I would like to welcome Anne Turner, who is the president of Yukon Women in Mining; also Wendy Tayler, owner of Alkan Air and also a board member for Yukon Women in Mining; and Jennifer Walters is also here with us today from Energy, Mines and Resources.

Applause

Mr. Hassard: I will ask all members to join me in welcoming a gentleman to the Assembly this afternoon — I imagine that he is here for the Community Safety Award tribute — Mr. John Gullison.

Applause

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I would like to introduce and welcome a number of guests who are here today for one of the tributes: Mr. John Gullison, who is a Corrections officer — he has already been introduced; Ms. Laura Scott, who is with the Department of Justice; Constable Francis Caron; Claire Desmarais, from the Mount Lorne Volunteer Fire Department; Corporal Cam Long and retired police service dog Crash; and we are expecting Constable Candice MacEachen as well. Thank you very much for being here.

Applause

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would ask my colleagues to please help me in welcoming members from the Yukon Housing Corporation. We have here: Sarah Murray, communications analyst; Jan Slipetz, community housing officer; Philip Oberg, project manager; and Juergen Korn, research and policy development project manager from Yukon Housing Corporation.

Welcome.

Applause

Speaker: Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of National Community Safety and Crime Prevention Month

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to National Community Safety and Crime Prevention Month.

Many Yukoners and organizations are playing an important role in building safer, stronger communities, and today is a great opportunity to recognize their contributions. Last May, I had the privilege of presenting 13 Yukoners, two groups, and a four-legged hero with Yukon Community Safety Awards. The award recipients were recognized for their innovative community safety initiatives and efforts, including supporting victims of crime, providing excellence in emergency and first response, ongoing volunteerism, and commitments to community policing.

The 2019 individual award recipients were: Constable Francis Caron, who received the first responder award for his outstanding service in rescuing two individuals who were in the water in Miles Canyon near the footbridge.

Also recipients: Claire Desmarais, who received a volunteer award for volunteering with the Mount Lorne Volunteer Fire Department since its inception in 1996 — an incredible 23 years of service; Darlene Hutton, who received a volunteer award for her many volunteer efforts in the community of Mayo, including serving on the Mayo ambulance group as the supervisor since 2012; Constable Amy Handrahan, who received a Yukon Policing Award for her avid volunteer efforts in Watson Lake that range from baking for community events to working with the local elementary and high schools on initiatives to benefit youth; Charlotte Hrenchuk, who received the Services to Victims Award for her decades of advocacy and research focused on issues related to women and girls in the north and improving responses for victims of crime and vulnerable people; another recipient was Constable Candice MacEachen, who received the Mentor for Yukon Youth Award for her ongoing dedication and commitment to training and mentoring girls hockey teams of various ages; James Smarch, who received the Lifetime Contribution to Community Safety Award for his significant contributions to the development of the Teslin Fire Department as a member and chief; and last but not least, police service dog Crash, a loyal companion and deserving recipient who was supported by handler Corporal Cam Long, who has retired after a noteworthy career with the RCMP — that's Crash, not Corporal Long.

In addition to the individual awards, Mr. Speaker, the awards for outstanding projects or group contributions to community safety went to Ingrid Wilcox, Craig Cameron, and John Gullison for their exceptional work at Whitehorse Correctional Centre with the gardening program; and lastly, the Teslin RCMP detachment — Corporal Jeff Myke, Constable Jason Pradolini, and Constable Travis Draper for their outstanding involvement in the community, especially their work with children and youth.

Mr. Speaker, the recipients of these awards demonstrate the highest level of commitment to community safety and make

an extraordinary difference in the lives of Yukoners. All of this work is truly inspiring and deserves our admiration and thanks.

In closing and in recognition of National Community Safety and Crime Prevention Month, I wish to express my appreciation to our partner governments, the RCMP, organizations, and volunteers that play an important part in building safe communities. Keeping our communities safe is all of our responsibility.

Applause

Ms. Van Bibber: I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to the recipients of the 2019 Community Safety Awards. These awards recognize individuals who have gone the extra mile to contribute to making our communities a safer place.

We are fortunate to have an incredible network of volunteers in the Yukon, each of whom holds a passion and dedication for what they do for others.

Each year since 2012, we recognize citizens for their innovative safety initiatives including: restorative justice, research and activism, youth outreach and support, excellence in emergency and first response, volunteerism, and community policing. Wow — I think we've covered everything in those categories. Reading the accolades and the backgrounds of these award recipients proves that we have many Yukoners who rightly deserve to be applauded.

The Exceptional Program Award to the Whitehorse Correctional Centre Gardening Program gives inmates an ability to learn skills and lessen stress and provides a safe healing space — and as an added bonus, provides fruit and veggies to the Whitehorse Food Bank.

I won't repeat each name, as it has been done by the minister; however, I recognize and thank the award winners for two Volunteer Awards, three Yukon Policing Awards, a First Responder Award, a Mentor for Yukon Youth Award, a Services to Victims Award, and we acknowledge their amazing contributions.

Our retired police service dog named Crash who is in our midst today was also awarded for a Yukon Policing Award. How wonderful that we don't forget our canine workers and friends. Thank you, Crash, for your career of search and rescue and other duties — oh, yeah — and his handler, Corporal Cam Long.

Lastly, we honour a Lifetime Contribution to Community Safety Award to James Smarch, chief of the Teslin Fire Department. This is for his continued work to ensure better training, support, and fire awareness in his community.

I would also like to note that November also happens to be crime prevention month. We have so many individuals and groups working in our communities every day by providing community safety and making Yukon the most wonderful place to live. Let's keep vigilant and help where we can.

Thank you and congratulations to all those we are saluting today for all the work you continue to do for our territory and for the knowledge you pass to others. Thank you.

Applause

Ms. White: I understand where Crash is coming from — I mean, politics — it's an interesting thing.

The Yukon NDP add our voice to the chorus of congratulations being offered to the 2019 Community Safety Award winners. Part of being a great volunteer and community member is loving what you're doing — finding something that you are passionate about or something that inspires you and then filling a need in your community. This year, as we heard, 13 Yukoners, one program and, of course, Crash, the newly retired police service dog, were recognized and honoured for their efforts to prevent crime and foster community safety.

Thank you to each and every one of you for the positive impact and the role that you play in your respective communities and fields. Whatever your reason for volunteering and giving back to your community, we know that you have helped to transform the world around you, so thank you.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further tributes?

In recognition of 2019 Yukon Geoscience Forum awards

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I rise on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to the many award winners recognized at the 47th annual Geoscience Forum that is wrapping up today.

First, the Leckie Award celebrates excellence in environmental stewardship, outstanding social responsibility, and innovation in mining practice. These awards were created as a homage to the late Robert E. Leckie, a Mayo mining inspector who was dedicated to mine site reclamation. The Leckie Award for responsible and innovative exploration in mining practices went to two-time nominee John Alton. He is deserving of this award because his innovations have sustained the ecosystem in and around waterways associated with his mining operations, and his work has inspired sustainable mining practices in other miners. This work includes well-constructed and stable structures, continuous topsoil spreading, contouring, rock armouring, and bouldering groupings. He told us that, over the course of his 39-year career, he was self-motivated to reach the high standard of reclamation and innovation as he went beyond the required level of restoration. His motto was, "We would like to leave our site better than when we started." He is truly a worthy recipient of this award.

The Leckie Award for excellence in environmental stewardship in placer mining went to Moonlight mining. The Dago Hill claim block on Hunker Creek is located 19 kilometres south of Dawson City. They have done a commendable job reclaiming not only their own mined land, but also land in the area previously mined by others. Moonlight has stabilized hill walls, stockpiled vegetation mats, created ponds, and encouraged root growth on the bench claims' terrain. Owner Kyle Bruce has made every effort to cover his claims and previously unreclaimed areas with vegetation mats and in situ material. He also added freshwater ponds, which encourage wildlife and waterfowl, and contoured sloping to help return the landscape to a more natural state. I sincerely

appreciate Moonlight's dedication to responsible placer mining and progressive reclamation.

The Yukon Chamber of Mines awarded their community award to Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Development Corporation. They are recognized for their efforts on business development and continuing to grow their services and supply the mining sector in Yukon and the Yukon in general.

They have been instrumental in creating joint ventures and arrangements with many Yukon businesses, and many Yukon businesses have enabled them to be active in the mining industry in Yukon. Companies such as Underhill Geomatics Ltd. Have benefited greatly from working with Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Development Corporation.

Greg Finnegan, Andrijana Djokic, and Hector Campbell from Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Development Corporation were specifically applauded for their work.

Yukon Chamber of Mines awarded their member of the year award to Al Doherty. Al Doherty has been an active industry leader and advocate since the 1980s. He was valued for both his prospecting skills and mineral and industry knowledge. He has served as president of the Yukon Chamber of Mines and was a member of the board for many years and on the board of the Yukon Mine Training Association. He's a champion of industry interests on many different initiatives.

Yukon Chamber of Mines also partnered with the Yukon First Nation Chamber of Commerce to present the First Nation mining award to Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. They are recognized for their excellent efforts and contribution of resources, working closely with Newmont Goldcorp's Coffee mine project team for over three years to develop a socially and environmentally responsible mining project.

Working closely with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Newmont Goldcorp added additional monitoring stations and studies to their project plan. By providing opportunities to mining companies to partner on a variety of initiatives such as the Klondike River salmon sonar and restoration program, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in is helping to advance responsible mining in Yukon.

The Yukon Prospectors Association presented their prospector of the year award to Carl Schulze. In 1990, Carl discovered the Sugar Gold Vein in northern Ontario, which entered production a short 28 years later and still produces to this day. The mine is expected to produce over a million ounces of gold. Carl arrived in Yukon in 1992 and has been very active as a volunteer in the community, including several stints as president of the Yukon Chamber of Mines.

In 1997, he discovered the Harlan and Cache Creek occurrence in the South MacMillan River, and in 2006, he discovered the Amadeus zone in Sonora Gulch. In 2012-2015, he discovered and co-discovered the Mars and Callisto zones in the Einerson Lake area — just 20 years of amazing work.

Finally, Julia Lane was recognized by the Yukon Women in Mining as their 2019 champion. Julia Lane's accomplishments during her brilliant career had a big impact on Yukon projects and people. She was an amazing advocate for Yukon Women in Mining. She stood out as a role model not through any specific intention, but by embodying what it means

to be professional, passionate, and dedicated. While Julia was known and respected in Canada and the global mining industry as a rising star, she will also be remembered for her kindness and enthusiasm. Yukon and Canada's mineral industry have suffered an enormous loss this year, and she will be greatly missed by many. Julia is the champion who we all hope to be.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the honourable members of this House to join me in acknowledging the substantial efforts by mining companies, operators, First Nations, and scientists who go beyond the typical call of duty to responsibly support, inspire, and sustain their sector's operations. They are role models and ambassadors for this industry.

Applause

Ms. McLeod: I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to this year's Geoscience Forum and Tradeshow — which took place this year between November 16 and today — and to the Chamber of Mines and all those involved for once again pulling off an incredible event in celebration of Yukon's responsible and successful mining industry.

The Geoscience Forum and Tradeshow provides the opportunity for governments, miners, geologists, and anyone involved in the industry to connect, promote their contributions to mining, and take in a variety of presentations and updates from key players across the industry.

I would also like to mention that the family day was a great success once again and is quickly becoming one of the most highly anticipated events for kids in the community, especially for those collecting the gold that they find in their pan each year.

We would like to congratulate a few deserving individuals who received awards last night during the Chamber of Mines awards banquet for their work and dedication to the mining industry here in the Yukon.

Our congratulations to the recipients of the 2019 Robert E. Leckie Award, Kyle Bruce and Moonlight Mining, and John Alton. The Yukon Prospectors Association 2019 Prospector of the Year Award went to Carl Schulze — and our congratulations to Carl; this is well-deserved for all his work. Julia Lane was recognized for the 2019 Kate Carmack Women in Mining Award. Recognized for the Yukon Chamber of Mines Member Award was Al Doherty and, for the Community Award, the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun. Recognized for the inaugural First Nations in Mining Award, presented by the Yukon Chamber of Mines and the First Nation Chamber of Commerce, was the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation.

Thank you and congratulations to all award winners for your contributions. It is not easy to put together a convention of this magnitude, and our thanks go out to all those involved in its organization and to the sponsors as, without you, the Geoscience Forum would not be possible. We hope that everyone who had a chance to attend the 47th Geoscience Forum this year had a great time and went away with new connections and new ideas.

Ms. White: I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP to tribute the hard work done by the folks who organized, prepared, executed, and attended the 47th Annual Geoscience Forum and Trade Show. The Yukon Geoscience Forum and Trade Show continues to be an opportunity to celebrate relationships and build partnerships while keeping up to date on trends and industry best practices. This conference continues to bring folks from across industry — from prospectors to dreamers, junior mining companies, to those companies who are actively mining and producing and all shades in between.

Mr. Speaker, people involved in all aspects of the mining community — from exploration geologists to expeditors, pilots to underground miners, camp cooks to mining engineers, equipment operators to environmental monitors — all come to the job because of their love of adventure and the challenge that working remotely offers. No matter what role is played, there is a love of the experience, because you can't work this hard without loving what you do.

It is not just a job; it is a lifestyle choice. The successes of others are always celebrated within the industry, and last night's awards ceremony was a chance for folks and organizations to be recognized by their peers for outstanding work and achievement in their field. We have heard a great deal about the winners, but we would also like to offer our congratulations to last night's winners: Al Doherty, the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Development Corporation, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation, Carl Schulze, John Alton, Kyle Bruce with Moonlight Mining, and of course we are confident that Julia Lane's family, friends, and colleagues will treasure the industry recognition of Ms. Lane being awarded the Kate Carmack Women in Mining Award.

So, Mr. Speaker, we offer our congratulations and thank you to all of those who participated in this year's 47th Annual Geoscience Forum.

In recognition of Radon Action Month

Hon. Ms. Frost: I rise today to pay tribute to Radon Action Month. During November, governments and organizations across Canada urge citizens to test their homes for radon gas and to take action to protect themselves if their homes test high.

This year, the Government of Yukon has partnered with the Yukon Lung Association and the Public Service Alliance of Canada, with support from Health Canada, to urge Yukoners to take action on radon. It is so important for Yukoners to test their homes for radon. It is estimated that a non-smoker exposed to high levels of radon over a lifetime has a one in 20 chance of developing lung cancer. This increases to one in three for a smoker exposed to high levels of radon over a lifetime.

Radon can be present anywhere in Yukon, and the only way to know if your home has radon in it is for it to be tested. Testing for radon in your home is simple. Test kits are a little bit smaller than a hockey puck and sit quietly in your home for at least three months, after which you send it to the lab for analysis.

Health Canada guidelines for radon in homes is that, if a home has 200 becquerels of radon per cubic metre or higher,

plan to remediate your home. The higher the concentration of radon, the sooner that you should undertake remedial measures.

The Yukon Lung Association is providing a \$10 subsidy on test kits sold at Home Hardware in Whitehorse to lower the price for Yukoners. The Yukon Housing Corporation, in partnership with the Yukon Lung Association, is offering a limited offer of test kits for free in Yukon Housing Corporation's offices for residents living in rural Yukon communities without ready access to Home Hardware.

If your home has radon levels over 200 becquerels per cubic metre, you can contact one of the radon mitigation specialists in Yukon to figure out the best course of action to lower the levels in your home. Radon mitigation can usually be completed for small, similar costs as other common home repairs.

It is important to restate that the only way to know if you have high levels of radon in your home is to test for it. As a government, we take this very seriously, particularly with the impacts that radon can have on one's health. We are continuing to support daycares and day homes to test for radon this winter.

Thank you to our partners who help promote radon awareness and radon action. I just want to give a shout-out and an acknowledgement to the incredible staff at Yukon Housing Corporation for doing such a great job in promoting awareness and for their mitigation efforts across the Yukon.

Ms. Van Bibber: I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition and the Third Party to recognize November as Radon Action Month.

Radon is an invisible radioactive gas. This gas comes from a natural breakdown of uranium in soil and rocks. Radon decays quickly and releases tiny radioactive particles. You cannot see it, smell it, or taste it. Radon typically seeps into basements through cracks in the foundation or drainpipes or other openings around the base of your home. Unfortunately, it is found in many homes, although often at levels that are not considered to be dangerous. But, depending on the area and home construction, there is a chance that homes are at a risk of elevated levels which, over time, can lead to lung cancer in many individuals.

Radon exposure is the number one cause of lung cancer in non-smokers and accounts for 16 percent of lung cancer deaths each year in Canada. With long-term exposure, the radon gas attacks the cells of the lung's lining.

Over the past 25 years, tests show that the concentration of radon in Yukon homes is among the highest in Canada. Most recently, tests have shown elevated levels of radon in subdivisions just south of Whitehorse. Whitehorse Copper, Pineridge, Wolf Creek, Spruce Hill, and Cowley Creek have all shown radon levels above the guidelines of Health Canada.

The best time to begin radon testing is in the colder months and when we are in a more enclosed environment. That is the reason why Canada says that November is a good month to recognize Radon Action Month. To encourage people to get a radon test kit and do their due diligence in their homes, the test kit gives very good instructions and is easy to use. Put the simple device in a low spot in your basement. After a three-

month period, mail it off in a self-addressed envelope. Then you wait for results. I know — I waited with bated breath just as if I was waiting for a medical result. Thankfully, our home came back clear.

I urge all Yukoners to ensure their home is or has been tested to ensure radon levels are within acceptable limits. As the cold is here and homeowners have plenty of time to complete the three-month testing, there is no excuse. A test kit can be picked up for those living in rural communities at the Yukon Housing Corporation offices. For Whitehorse residents, kits are available for purchase at Home Hardware. If there needs to be mitigation work done, it could include crack sealing and the installation of a fan system to prevent soil gases from entering the home.

So, Yukoners, look into the effects of radon, pick up a test kit for your home, and sleep peacefully knowing that radon is not in your home or knowing that you are able to address the issue for the good of your and your family's health.

Speaker: Tabling returns and documents.

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Speaker: The Chair has for tabling the Yukon Human Rights Commission 2017-18 annual report and financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2018, which is tabled pursuant to section 18 of the *Human Rights Act*.

Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I have for tabling a letter to the Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Premier of the Northwest Territories, and the Hon. Joe Savikataaq, the Premier of Nunavut, from me concerning CBC's recently announced decision to eliminate regional AM news broadcasts.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the premiers of all three northern territories to write a joint letter to the president and chief executive officer of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation — CBC — and the federal minister requesting that CBC reconsider the decision to eliminate the English language morning news based in Iqaluit and Whitehorse in favour of a pan-northern newscast broadcast out of Yellowknife to ensure that:

(1) the programming provided by CBC reflects Canada and its regions to national and regional audiences while serving the special needs of those regions as stated in the 1991 *Broadcasting Act*; and

(2) consideration is given to the distinct cultural and regional differences that exist across the north between three separate and distinct territories that comprise 40 percent of Canada's land mass.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Canada to restore funding to CBC, Canada's public broadcaster, in order to restore services in the north; and

THAT this House directs the Speaker of the Yukon Legislative Assembly to convey the decision of this House to the federal Minister of Canadian Heritage, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, and the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut.

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

THAT this House urges Yukon's Member of Parliament to write to the federal Minister of Canadian Heritage and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to ask that the decision to end Yukon-specific radio newscasts be reversed.

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

THAT this House urges the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to recognize the importance of local radio programming in the north, including newscasts, by:

(1) cancelling its plan to centralize all morning newscasts for the Yukon, NWT, and Nunavut out of Yellowknife;

(2) ensuring that its news reporting across the north has sufficient resources to cover locally relevant news in each territory; and

(3) in future, prioritizing local news coverage in the 39 percent of Canada's land area which the Yukon, NWT, and Nunavut together account for ahead of urban-centric programming.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Aviation investment strategy

Mr. Hassard: So, the Liberal government is currently developing a plan to guide future investment in the aviation system, called "Yukon's Flight Path: Aviation Investment Strategy". As part of this, the government has contracted Stantec to consult with industry on their priorities going forward. One of the sections of the consultation document is entitled "Revenue Generation". In it, they ask those being consulted if they support the Government of Yukon bringing in an airport improvement fee — otherwise known as an "airport tax".

So, despite the fact that the Liberals have claimed that they have no desire to bring in an airport tax, here we have the government's own contractor out consulting on the Liberals'

airport strategy specifically asking people if they would support an airport tax.

Can the minister explain why the Liberal government is consulting on whether or not to bring in an airport tax?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am really happy to be talking about the Flight Path project this afternoon, because after 25 years with no aviation act, we brought that in, and now we are looking at trying to set the direction for aviation in the territory for the next decade or so. Our government has made significant investments over the past few years, including upgrades to equipment and facilities, and a comprehensive multi-year investment plan will make sure that we are meeting the Yukon's current and future aviation system needs.

Engagements to gather input on how we should prioritize future investments began the week of November 12, starting with targeted engagement with aviation stakeholders. We will broaden the engagement to include communities, governments, and other airport users. A 90-day public survey will be launched on November 20 on engageyukon.ca. Stakeholder feedback will help inform a strategy that combines safety, efficiency, stakeholder needs, and operational requirements for Yukon aviation.

I have said publicly, Mr. Speaker, that we are not going to bring any aviation fees in, and I stand by that. But we are going to talk to industry and see exactly what they feel the landscape looks like, as far as aviation, for the total spectrum of the aviation community.

Mr. Hassard: It is interesting, because right there on page 10 of the Liberal government's own consultation document on the future of aviation in the territory — I will quote directly from this document — for the future of our airports — from question 12: "Yukon government should collect Airport Improvement Fees". It then gives you the options from "strongly agree" all the way to "disagree". As we know, airport improvement fees are just another way of saying "airport tax". You don't ask a question in a consultation unless it is something that you are considering doing. If the government is truly ruling out an airport tax, then will the minister ask the government contractor to remove this question from the consultation document?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I have to disagree with the Leader of the Official Opposition on this point and his intonation in that question. It was: "Should the government impose fees?" not "Should the government..." — so he put the stress on the wrong syllable.

We are asking the aviation industry what we should do, if we should — and we are going to gather that information and consider it. The investment strategy that we are developing will focus on Yukon's aviation industry for the period of 2020 to 2030, and there are no plans to increase aviation user fees at this time. However, it is important to examine our fee structure to determine its role in the development of the aviation system.

Our government has made significant investments in aviation over the past few years, including upgrades to equipment and facilities. We have spent almost \$40 million on aviation this year. That investment is bearing dividends. We are seeing Air North flying more. Mayo has just been certified.

Those investments pay real dividends, and I am proud of the work that Highways and Public Works has done on behalf of our aviation system.

Mr. Hassard: Either you want an airport tax or you don't, and if you don't, then you shouldn't be wasting money and time in consulting on whether or not to bring one in.

Will the minister agree to tell their contractor to remove this question from their consultation on an airport tax? If they won't, we can only assume that the Liberals are planning on bringing this in.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: This is the pattern that we are seeing from the Official Opposition. They are making an awful lot of assumptions. We know what assumptions do, Mr. Speaker. Our government has made significant investments in aviation over the past few years, including upgrades to equipment and facilities. We are going to continue to make those investments, because we are seeing real-world benefits to this. We are seeing Air North flying to more places. We are seeing more investment. We are seeing Air Canada investing, and we are seeing Air North investing. We are seeing our airports certified in Mayo. We are currently seeking a certification in Dawson, and word will be coming back on that fairly soon, I hope, Mr. Speaker.

There is all sorts of work in progress to improve the way that our communities throughout the territory are connected to Whitehorse and to the rest of the world. That is coming through the diligence that the Department of Highways and Public Works is putting into this file. It is coming through the passage of our new airport legislation. All of these pieces, Mr. Speaker, are bearing fruit for the territory. I am very happy with the work that we are doing on the aviation file.

Question re: Government of Yukon website

Mr. Kent: I have some questions for the Premier today on one of his favourite vanity projects: the new yukon.ca website and his nationally ridiculed new logo.

In the February 2018 news release, the Premier claimed that they would spend \$250,000 for the planning, design, development, and assessments of the yukon.ca website. In an internal memo from the Information Resources Management Committee — the IRMC — the employees have requested an additional \$288,000 for content migration and web development. That is more than double the original budget. Obviously, concerns that this project has gone way overbudget and is quickly turning into a boondoggle are reflected in this memo.

Can the Premier tell us how much has been spent to date on his new website?

Hon. Mr. Silver: It is interesting to listen to the member opposite accuse the department of boondoggling.

Anyway, since launching this site in February 2018, there have been over 650,000 visits to yukon.ca and over two million page views. We have gathered nearly 3,000 feedback forms since the launch, and we can continue to adjust content in response. Our goal is obviously to shut down all parts of the old website, and we are on track to do that by the end of 2020.

In 2018-19, if the members opposite care to listen, we spent \$200,000 on continuing the development and improvement of yukon.ca. This builds on the quarter of a million dollars that we spent in the 2017-18 fiscal year on planning, on design, on development, and on assessment of the website. So far in the 2019-20 fiscal year, we have committed \$100,000 to continuing to develop yukon.ca.

Mr. Kent: Just to be clear, this is the Premier's boondoggle. It has nothing to do with the officials. This was his decision and the decision of the Liberal government to proceed with a new website.

That same news release in 2018 bragged that, at \$75,000 for ongoing annual maintenance, this was approximately half the cost of the current platform. Can the Premier tell us how much is being spent on ongoing annual maintenance and support for the new website, and how much is currently being spent on maintaining the old website?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, once we have completed the transition from the old to the new website, that ongoing maintenance will cost \$75,000 a year — half of what the old website cost to maintain, so that's a cost-savings there.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Silver: If members opposite care to listen to the response as opposed to talking off-mic as we answer the questions — again, this doesn't include staff time, and that is, of course, being rolled into the overall budget of the department.

On that as well, the member talked about visual identity. The visual identity is based on the Larger than Life logo, which external research and internal review showed that there was attachment to. That total cost process — just to be open and accountable as well — for development of the visual identity was just under \$124,000. Again, Mr. Speaker, that old logo was very old — 35 years old — and we had no other tools or templates to create a unified, professional look, and so that is, of course, what we did.

Again, I'm happy with the new changes of the visual identity and also of the website, yukon.ca. Any opportunity for us to promote the new website is a great opportunity.

Mr. Kent: It's starting to sound like the Liberals have blown through the original budget, they need up to another \$288,000 to continue the work, and there's no end in sight.

Meanwhile, people asking for improvements to medical travel are told, "Too bad, so sad" — interesting priorities by the Liberals — but this flawed website has left taxpayers holding the bag.

What have been the total costs to government through all government departments for content migration, development, and set-up for the new website? When will that work be complete?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I believe that I just outlined our costs to date.

Mr. Speaker, yukon.ca improves access to our government information and the means by which we can continue expanding the online services that we provide for Yukoners.

The new website has been designed to meet today's standards for privacy, security, accessibility, and also compatibility on other mobile devices as well.

When it comes to our visual identity, our visual identity is about improving the delivery of services and communication more effectively with the public. Again, this visual identity is about more than just a logo, Mr. Speaker. It gives us the tools and the templates for us to save significant time and money across government.

Question re: Grizzly bear conservation plan

Ms. White: This fall, the Yukon government released a conservation plan for grizzly bears in Yukon. While the plan sets out a number of action areas for managing Yukon's grizzly bear populations, it highlights the continued challenge of protecting and managing a species without reliable data. According to the plan, current grizzly bear management practices are based on numbers derived from a model developed in the 1980s and 1990s that gave an understanding of how many grizzly bears could be supported in various regions of Yukon. The conservation plan highlights the need for more accurate grizzly bear data and concedes that current numbers may be outdated.

Mr. Speaker, I was only a pre-teen when we did our last grizzly bear population model, and this government prides itself on evidence-based decision-making, and the evidence used is coming up on 30 years old. There is a good chance that our models are outdated.

What is the minister's plan for getting a more accurate picture of the overall number of grizzly bears in Yukon, their density, and geographic distribution?

Hon. Ms. Frost: With respect to the grizzly bear conservation plan and the implementation of that plan, I just wanted to note that, just this past weekend actually, the renewable resources councils were meeting in Dawson City. Part of the plan was to talk about conservation management on many fronts — moose management, caribou management, grizzly management — and a little bit around trapping concessions.

The important information that we acquire when we look at co-management that derives specifically from the elements of the self-government agreement — it is imperative that we have accurate numbers — absolutely. What the member is suggesting is that we acquire current numbers. Consistently, they ask for scientific data and analysis.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I can say that the plan provides a road map on how we can ensure grizzly bear populations remain healthy and viable throughout their natural range. So, we have a multitude of responsibilities, and we take that very seriously. We will continue to manage the 6,000 to 7,000 grizzly bears in the Yukon that we have identified as the current numbers.

Ms. White: The plan also highlights that we need current and accurate data, which we don't currently have. It is promising that the Yukon government is taking action to protect grizzly bear populations. There are a number of good recommendations contained in the plan, including measures to increase public respect and awareness, reduce habitat impact

and loss, foster safe bear viewing, and improve knowledge and data collection. What the plan seems to lack are timelines that set out specific targets for implementation and a breakdown of how the plan will be funded.

We know that, in 2006, the Department of Environment budgeted zero dollars for data collection on bears and that this data collection, at the time, was of a critical nature. At the time, it was estimated that the cost to meet the demand for accurate data collection on bears would cost \$230,000, and that was over 13 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, how much money has the government set aside for the implementation of the grizzly bear conservation plan, and when can Yukoners expect to see firm timelines put in place?

Hon. Ms. Frost: To recap, when we speak about management and conservation measures and when we look at grizzly bears specifically — the grizzly bear management plan was triggered and of course the consultation and engagement happened through the Fish and Wildlife Management Board and the cross-Yukon engagement took effect following protocols. It is very important that we look at all of our networks, and that means the stakeholder groups that are directly affected by grizzly bear management — the self-governing First Nations, which include the RRCs, the Fish and Wildlife Management Board, and the Inuvialuit. It is imperative that we look at various wildlife organizations and of course look at the agencies that we have to work with — recognizing that of course we need accurate data if we see a crisis at hand.

As I understand it, the grizzly bear management plan and the guidelines that affect the grizzly bear management plan — of course, the data acquired or received indicates that the grizzly bear population is healthy at 6,000 to 7,000 grizzly bears. That is across the Yukon — 6,000 to 7,000.

Ms. White: The plan also says that is a guess — it is a guess that we have that many bears. What I was looking for was numbers, money, and timelines, Mr. Speaker. One of the biggest holes in Yukon's wildlife management framework is a lack of a Yukon species at risk act. The grizzly bear conservation plan notes that the federal *Species at Risk Act* classifies grizzly bears as a species of special concern. While the federal legislation does provide some coverage for species at risk in Yukon, the federal government is responsible for only eight percent of Yukon's land mass. We don't know how grizzly bears would be classified under Yukon-specific species at risk act because we don't have one.

Last spring, the Minister of Environment announced that the Department of Environment is currently working to develop a Yukon species at risk act to satisfy the commitment that it made in 1996 when it signed the *Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk*. It was mentioned again in this government's most recent throne speech.

It has been a quarter of a century since the Yukon committed to developing our own species at risk legislation and Yukoners are wondering when it's coming.

Mr. Speaker, when can Yukoners expect this government to finally table species at risk legislation?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to thank the member opposite for the question.

A couple of things — one, we started from grizzly bear management. We certainly want to look at the effects of the conservation plan as we implement and take into consideration accurate data. Now, knowing that we collect data by doing our surveys, we also have to keep in mind that it's imperative that we take into consideration local traditional knowledge and working with our trappers and hunters so that we know specific areas of concern.

When we look at the *Species at Risk Act*, we have the status of the endangered wildlife in Canada as regulated by Canada. We know that we have a priority and I said we would continue to work toward our own policies, specifically to address species at risk and we will continue to do that in good faith.

We will track all species of significant concern and integrate that into existing measures. We did that very successfully in the Peel plan with the boreal caribou. We defined a species that is of concern and we worked with our partners to integrate — and we will continue to do that should these issues come to our attention. I'm happy to say that the department is doing a really great job in terms of recovery strategies for barren ground caribou.

Question re: Radon testing

Ms. Van Bibber: In a July 29, 2019, letter from the Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services to the Public Accounts committee, he states that all Health and Social Services 24-hour facilities, health centres, staff housing, and some office spaces have been tested for radon. He goes on to state that the remainder of the office spaces will be tested this winter; however, he fails to mention which and how many Health and Social Services office spaces are being tested for radon this winter.

Can the minister tell us how many Health and Social Services office spaces are being tested for radon this winter? Which ones?

Hon. Ms. Frost: We have a number of units that we're responsible for through Health and Social Services, and that includes our daycare centres and our family homes.

With all of the units that are owned by the Government of Yukon, we work with Yukon Housing Corporation and we work with Highways and Public Works to address and test for radon levels in all of our homes.

With respect to the specific numbers, I don't have that in front of me, but I will endeavour to get that back.

Ms. Van Bibber: In the same letter from the deputy minister, he says that most of the Health and Social Services sites identified have radon levels above the Health Canada upper limit and that they have been remediated. The key word there is "most", so there are still some left to be remediated. The deputy minister goes on to state in a letter that remaining sites will be remediated within two years. Can the minister tell us which Health and Social Services facilities with elevated radon levels are still awaiting remediation and which facilities those are?

Hon. Ms. Frost: As indicated, I'm not able to get the specific locations, but what I can say is that — I noted in my opening tribute that it was to look at the radon in our various facilities. We look at the health and safety, of course, of our children who are in licensed daycare centres, but we also look at our program areas, recognizing that we have a number of units, perhaps, where that level might be a bit high. We want to ensure that we mitigate those, and that means working with our partners, so we are addressing that.

As I indicated, I do not have the specific numbers in front of me, but I will endeavour to get that. I'm not sure — if the member opposite can give more information on specific sites, I might be able to respond. At the moment, I do not have that technical information in front of me, but I will endeavour to get it back.

Ms. Van Bibber: Can the minister at least tell us if any of the Health and Social Services facilities with elevated radon levels are in a location that Yukoners live in, such as a long-term care facility?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Naturally, all of us in this Legislative Assembly would be concerned if we see elevated — as I indicated in the earlier presentation. If we see elevated levels of radon within units that we are responsible for, we will endeavour to take immediate measures to remediate the challenges that are before us. We have done that on a lot of units already through our home repair programs and through our support programs.

We are working with our partners at Highways and Public Works — through all of the buildings that they own — so we will continue to do that good work.

I want to assure the members opposite that, given that November is Radon Awareness Month, there are heightened anxieties across Yukon, and we will endeavour to do the education campaign, but we will also ensure that we look at remediating all of the facilities that have higher than 200 becquerels per cubic metre. We know that, with between 200 and 600 becquerels per cubic metre, we have two years in which to mitigate. We will try to work within that timeline and, of course, act as quickly as we can.

I said that I would endeavour to get the information, and I will do that.

Question re: Pharmacist regulations

Ms. McLeod: In August of this year, the new pharmacist regulations came into effect. The regulations broaden the scope of work allowed by pharmacists to include extending, altering, and substituting prescriptions in some cases and administering things such as the flu shot.

There is one problem, though. While the regulations are in effect, there is no mechanism in place to implement the expanded scope of practice allowed by the regulations. Yukoners are having trouble finding family doctors, and there is a shortage of nurses in Yukon.

This puts added stress on doctors and the emergency room. Pharmacists are in a position to alleviate some of this pressure by extending existing prescriptions and saving health care costs by reducing unnecessary visits to the ER or clinics.

Can the minister tell us what the government is doing to ensure mechanisms are in place to allow pharmacists to bill the government for their expanded scope of practice?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thank the member opposite for this question about pharmacists. Indeed, the initiative around pharmacists and pharmacies has been desired and ongoing for some time. We did bring in new regulations for pharmacists under the *Health Professions Act*. This has expanded their scope of practice for pharmacists to better serve all Yukoners. Pharmacists can now adapt prescriptions, extend prescriptions, access and use lab results related to prescriptions, and administer injections. Rural permit holders in communities can continue to practice under the regime with a balance that ensures convenience and stronger protections for patients.

I think that the work that pharmacists are doing around the territory is great. They came to us. They said they could do more. We worked with them to expand their scope.

I am sure that the Minister of Health and Social Services will talk about the technical billing details, but just to note for all Yukoners, pharmacists are now able to do more, and we are really happy about that initiative.

Ms. McLeod: Regarding the new pharmacist regulations, there will be negative impacts on rural Yukon. The new regulations put new restrictions on rural permit holders. This means that someone from Watson Lake who gets a prescription in Whitehorse will only be allowed to fill this prescription in Whitehorse. They will not be allowed to wait until they get back to Watson Lake to fill that prescription and get it from their local pharmacist. This will hurt rural Yukoners and reduce their access to health care.

The Minister of Community Services knew of these concerns, as they were raised directly with him by rural permit holders. He seems to have ignored them entirely. Can the minister explain why they designed the regulations this way?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, I will just repeat the last part of my last response. As I stated in my last response, rural permit holders in communities can continue to practice under the regime with a balance that ensures convenience and stronger protections for patients. We are certainly not ignoring rural permit holders. In fact, I will thank our rural permit holder from Watson Lake who just stepped forward to be on our pharmacy advisory committee.

The deputy minister and I did sit down in Watson Lake, and we had this conversation with them about their concerns. We are looking to resolve all of their concerns. We are developing guidelines around reasonability of markup, recognizing the cost to operate in rural communities, and we are looking at draft policies to confirm how the rural permit holders may co-sign the prescription, acknowledging knowledge of the drug in order to dispense, et cetera.

Mr. Speaker, we are working closely to try to find solutions for our rural permit holders while also balancing the need to ensure protection for all patients across the Yukon.

Ms. McLeod: I am going to ask a question of the Minister of Health and Social Services, since the Minister of Community Services kind of punted this away.

Can the Minister of Health and Social Services tell us today what the government is doing to ensure that mechanisms are in place to allow pharmacists to bill the government for their expanded scope of practice?

Hon. Ms. Frost: What I can confirm is that we are working with the Yukon Medical Association. Of course, we are working through the technical details for payment with the pharmacists, and we have these proposed changes for the new year. I am working very closely — when we look at legislative changes, we work with Community Services, of course, on legislative adjustments, and it is imperative that, as we go ahead, we meet with the Pharmacists Association, and we are doing that. We are working to implement the regulations — working in good faith.

Just yesterday, I met with the territorial and provincial ministers responsible for pharmaceuticals across Canada to speak about the federal legislation, but also looking at discussions around collaborative approaches to reduce costs for pharmaceuticals and trying to better understand how we collectively will work together to fill some of the gaps and improve our drug management system in the Yukon and across the country.

We are looking forward to further discussions. We have another meeting coming up in January, but in the meanwhile, we will continue to work here in the Yukon with our Pharmacists Association.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

Ms. White: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, and notwithstanding Standing Order 27(1), I request the unanimous consent of the House to identify, under Standing Order 14.2(3), Motion No. 116 regarding reductions to the CBC North service, notice of which the Member for Whitehorse Centre gave earlier today without one clear day's notice.

Unanimous consent re identifying Motion No. 116

Speaker: The Leader of the Third Party has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, and notwithstanding Standing Order 27(1), requested the unanimous consent of the House to identify, under Standing Order 14.2(3), Motion No. 116 regarding reductions to the CBC North service, notice of which the Member for Whitehorse Centre gave earlier today without one clear day's notice.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: Unanimous consent has been granted.

Notice of opposition private members' business

Ms. White: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(3), I would like to identify the item standing in the name of the Third Party to be called on Wednesday, November 20, 2019. It is Motion No. 116, standing in the name of the Member for Whitehorse Centre.

Mr. Kent: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(3), I would like to identify the item standing in the name of the Official Opposition to be called on Wednesday, November 20, 2019. It

is Motion No. 113, standing in the name of the Member for Kluane.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 4: *Act to Amend the Elections Act* — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 4, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Silver.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I move that Bill No. 4, entitled *Act to Amend the Elections Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 4, entitled *Act to Amend the Elections Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I do sincerely appreciate the comments and contributions from the members on both sides of the House in support of these amendments. I also want to once again send thanks to Maxwell Harvey for his attendance in the Assembly to answer questions and to provide support during Committee of the Whole for discussion on these amendments — and to Lawrence Purdy as well, a legislative drafter. It was helpful and appreciated by me and I know it was appreciated — their time — by all Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Yesterday, as we know, the amendments were read and agreed to by Committee of the Whole without amendment, so I will keep my comments here brief. There was some good discussion. We debated bills for the benefit of Yukoners, so I thank the members for focusing on the objective of these changes — to improve the registration and voting process for Yukoners and to ensure the integrity of the electoral process. As I have said, taken together, this important package of amendments is to modernize our processes and to bring the permanent register to life.

These changes are based on providing convenience and access to the vote, including to open up the use of special ballots for all Yukoners and to ensure that there are convenient options for Yukon voters in rural remote areas. Of the utmost importance, all of these changes are based on ensuring the integrity of our voting system.

We know that any changes to the elections process are of great interest to Yukoners. Elections Yukon will be undertaking communications and public education to provide information on what's new and where people can find all the information that they need.

Again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to thank Chief Electoral Officer Maxwell Harvey and the office of Elections Yukon for their work in developing and bringing forward these amendments, and I want to thank all members for the discussion.

Mr. Cathers: In rising as the Official Opposition critic for democratic institutions, I would just note that our objection

to this legislation is based on several grounds. One is that the Premier has chosen to abandon the tradition of attempting to reach all-party agreement on changes to election legislation [in doing so](#). As I have reminded the House on previous occasions, both in 2008 and the last time, in 2015, when the legislation was changed, legislation that I tabled at the time as Minister of Justice had not only received unanimous agreement at Members' Services Board, but we had shared the text of that legislation with the Liberal Party and the NDP. The leaders of both parties were quoted in the press release, along with the Premier, as supporting the legislation and the House unanimously passed the legislation.

Again, our objection to this legislation is primarily based on the fact that it reduces the window for when people are allowed to cast a ballot and that there has been zero consultation on that proposed change. As I noted previously in the Assembly, if the public were to support the changes contained in the bill through public consultation, we as the Official Opposition would not have a problem with the concept of it. But we do fundamentally believe that the public has a right to be consulted before changes are made that reduce the opportunities to vote and that last time, according to the information from Elections Canada in this particular case, 206 people voted during the early voting period that is being eliminated by this bill.

I note as well that, while we respect the views of the current Chief Electoral Officer and recognize that there is a philosophical difference between the current occupant of the office and the previous Chief Electoral Officer who proposed the pre-writ special ballots currently contained in the law, we believe fundamentally that democracy belongs to all Yukoners. It does not just belong to politicians, bureaucrats, or any Officer.

Fundamentally, as I have noted, if these changes were to be supported by the public through public consultation, we would not have an objection to them taking place, but for a Liberal Party which ironically ran on a campaign slogan — the fact that they adamantly refused to support our request to take these changes out for public consultation first before changing the law is very disappointing. It is certainly not what Yukoners expected when they elected this Liberal government because they unfortunately believed that the government would come through on their election slogan of “Be Heard”.

Again, we've suggested on several occasions that this specific change that would reduce the window of when people are able to cast a special ballot should go out for public consultation first. There is absolutely no reason that this couldn't have occurred and the changes come back at a later date.

Despite the rhetoric of the Liberal Premier on this, it is clear in their decision and in the way that they are voting and proceeding on this legislation that the Liberal Party does not believe that Yukoners should have an opportunity to express their views on this change before the House passes it into law.

The Premier can try to say that it's not reducing voting opportunities, but the legislation is quite clear. The provisions that were in effect for the last election, which allowed people

to cast special ballots at that time — three months before the writ was dropped — are being removed in this legislation and being removed with zero public consultation.

Again, I would just note that the votes of those 206 people who made use of that early voting in 2016 could have materially affected the outcome of the last election, if they were not able to cast a ballot. Despite what members may claim, there is no member of this Legislative Assembly who knows how many of those 206 people would have been able to cast a ballot by other means and how many may have been disenfranchised.

It's important to note as well in the margins of victory that, looking at members of the Premier's government and in fact of the Cabinet, we see members who hold their seats by having won by a margin of 14 votes and, in another case, seven votes.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Cathers: Again, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the off-mic comments from members, but we fundamentally believe that the public has a right to be consulted on this type of change before it is made. We will adamantly stand against the proposal to eliminate this early voting opportunity without asking the public first.

It is consistent as well with the Liberal Party — despite running on promises of openness and transparency and under an election slogan of “Be Heard” — that their approach on electoral reform has been “one party decides all”. Their approach in the *Elections Act* has been that, as long as they support changes, they don't believe the public has a right to weigh in at all.

Mr. Speaker, the Yukon Party strongly disagrees. We believe that the Yukon's democracy and this Yukon *Elections Act* belong to the citizens of the Yukon.

Ms. Hanson: For a moment there, I thought the tape was on “repeat” and “rewind”.

In speaking to this at third reading, we are happy to see this finally brought to the vote. I would like to give credit to the Chief Electoral Officer's staff and the legal drafting team who worked with him. We do know that the Chief Electoral Officer has been working with perseverance for almost a year to get our attention, as Members of the Legislative Assembly, on the beginning of a suite of changes that need to be made to the *Elections Act* to keep it current and to make it effective.

We are pleased to see the focus on the establishment of a permanent register of voters and to see the broadening of the scope of the application of special ballots. This is a really important thing to take away — the notion that you have to meet some sort of criteria around whether or not you are deserving or worthy or in a particular place in order to be eligible to cast your vote by special ballot. We look forward to seeing the results of that in anticipation that we will see the same kind of expansion of the number of people using special ballots as we have seen in the federal election in Yukon and with the permanent register of voters to seeing a much broader representation of those citizens who are truly eligible to vote than we have to date, which will then make it incumbent upon us all to ensure that we get the people out to cast that vote,

because we are resting on our laurels assuming that we have a really high turnout. I think that we have been given a heads-up from the Chief Electoral Officer that, in fact, it may not be as high as we would like to believe.

Our view is that we would like to see the Chief Electoral Officer and his staff given the green light to get this work underway and to be able to come back to us, as he promised, by June 1 or so with the next tranche of amendments to the act.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on third reading of Bill No. 4?

If the member now speaks, he will close debate.

Does any other member wish to be heard?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I like those words — “be heard”.

I do want to thank the members opposite for their comments. I really want to thank the Member for Whitehorse Centre. When we had the Chief Electoral Officer in as a witness — more opportunity to be open and transparent on this process and to really straighten the record as to how we are allowing for many more people to have access to the voting process as opposed to what the Member for Lake Laberge would have you think. At that time, what we saw was a party that was researched in their questions and not only on specific changes and amendments to this act, but also on suggestions moving forward into the next round through that process. It is commendable that the members opposite in the Third Party came ready to debate and to engage.

But what we heard from the Yukon Party is really disappointing. If everything is always so bad — it’s one of those things where it’s hard to believe the narrative that everything is always so bad. We just saw the member opposite — the Member for Lake Laberge — literally reading from Hansard back to the Legislative Assembly the repeated rhetoric that we heard the day before about this process causing the member opposite such chagrin that he just cannot believe that we would go forth without consultation on these amendments, which is really an interesting narrative, Mr. Speaker, because if you think about it, the recommendations that came from 2015 are exactly where we started this conversation.

So, when the Yukon Party was in government in 2015 — these recommendations are based on that process. I don’t recall consultation with the public on that round of recommendations and initiatives from Members’ Services Board. The reason why I don’t remember it is because it didn’t happen, but if you listen to the Member for Lake Laberge now, he is just beside himself that we would not —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Member for Lake Laberge, on a point of order.

Mr. Cathers: Not only does the Premier seem to be in contravention of Standing Order 19(i), he has gone down quite a way into insulting language, but he seems to have missed the point: that there is a big difference when you’re expanding voting opportunities or contracting them.

Speaker: If I could just have clarification from the Member for Lake Laberge, you’re saying that there is insulting language?

Mr. Cathers: Yes.

Speaker: The Hon. Premier, on the point of order.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I’m at a loss to know which language he’s talking about.

Speaker’s statement

Speaker: I will review Hansard. Obviously, any exchanges in the House between members should not be in relation to any personal attributes or personal characteristics that have nothing to do with positions taken on legislation, bills, or debate. Of course, we all know that, but I will review Hansard to see whether the Premier strayed and was outside of the subject matter of the debate at third reading.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, I’m not intending to make any personal attacks, but basically I will continue the narrative here, if I’m allowed that leverage.

We are being asked very adamantly to do something that, when the Yukon Party was in power, they never did; they did not do it. I just think it is very interesting that the member opposite — and he has stated it many times, over and over again. We contemplated getting up on a point of order — that the member opposite repeated unnecessarily, over and over, the same narrative, but I think it’s interesting for this to be put in Hansard. I think it’s a good record to see the modus operandi of the member opposite. It is also good for the record to show that they are asking us to do something that they did not do, which is a consultation after the recommendations from a Chief Electoral Officer come in.

What is also interesting to note — and to clear the record — is that there will be an engagement coming up now that the bill has hopefully passed third reading. That will be a great opportunity for people to see all the changes and to see that the Member for Lake Laberge is incorrect — there are now more chances to vote than before, not less, by adding thousands of people to a permanent register, identifying voters who may not have ever been identified before, and reducing the ability for double voting which happened under the previous system — or could have happened under the previous system.

I am interested in why the member opposite is so against having thousands of people added to the list with special ballots being open to any Yukoner, yet they would rather we just keep an old system where, a year before an election, you can vote for a party when an election has not even been considered yet or candidates have not even been determined. Again, I stand by the recommendations and the process through the Members’ Services Board and the recommendations there. We believe that these are about integrity. We believe that these are about increasing the chances for Yukoners to vote.

It is also interesting that I have only heard from the Member for Lake Laberge. I haven’t heard from the Yukon Party as writ large as to what they think about the narrative that is being portrayed here by the one member. It would be interesting to see if they believe that this opens up — because what we’re hearing from the Yukon Party is that somehow

these recommendations are curtailing Yukoners' chances to vote. I think that this is very dangerous language and this is a very dangerous narrative.

I also think it's very interesting because there was in the past — once that the member opposite can remember — a time when there was all-party consensus in Members' Services Board on recommendations from the electoral office, yet there were several of these.

For them to then say that the one time decides an age-old tradition of kumbaya in Members' Services Board — that somehow again we are veering away from — it's misleading, and I disagree completely, because I'm also a member of Members' Services Board and that is just factually incorrect — that it is an age-old tradition.

Anyway, getting back to the legislation at hand, I believe that we went through a great process here. What we have done that the previous government didn't do — I will check back on the time through the Yukon Party's 14 years. I don't believe the Chief Electoral Officer ever appeared as a witness in the Legislative Assembly during a bill to debate those recommended changes.

In the interest of hoping that — past the narrative from the Member for Lake Laberge — Yukoners hear about the integrity directly from Mr. Harvey and directly from the electoral office as far as the process and that Yukoners hear past the narrative of the Member for Lake Laberge and hear the narrative of increasing — not decreasing — the number of ways for people to vote and the additions to a list that gets us out of being the last jurisdiction in Canada to have the opt-in as opposed to the opt-out system.

With that being said, it's always a pleasure being able to correct the record, Mr. Speaker. I will hope for unanimous consent on this bill. Something tells me that I'm not going to get it from the Yukon Party.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Disagree.

Mr. Kent: Disagree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Disagree.

Mr. Cathers: Disagree.

Ms. McLeod: Disagree.

Mr. Istchenko: Disagree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 12 yeas, six nays.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion for third reading of Bill No. 4 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 4 has passed this House.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: 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 (Mr. Hutton): Order, please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Motion re appearance of witnesses

Committee of the Whole Motion No. 2

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I move:

THAT from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 19, 2019, Mark Pike, chair of the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board, and Kurt Dieckmann, president and chief executive officer of the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board, appear as witnesses before Committee of the Whole to discuss matters relating to the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board.

Chair: It is moved by Ms. Dendys:

THAT from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 19, 2019, Mark Pike, chair of the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board, and Kurt Dieckmann, president and chief executive officer of the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board, appear as witnesses before Committee of the Whole to discuss matters relating to the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board.

Committee of the Whole Motion No. 2 agreed to

Chair: The matter now before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

Bill No. 200: *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Resuming general debate — Mr. Silver, down to four minutes.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I'll cede the floor to the member opposite.

Mr. Kent: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and welcome to Deputy Minister Mahar back to the Chamber.

I know that we have limited time here this afternoon before we welcome officials from WCB to answer questions of members.

I just wanted to touch on some Education questions that I had that we didn't get a chance to get to last time. I recognize that the Premier may not have all the information at his fingertips, but if he could get some of the specific information back to us, we would appreciate that.

The first one is with respect to teacher vacancies. Obviously, there are some positions that don't have a permanent teacher in them throughout the schools. I'm just wondering if the Premier is able to provide us with a total number now and then perhaps a breakdown of vacancies by community or by school either today or by way of legislative return or the next time we're up in general debate.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I too would like to welcome Ms. Mahar here today to answer some questions.

I don't have vacancy numbers with me now, but I can go through some of the numbers for actual staffing allocations.

Let me just double-check here. Actually, as far as vacancies right now, I believe that the number is 53, but if that number is not correct, I will get back to the member opposite.

Mr. Kent: Thanks; I appreciate that. If the Premier is able to give us a breakdown of that number by school, that would be helpful for our MLAs — particularly for those who represent rural ridings.

I know that when we left off last time, we were talking about Education in general debate, and I had asked a question about after-school programs policy. I think, when I looked back at Hansard, the Premier's response was more geared toward volunteers and the importance of volunteers and extracurricular activity — that type of thing. I guess the question that I had was with respect to the facility use policy for after-school programs.

I know that one school in the Whitehorse periphery has the opportunity to provide after-school programming through the use of their facility, but I am not sure about Golden Horn School, which is in my riding. Again, it is one of the most popular issues that I get contacted about by parents, because without after-school care, it is difficult for many parents to have their kids attend Golden Horn if they do want to. It did happen again, as I mentioned last time up. A constituent of mine had to make different arrangements for a downtown school. I believe that their child is at the Montessori school after getting accepted to Golden Horn, but the lack of after-school programs and after-school care in that facility was brought up.

Is there a facility use policy that the Premier can point me to so that I can point parents toward who are interested in this issue?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I have to correct the record. That number of 53 is not correct, so I will get back to the member opposite as to the current number on that as far as vacancies.

As far as with most schools, and if we are talking specifically about the school that the member is referencing, that would be through an agreement with the City of Whitehorse, and that agreement is available on the City of Whitehorse's website.

Mr. Kent: Again, we could probably go back and forth on that one a little bit, but what I will do is write a letter to the minister about it just outlining the specific concerns that I have heard and kind of what the school council understands to be some of the blockages in getting some sort of facility use agreement with Golden Horn, but I thank the Premier. As I said, I will follow up with his minister by way of a letter on behalf of my constituents.

One of the other issues that I wanted to touch on today is the attendance area review. I thank the minister — she did respond to a letter I sent. Her response was on October 7 of this year. I am just going to read a passage from the letter that she sent to me. My question was essentially about the timing and the consultation framework for the attendance area reviews in the Whitehorse area. A paragraph excerpt from her response to me is that: "We are planning to contact Whitehorse school councils later this school year to determine when the department can meet with them at their school council meetings to discuss the review. We will then analyze the information gathered from school councils to review the complete picture of Whitehorse school attendance areas." Then there is the important part that I want to ask the Premier about: "We then plan to implement any adjustments to attendance areas and establish a new attendance area for the Whistle Bend elementary school in time to ensure the successful opening of the new school, which is currently planned for the 2023-24 school year."

So, can the Premier just confirm that there won't be any adjustments to the Whitehorse attendance areas until that new attendance area for Whistle Bend is established in time for their school year, when the school is ready to open?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thanks to the member opposite for the question.

As the member opposite knows from his past experience, the *Education Act* requires every school to be assigned an attendance area. As part of the Whistle Bend elementary school project, we will be reviewing all existing Whitehorse attendance areas to establish an attendance area for the new school. We will meet with Whitehorse school communities and their community meetings this school year to discuss attendance areas and hear from them before any decisions are made. We will then consider the information specific to the member opposite's question, gather feedback from the school councils to determine any adjustments, and notify the school community in or before the fall of 2020.

Mr. Kent: I wanted to just touch on a few capital projects now that come from the Department of Education budget. They may currently be managed by the Department of Highways and Public Works, but nevertheless come from that budget. What I wanted to talk about was portables. Obviously, there were problems with portables at Robert Service School, in the Premier's riding.

There was mould found. I'm just curious as to if the Premier can provide us with an update. I know that the programs that were being run out of that portable I believe were moved inside the school while the department searched for alternate space. If the Premier can confirm for me too — I think one of the programs was the individual learning centre and I can't recall what the — sorry; I don't have the notes in front of me — I can't recall what the other program was. So, if he could tell us what programs those were, if they're still in the school or if alternative space was found — and then I will ask a couple more questions about the portables here in a second.

Hon. Mr. Silver: So, a little bit of background just to kind of frame the issues at Robert Service School — a mighty fine school, I might add.

In August 2019, school staff and the superintendent identified a short-term solution to address the space needs for the start of the school year. The principal contacted the City of Dawson, the school council, and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation to inform these groups and these governments that the plan to house the two programs that were formerly in the portables in September — so the next month — the school administration met with the City of Dawson, the school council, and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in to discuss continuing these arrangements and these agreements for the remainder of the school year — so as you can imagine, thinking on their feet once they addressed the issue or identified the issue to not only work in the short-term but then to provide a long-term plan.

So, the ILC — that's now in the ancillary room. There is no other space that can be used that would not adversely affect programming, so we're utilizing the ancillary room for that. The alternate potential solution of using the sensory room adversely affects the most at-risk students because of the programs that are already there and it also introduced a potentially disruptive element into that elementary wing which is — believe you me — very, very busy. This has a separate entrance that is deemed very critical to the functioning of programming — so looking at all different options, but that was not something that was readily available.

Now, the rec board — there are issues there. They don't necessarily like us using this approach because that ancillary room is used by so many different community organizations to provide other outside-of-school programming. But that is where we are right now as we look at this situation. The ancillary room of course is a school property, so we want to use that for school programming, first and foremost.

The grade 7 to grade 9 resource room programs are now in the counselling room. So, there is a separate entrance to that space and it is important for the students and for the programming to be able to be used in that area. Its location will result in minimal disruptions to other program areas — the

counselling room. The counselling room itself will move upstairs to the room that was designed for the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in education director. This space is available until the director is hired, which won't be for another six weeks, roughly. Interestingly enough, 10 years ago, that is exactly what was offered out of that office — back when Mr. Dragon was still a teacher and counsellor at Robert Service School.

The school has also indicated that, if Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in does hire an education director with the aim of working outside of the school, then they will be accommodating and working together to meet the needs of both Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and also the school.

Mr. Kent: With respect to that portable, obviously there was some money in the budget this year to fix up that particular portable. I am just wondering if the Premier has that dollar amount that was in this year's budget, that was allocated to fix up that portable prior to the mould being discovered. Then I guess the second part of that question is: What are the long-term plans? When will there be either a new portable built or installed in its place? Is that something that we can look forward to — perhaps in the next capital budget?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Chair, I apologize. We are here with the supplementary budget information in front of us, and there is no extra money for Education in the supplementary budget, so now we're going back and looking at the mains budget to find these dollar values for the member opposite.

In that, there was \$3 million over two years to build modular classrooms, or portables. The portables are beginning that procurement — so the 2019 tenders would go to Golden Horn Elementary for modular one and also for modular two, so those are two there. Also, Selkirk Elementary for the 2019 tenders — and then the 2020 tenders would be for the Robert Service School for those two modular classrooms.

Mr. Kent: I thank the Premier for that response. I was going to ask about the second modular at Golden Horn, but he did answer that in his reply there. That said, I think he mentioned Selkirk and then Robert Service. Are there plans for portables at any other schools, either in the Whitehorse area or in the communities, or is it just those three? There's Golden Horn one and two. The first one is installed, and I think they are expecting the second one sometime early in the new year. Then there is Robert Service, and I believe he mentioned Selkirk. Is that it for what is in the plans at this time as far as portable classrooms?

Hon. Mr. Silver: It is worth noting that there are other dollar values for ongoing maintenance in different schools. Right off the bat, just as a note, there's \$1.4 million this year for stabilization work at Ross River. That was in the budget as well. There are other numbers outside of the portables, for the record, but specific to the member opposite's question, I don't have any other information at this time to share on the portables.

It all comes down to enrolment, so we will continue to monitor enrolment and take a look at issues for modular classrooms based on that information as the school year numbers become available.

Mr. Kent: In Question Period earlier this Sitting, I asked the Minister of Education about the minutes of a school council meeting held at Selkirk School — I think it was about two and a half years ago, in February 2017 — but there was a study that was shared at that school council meeting with respect to renovations and modifications to the school. It didn't mention a portable.

I believe that I asked in Question Period if we could have a copy of that study, and I don't think that anything has been provided yet. I'm just hoping that the Premier can commit here today that we will get a copy of that study that was referenced in those minutes that I brought up in Question Period earlier this Sitting.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Just to jog my memory, I remember a conversation about the Selkirk parking lot, or was it specific to the actual asset itself? I'm not really sure which one.

Mr. Kent: My understanding is that it's specific to the building itself. It wasn't to do with the area around it like the parking lot or any of the projects that I think that are in the current budget. It was a study that was done by the Department of Education respecting some of the enrolment pressures at Selkirk and expansion to the school or improvements to the facility.

That's why I'm curious, because the portable for Selkirk is a more recent development, and then this was according to the minutes of that school council meeting shared with the council members at the time, but I'm hopeful that the Premier or his colleagues will provide us with a copy of that study as well.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I believe it is the study that was completed in November 2016 that the member opposite is referencing. I will look into whether or not we can provide a copy to the member opposite.

Mr. Kent: So, if the Premier can let us know if he can provide that copy — I guess it will probably be subject to ATIPP, and we would prefer not to go that route, but we'll look forward to receiving a copy one way or the other.

I wanted to touch briefly on the 10-year facility plan or the 10-year capital plan for Education facilities. I know we talked about that a couple of years ago on the floor of the Legislature. I talked to the Minister of Education about that. I'm just curious if that document has been completed. If it has been completed, when will the government be in a position to make that public and provide members of the House with that document as well?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Just to clarify, the government has created a five-year capital plan that includes school projects to ensure that all buildings are safe and available for use for many years to come. To be clear, this five-year capital plan is the capital plan for Yukon schools and the Department of Education. The capital plan provides more than \$29 million in capital funding this year toward building, maintaining, and modernizing schools. In that, it is important to remember and to recognize that all approved capital projects from the Department of Education are prioritized and managed through this plan — the five-year plan.

The school-related projects in the government's five-year capital plan include a new Whistle Bend school in Whistle Bend, portables — as we discussed, in the short- and medium-

term, such as new portables for Golden Horn, as we mentioned, and also Selkirk and then the secondary for the other school, for Robert Service — and working with Kluane First Nation, for example, on the relocation of Kluane Lake School to Burwash Landing, the new French first language secondary school, the additional site features at F.H. Collins Secondary School, and also ongoing stabilization work in the schools.

The 10-year capital plan that the member opposite is referencing — just to be clear, that was an internal facilities planning document that was developed as advice, and that advice was to help to inform the recommendations for the government's five-year capital plan. It does not reflect approved capital projects for the seasons, and therefore it is not published or shared externally. But to be clear again, all approved school construction and renovation projects are being prioritized and managed through the public five-year capital plan.

Mr. Kent: There are a couple of other issues that I wanted to touch on before we recess to allow time for the witnesses to come in. One of them is a capital project, and then the other one is with respect to the Yukon excellence awards.

I will talk about the Yukon excellence awards first. Those Yukon excellence awards are designed to award Yukon students for their achievements and not awarding schools for their excellence. As the Premier knows, there are a number of Yukon students who attend a secondary institution outside of the Yukon for a variety of reasons. This was brought to my attention by a constituent of mine. I am just curious if the Premier or his colleagues will take a look at the Yukon excellence awards with an eye to ensuring that the students are allowed the same opportunity and be awarded Yukon excellence awards based on their academic grades and standing and not necessarily where they attend school.

It's essentially rewarding Yukon students for their achievements regardless of whether it's a Yukon school they attend or if they're at school Outside — keeping in mind that their families are still here and they still maintain their homes here; they're just Outside at school for a variety of reasons.

Hon. Mr. Silver: As the member opposite does know as well, the ability for us to spend more per capita on students in the Yukon is something that we take pride in — than most other jurisdictions in Canada — dare I say North America — and these types of awards — lots of conversations both on the school level with awards and also through the department, writ-wide, on not only necessarily academic awards but also awards of achievement in general for students who may come from less means or show huge progress in a short time frame. It's really important to not only just award top academics but to also take a look at more of a collaborative kind of model when it comes to this. That's where — when we're looking at policy, whether it's the Yukon excellence awards, for example, or others — we have the advisory committee for Yukon education and these awards are currently for students who attend Yukon high schools, as the member opposite knows — for those who have been very successful in learning Yukon's content and that's really where the focus is right now. But again, there is an

advisory committee on Yukon education that can definitely take this under advisement.

Again, earning excellence awards does apply to students currently in Yukon schools.

Mr. Kent: I'll direct some correspondence or I'll have my constituent direct some correspondence to that advisory committee for Yukon education just to make their case. Again, I think the important part is that Yukon excellence awards should be designed to award Yukon students for their achievements — not Yukon schools for their excellence.

Again, the Premier mentioned that we made some changes during my time in government. I don't know if I was the minister at the time the changes were made, but we expanded the scope and the courses that were involved. That said, hopefully I will direct my constituent through the proper channels of this advisory committee for Yukon education.

Mr. Chair, I was going to ask one final question about the track and the field at F.H. Collins, but I will have to save it for next time — for Question Period or something like that — because it is 3:15 p.m., and seeing that we do have witnesses appearing for Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board this afternoon, I move that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Kent that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

Chair: Pursuant to Committee of the Whole Motion No. 2 adopted earlier today, Committee of the Whole will receive witnesses from the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board. In order to allow the witnesses to take their places in the Chamber, Committee will now recess and reconvene at 3:30 p.m.

Recess

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

Appearance of witnesses

Chair: Pursuant to Committee of the Whole Motion No. 2 adopted on this day, Committee of the Whole will now receive witnesses from the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board.

I would ask all members to remember to refer their remarks through the Chair when addressing the witnesses. I would also ask the witnesses to refer their answers through the Chair when they are responding to the members.

Witnesses introduced

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The witnesses appearing before Committee of the Whole today are Mark Pike, chair of the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board, and Kurt Dieckmann, president and chief executive officer of the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board. I would like to welcome them both here today and to thank them for the hard work to keep our workers protected in an ever-evolving, global economic climate.

Mr. Chair, historically, the focus has been on our workers' physical well-being. We are working hard to expand this focus from physical to mental. An amendment to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* of 2017 opened the door to developing important new regulations aimed at the prevention of psychological injuries in the workplace. The Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board is working toward developing such regulations for Yukon workplaces.

A new regulation is underway and will help prevent violence and harassment — significant causes of workplace psychological injury. Another major focus is on a review of our two major pieces of legislation — the *Workers' Compensation Act* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. All of these legislative and regulatory changes, along with the day-to-day work of our Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board, are critical to enabling our employers to remain competitive and our workers protected.

With these elements in mind, I would like to thank again Mark Pike and Kurt Dieckmann for their presence here today. We look forward to the discussions and interaction with our colleagues from across the way.

Chair: Would the witnesses like to make opening remarks?

Mr. Pike: Yes, I would, obviously. As the minister mentioned, I'm Mark Pike, and I'm the chair of the board of directors of the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board. With me today is Kurt Dieckmann, who is our president and CEO. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to appear here today and to participate in a discussion about the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board, its business, and workplace safety across the Yukon.

The *Workers' Compensation Act* requires us to appear in this House on an annual basis. It provides an opportunity to represent the work that our board of directors and every member of our organization is diligently and proudly performing on a daily basis — work that enhances the health and safety of all Yukon workers and ensures that the effects of workplace injuries are mitigated as much as possible.

As part of that, we are here to discuss our 2018 annual report. Just a quick mention — on page 2 of that report is a short document called "Year at a glance" which may in fact answer some of the questions that you will have as we go through this today.

Last year was an important year for us, as it represented the 100th anniversary of workers' compensation legislation in the Yukon. With 2018, our second century has dawned, and it is the first step on a new leg of our continued journey. As we move forward into the future, we see a landscape that is constantly changing, and it presents fresh challenges.

As our 2018 annual report focuses on, our resolve is strong, and we are well prepared for what lies ahead. If the first century of workers' compensation and workplace health and safety in the Yukon was about the physical health of workers, this new one will certainly be about their mental health and preventing psychological injuries.

We will carry our learning forward because we know that not all injuries are physical, and while we may be well versed

in broken bones, there is still much that we have to learn about broken minds. One thing is certain — both can be mended.

We are proud of our new strategic plan that was introduced in 2018. The plan provides us with a clear vision of Yukon's economy, workforce, and culture through the next five years. It was developed with input from our staff and our valuable stakeholder partners, and it was informed by our history of experience. Our strategic plan will guide us as we work toward preventing disability and our long-term vision of zero — zero injured workers, zero work-related fatalities, zero permanent impairments, and zero safety violations.

We have a stable compensation fund, and we made prudent financial decisions to protect the interest of employers and workers and the integrity of the fund itself. We have strong and positive partnerships with stakeholder organizations in the community. Their input and insight inform the path of our journey and help us to remain sensitive to the needs of our community.

The board of directors is proud of the work done every day by our staff, and we face challenges ahead, as does any high-performing organization. By employing our century of wisdom, knowledge, and experience and by continually striving to improve, we will achieve ever-greater successes in the future.

We are proud to appear before you today, and we welcome your questions. With that, I will turn it back over to the Chair.

Ms. McLeod: I want to thank the witnesses for appearing today. I don't have a lengthy set of questions today, but certainly I have a few.

Can the witnesses provide the House with the current information regarding the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board staffing and, in particular, how many FTEs are currently funded under the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board and whether that is translated into a full complement of staff?

Mr. Dieckmann: In 2018, our total FTE count was 85 staff. For 2019, with the act review and regulation review that we've been doing, we added two temporary positions to bring that total complement up to 87. Then we also do have budget dollars for casuals and AOCs to fill in during the summer season when people are off on vacation and other times when people are off, but they don't factor into our full-time equivalent count.

Ms. McLeod: Thank you for that answer. In the annual report, there is a \$768,000 increase shown to the wages and benefits package this year, so can the witness confirm whether this increase is tied to the annual YEU collective agreement economic wage increase?

Mr. Dieckmann: Yes, a large portion of that is tied to wage and salary increases. It's not just the collective agreement increases, though. There are staff who enter the organization at the bottom of the pay scale, so as they move up the pay scale, those salaries will increase as well, but the majority of that is tied to the salaries — yes.

Ms. McLeod: Thank you for that answer. According to the 2018 annual report, safety officers launched 40 investigations into workplace health and safety situations that required a deeper level of analysis than just an inspection. That

number is up from 28 in 2017. Can the witness provide a breakdown of the types of situations that these might be? What might result from these types of investigations?

Mr. Dieckmann: I do have that information. It will just take a second to find it.

The types of things that get investigated are where there are serious injuries — serious incidents that might occur in a workplace. We had some fatality investigations that were undertaken, and we also had some investigations into areas where workers felt that they may have had discriminatory action taken against them for bringing forward issues in the workplace or for trying to apply workplace safety measures. Those are the main types of things that do get investigated.

Ms. McLeod: In the cases of these 40 investigations that were done in 2018, were all of the situations rectified to the satisfaction of all parties?

Mr. Dieckmann: I guess I would ask: What do you mean by "satisfaction of all"? The investigations all reached conclusions. In a couple of instances, there were fines levied. In other instances, charges have been laid. I guess we would have to qualify what you mean by to satisfactory conclusion.

From my perspective, they were all handled well, handled professionally, and the outcomes were reasonable with what would be expected based on the evidence that was collected.

Ms. McLeod: When a workplace is inspected under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, owners, of course, may be presented with orders to correct deficiencies. Can the witness provide information on what types of deficiencies may be encountered — I suppose, what the most prevalent ones are — and a general idea of the process for dealing with these deficiencies?

Mr. Dieckmann: There are two parts to that question. The first part is the types of things that we find. It can vary considerably. It depends a lot on the industries that are being inspected.

In the construction industry, for example, if it is road construction, a lot of times we will find things like equipment maintenance issues. We will find things like operators not wearing seatbelts. We will find things like personal protective equipment not being properly used or properly maintained. In vertical construction — building construction — some of the more serious things that we find are failure to use appropriate fall protection. We will find things like equipment maintenance issues, but those are usually small tools, hand tools, saws without guards — those types of things.

When we are looking in office environments, a lot of the things that we find are a lack of hazard assessments — a lot of office environments don't think that there are any hazards, so they tend not to do some of the program things that need to be done, such as maintain safety committees and that type of thing. We will also find a lot of things like slipping and tripping hazards within office environments — simple things like people leaving lower drawers open on file cabinets and creating tripping hazards. Like I said, there is a broad range. I wouldn't say that there is any particular type of thing that we find in workplaces that we would hone in on.

During 2018, I believe that we did have a lot of eye injuries occurring, so we did have a bit of a campaign on eye injuries at that point. That was a lot of times due to the failure to wear proper eye protection.

How things are handled really depends on the nature of the occurrence or incidents that we find. Where we find things like slipping and tripping hazards, housekeeping issues, and minor issues with equipment maintenance, a safety officer will issue a corrective order to the employer. Where it's personal protective equipment, it could be orders issued to the employer, to the supervisor, or to the worker. Once an order is issued, there will be a discussion with the person to whom the order was issued as to what measures they need to take and by when they need to take them. Again, that is dependent on the nature of the hazard and how serious it is. If the order is complied with, the owner, employer, worker, or supervisor is required to contact our office and let us know that it was complied with. If we don't receive notification of compliance, we will go and follow up and do a re-inspection to verify that compliance has actually occurred.

Even in the cases where we do get compliance, we go and verify approximately 10 percent of those just to make sure that people did notify us and that they have, in fact, taken corrective measures.

If people don't comply with the orders that are written, then we can do things like issue administrative penalties, or we can prosecute through the courts for failure to comply.

Where there is an issue that occurs that is serious in nature — for example, if somebody is working at heights and not using appropriate fall protection — we will issue orders and either levy administrative penalties or, if it is serious enough, go to prosecution in those cases.

Ms. McLeod: I understand that there are different remedies, I guess, depending on the type of deficiency, but generally speaking, how much time is a business given to rectify any type of deficiency?

Mr. Dieckmann: As I said, that really depends on the nature of the issue. I can give you a couple of examples. If we saw a piece of mobile equipment with a broken windshield and it was obstructing the operator's vision but they were still able to safely operate, we would have a discussion with the employer to see how long it would take them to get a new windshield in. If it is a reasonable amount of time, we would then issue the order and have the corrective measures taken within the time frame that they are able to actually get it done.

If it is a serious incident — somebody is on a roof and they aren't wearing appropriate fall protection or aren't using appropriate fall protection, haven't been appropriately trained, or haven't been supplied with that — we will issue a stop work order and have it say that you are not to continue until it is corrected. So, that is correct immediately or don't continue with the operation.

Ms. McLeod: So, obviously it is not always Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board that goes into a workplace to find an issue. Sometimes there is a worker who brings it forward to the attention of the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board.

What is the process for a worker to raise concerns about an issue within the workplace?

Mr. Dieckmann: A little bit of a story, I'll start with — the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* is based on what we call the "internal responsibility system".

So, if a worker finds that there is something in their workplace that needs to be corrected, first and foremost, they should report it to their supervisor. Their supervisor can't deal with something that they don't know about, so we always recommend that, first of all, you go to your supervisor to see if it can be corrected.

If it's not corrected — if the supervisor or the employer doesn't take it seriously and they don't correct it, they can contact our office. We have a 24-hour answering service, so we can be contacted at any time. We have safety officers who are on duty 24 hours a day. They can contact our office. What will happen is the safety officer will — if they don't get the safety officer right away, they leave a message and the safety officer will get a hold of them as soon as they possibly can. We'll have a discussion with the worker as to what the issues are that they've seen in the workplace.

We will also maintain confidentiality — the best that we can. We can't always guarantee it because, if we do take further enforcement actions like levying fines or prosecution through the courts, then we will have to disclose that it did arise as a complaint. But we typically don't go in and first thing we do is say that we've had a complaint here and we're taking enforcement action. We will speak with the worker; then we will go and visit the workplace. We will do an examination. If we feel that there is actually something that we need to be dealing with, we'll deal with it appropriately.

Ms. McLeod: With respect to the regulations around employers providing WHMIS training to employees, what's the status of the implementation? Have there been any concerns brought forward by employers or employees around the implementation practices regarding WHMIS?

Mr. Dieckmann: The WHMIS regulations are now fully implemented. As part of our inspections, we will check the workplace and see if there are controlled products in the workplace. If there are, then we will verify that training has occurred, that safety data sheets are available in the workplace, and that people are aware of the chemicals that they're using — their storage and all of those kinds of things.

We haven't had a lot of employers or workers come to us and say that they're having difficulty implementing the system. The system actually hasn't changed a lot from what it was historically. A big part of the changes that occurred were the training requirements. There were some challenges initially, but we did a soft implementation on the WHMIS regulations to give people time to get the training done.

We have identified a number of resources where people can get the training. So, for just the general education piece, there is some really good online training. Northern Safety Network Yukon has a good training program available. So, there's lots of training available in the territory.

The access to training hasn't been an issue. Where we have run into issues or come and seen that people haven't provided

the training or aren't currently complying with the legislation, in most instances, it's a lack of knowledge. So first we educate and then we enforce.

Ms. McLeod: Can the witness provide information about the CHOICES incentive program — in particular, how much is offered to employers in the form of a rebate for safety training?

Mr. Dieckmann: It will just take me a second to find those numbers.

On the CHOICES program — for companies that are COR-certified, they can receive up to a 10-percent rebate on their assessments to a maximum of \$25,000. For other employers who are not COR-certified, they can receive rebates for providing training for their workers. There is a number of trainings that can be available. If they are providing workplace training — WHMIS training would qualify, first aid training, food safety and a number of other training programs — so any sort of training provided by a third party that has a safety element to it, they can receive a rebate. I don't have the amount of the rebate for the training available, but I can certainly get that and provide it to the minister to bring back to the House.

Ms. McLeod: Thanks to the witness for that. It's reported that, between 2017 and 2018, there was an increase of \$166,000 in penalties for infraction charges to Yukon businesses — things such as failing to meet registration deadlines, incorrect filing of employer payroll returns, and failure to pay the premiums. It seems to be a large increase.

So, first of all, is the witness able to break down the amount to give us an idea of how many businesses have had to pay penalties and what the average penalty might be worth to a business?

Mr. Dieckmann: I don't have a breakdown of the number of businesses, but we will get that number for you.

A couple of things that I can tell you, though — while the difference between 2017 and 2018 may seem like a fairly large increase, the reality of it is that the amount of penalties has been decreasing fairly steadily since 2010. Back in 2010, the penalties were around \$542,000 to workplaces. In 2011, it was \$500,000. In 2012 — \$495,000. Most recently, 2018 was \$390,000. But overall, they have been decreasing over that amount of time. In the past three years, they have been just over half of what they were back in 2010.

The good news is that a lot more companies are complying with the reporting requirements and getting their reported payroll in a lot sooner. We have taken a lot more proactive approach to contacting employers to try to make sure that they are aware of their reporting and payment obligations because the last thing we want to do is issue penalties in this area. We've gone a long way to try to knock them down.

Ms. McLeod: Given that penalties have been decreasing for the last eight years, I guess — nine years — can the witness explain for us what is behind the sharp increase for this past year? I might have thought it was because there were more employers, but I think the report reflected that there aren't more employers. In fact, there may be less. If I can just get the witness's thoughts on — why the increases?

Mr. Dieckmann: The reasoning for it — I don't have that information, and it's not something that I think we can really establish. It's really difficult in a jurisdiction our size to establish trends or anything like that. But we do know that, sometimes when there are increases in payroll — so when we have overall increases in assessable payroll — that can certainly have an impact on it, because when you have an increase in payroll and an increase in the amount of assessment that has to be paid, you can get sort of a natural occurrence of — those who don't pay will have higher bills for failure to meet the reporting requirements.

Ms. McLeod: I'm going to assume from that, then, that there has not been an increase in the amount of penalty required to be paid for a certain infraction — and you can correct me if I'm wrong in that, but I gather that's the case.

Of course, we're always happy to hear about outreach and education programs, and we are happy to see that more people in 2008 were reached in the communities than previously, due to an increase in community events and school safety awareness programming. Can the witness confirm how much funding was allocated to community outreach overall in 2018-19 and how that might compare with the year previous — 2017-18? How much of that amount was dedicated to in-school programming?

I realize that might be fairly detailed.

Mr. Dieckmann: As far as the numbers break down, yes, I'll have to bring that back for the minister to present in the House, because I don't have the exact figures for the outreach. But what I can say for sure is that the amount of outreach that we do is fairly extensive, and a lot of times, the change in the amount of money spent on outreach will come from where it is we actually go to.

Our consultants who go out into the schools try to make it to every school in the territory on a two-year cycle. So, if we're going to the more remote communities, there will be more money spent in those areas — but we have been working very hard.

The other place where we do a lot of outreach is going to events that are held within the community. So, we will go out into the community — to the Geoscience Forum, for example. We had people at the Geoscience Forum; we have people go to the Women in Trades and Technology, and so those are the types of things that we do. We also have programs for foreign workers. We will provide training and education for foreign workers through programs that are run as part of the foreign worker program.

Ms. McLeod: I want to turn to the compensation fund position. We have all heard that it reported at 132 percent, and as I understand it, the board is mandated to maintain 125 percent plus or minus four percent, so 129 percent would be the upper end.

What is the dollar value that represents the difference between 129 percent and 132 percent?

Mr. Pike: Just hang on a second as I look at the numbers to do a quick math calculation in my head here, so you just have to give me a second.

The three percent that we are talking about would amount to about \$4 million to \$5 million. I am doing that math in my head.

Ms. McLeod: Thanks for that — that is close enough for me.

Obviously, we have all read about the board's position in the paper, so there will not be a further rebate going out to employers. Is the board planning any action to bring the position down to 129 percent, say, by way of a premium discount?

Mr. Pike: Yes, the board has a funding policy in place — not specifically the cash rebates, but a funding policy in place that says that if we are overfunded, we return that overfunding to the employers who pay by way of a rate subsidy.

The number that we're talking about here is at December 31, 2018 — the board has approved a subsidy of \$2.9 million for the current year, 2019. An additional \$2.7 million is to be returned to employers in 2020.

The board is still committed to getting to that range. As I mentioned, we have a funding policy that is designed to do that, and that's what we're relying on to get where we want to be.

Ms. McLeod: Thank you very much for that information.

When the witnesses appeared in the House last fall, we spoke somewhat extensively, I think, about the legalization of cannabis and what issues or policy changes might arise from the new legislation. At the time, the witness stated that the board would be launching a major campaign in the early spring of 2019 to speak to the issue of cannabis impairment in the workplace.

Can the witness provide information around this campaign — for instance, what it entailed, what the cost was to run it, the length of time that it ran if that's relevant, and whether the board received any feedback on its effectiveness?

Mr. Dieckmann: I just need to find the information that I have on that.

I can't find the information, so I'll wing it as much as I can, and then we'll get back with any answers that I don't have for you.

We did run an extensive campaign last year related to cannabis. The dollar value of it — I'm not exactly sure, but we can get back to you on that. I do believe that our social marketing in that area was around \$30,000, but we will get the exact figures for you.

We ran the campaign through the beginning of the year well into mid-year. We did get a fair amount of feedback from employers indicating that they could really use some additional resources to help them with understanding their obligations when it comes to cannabis, so we provided a considerable amount of material on our website — links to organizations where there were some very good policies available.

We also worked with a lot of employers who already had substance abuse policies in place just to help them to understand that, really, there wasn't a lot of difference from them dealing with cannabis than there was for things like alcohol and alcohol impairment.

Interestingly enough, one of the things that we did tell employers was that, if they are managing impairment — and all types of impairment and not just focusing on the cannabis — it would make their policies much more effective. There was an interesting newscast on CBC just recently where they talked about one of the things that was noted through the cannabis implementation, and we saw a similar thing here in the territory. A lot of organizations, through updating their policies on cannabis, took a much different approach to the management of alcohol and even came to the conclusion, in a lot of places, that some of the things that they were doing as far as their alcohol policies needed to be changed to remove all instances where there were opportunities for impairment within the workplace.

As far as the numbers go, we'll get back to you on that, and I can also send some of the materials that we did provide for workers.

Ms. McLeod: Has the board had any further conversations around the issue of edibles? That is going to be the newest, I suspect, issue to come forward. Has the board had to adapt any policies to bring them in line with the legalization of edibles?

Mr. Dieckmann: Actually, what we saw with the introduction of edibles was a great opportunity to reintroduce some of the work that we had done back in 2018, because edibles don't change the landscape in that what we are still talking about here is impairment and how workplaces manage impairment. But it was a great opportunity to re-engage in that conversation and it was a great opportunity for us, when we are going into workplaces and having conversations with them about their impairment policies, to just remind them that, if they hadn't already updated them based on cannabis introduction, this was a good opportunity.

What we have found is that most employers who already had policies in place or who have put policies in place, while they were very nervous about the introduction of legalized cannabis back in 2018, they were far more comfortable with having the discussions and recognizing that the issue of impairment is a solvable issue within the workplace. We saw it as an opportunity and we took it.

Ms. McLeod: I want to move on for a few minutes to the review of the acts — the WCB and occupational health and safety. What prompted the review? What sorts of issues is the review looking to address?

Mr. Dieckmann: What prompted the review with us opening the act for the PTSD presumption and the regulations for psychological injury — that provided an opportunity for a discussion with the minister. She was keenly interested in knowing where our acts stood as far as whether or not they needed refreshing. After we had that discussion, the minister said that she would like to look into having a review of both of our acts done, and she subsequently provided us with direction to open up the acts and to look at them and modernize them.

Some of the issues — the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* especially is very, very dated. It was first introduced back in 1986, I believe — 1984 or 1986; somewhere in there — but it was based on legislation from other jurisdictions that had been drafted in the late 1970s, so it is sorely in need of review.

There are a lot of things in that act that are — there are things in the act that aren't defined. There are different workplace parties that are identified in the act that are undefined or we're not sure if they have the same duties, so there were a number of issues. The safety committees — the section on safety committees and safety programs is intermingled, so it's not really clear in there what is being talked about when people are reading through it. There are a number of issues that we have run into over the years that really require that act to be updated.

As far as the *Workers' Compensation Act* goes, it is a lot newer. It was last updated in 2008. But as you work with an act, issues come up and so what we've done over the years is, where people have raised concerns with the act or where we have recognized that there are problems with enforcement of the act, we have noted them and provided that information to them and she had agreed that yes, it would be time to open that act as well. That's how we got there.

Ms. McLeod: So, given what you've told me, would it be fair to say that the changes anticipated to both of these pieces of legislation are housekeeping in nature?

Mr. Dieckmann: I would say that for the *Workers' Compensation Act*, a lot of it is housekeeping. For the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, it's a little bit more than housekeeping, but a lot of it is clarifying and getting clarity of the understanding of what is contained in the act.

Ms. McLeod: Thank you for that. So, can the witness outline for us the consultation process that the board will be using and how members of the public can weigh in on this review?

Mr. Dieckmann: I have a lot of information on this, so I will try to keep it relatively succinct, if I can.

We have already started consultation. We kicked off in early November with a public meeting in Whitehorse. We have done a public meeting in Haines Junction already and we are scheduled tomorrow to go to Watson Lake — we have two public meetings scheduled in Watson Lake for tomorrow. We have been making people aware — there have been regular ads running on both local radio stations — CKRW and CHON-FM — so those have been advertised fairly extensively. We have done outreach through social media — Facebook — I believe we have a Facebook page up and running. We have done direct contact with approximately 60 organizations that represent either local governments, First Nation governments, employer organizations, or labour organizations to inform them of the consultation. We have also invited those 60 different organizations to meetings — we are calling it our “external advisory group” — and we have had two external advisory group meetings so far, and we have two more scheduled — one at the end of the month and another one in December. Then we have a final public meeting scheduled for January.

We are also inviting organizations. If they are not able to make it to one of our public consultations, they can contact us and we will set up a one-on-one meeting with the organization to get their input. If it takes more than one meeting, we are willing to meet with them until they are able to provide us with all the input that they need.

So, we have a large number of channels available for people to get in contact with us and to participate in the outreach.

Ms. McLeod: So, the witness mentioned Haines Junction, Watson Lake, Whitehorse, and that there has already been a meeting in Whitehorse. Are there any other communities that are contemplated for public meetings? How many public meetings would the witness anticipate for Whitehorse, or was that one the only one there's going to be?

Mr. Dieckmann: Sorry, I forgot to mention — yes, we are going to go to Mayo and to Dawson City as well. In each of the communities that we go to, we're having two meetings. So, in Watson Lake, we'll be meeting tomorrow evening, and then we'll have a meeting on Thursday morning. In Whitehorse, we did our kickoff meeting, which already happened, and then we have another public meeting planned for January.

We are also inviting anybody who would like to write in to us — you know, if they can't make any of the meetings, we're inviting any sort of written submissions that people could provide, and we will have two surveys. The first survey, we're hoping will go online very shortly, and the second survey will be either toward the end of December or early January — we'll get the second survey out.

The first survey is more just to gather some general information, and the second survey will be more detailed, based on some of the issues that we have identified through what we had already collected and people had already told us and where we have identified issues with the act, and then we'll also be including some of the things that we hear through the public consultation. If issues come up, then we'll also include those, because we do recognize that there are things in the act that we are not aware of as being issues, and so we're hoping that people will bring those to our attention.

Ms. McLeod: Can the witness provide us with a timeline as to when the board anticipates new acts to be brought before the Legislature or are ready to be brought before us? I understand these are the early stages of this process, but if we can have an estimation, that would be great.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I anticipate that we will have information brought to us on the act renewal. We'll bring all of the information back through our committee on legislation. I don't have the exact timeline on that right now, but as you have heard the witnesses today — they have spoken about wrapping up the consultation and then bringing a “what we heard” document.

We are working with our Department of Justice, along with the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board and the officials there, to bring information back to our Cabinet Committee on Legislation. Then we will be bringing it through our legislative process.

Again, as I stated several times, this is a very important priority for us, and we will be bringing it through in a timely manner.

Ms. McLeod: I am going to guess then that we are looking at a year down the road at least. You can correct that assumption if that's off the mark — if it's going to be longer or shorter — but that's what I'm going to go with today.

We have had a concern raised with our office regarding the possibility that WCB is planning to legislate the use of helmets for workers using snowmobiles or ATVs in their line of work — for example, placer miners using ATVs on the work site. Can the witness comment on this and maybe what the board's plans are in this regard?

Mr. Dieckmann: That is already a requirement under occupational health and safety regulations. Anyone operating snowmobiles or ATVs — any of those types of equipment — are required now to be wearing a helmet if they are operating it in the course of their work.

Ms. McLeod: Some people would put forward that it is not always in your best interest to wear a helmet, depending on the weather and other conditions. Is this something that is going to be considered for review if someone brought it forward during the review of this piece of legislation?

Mr. Dieckmann: That is currently contained in the regulations. The regulations are not under review, so, no, that's not part of what's coming forward in this review. It wouldn't be something that we would be bringing forward to the government.

Ms. McLeod: So, the act is being reviewed. The regulations that are derived as a result of the act are not being reviewed. It seems to me that, if you are changing the act, then there may be a requirement to change the regulations as well, but I will just leave that there.

On page 2 of the annual report, it states that there were four worker fatalities, and on page 6, it says that there were three. Can the witness confirm the number of worker fatalities in 2018 and perhaps explain if this is simply a difference in reporting or if there is some other reason for the difference in the number?

Mr. Dieckmann: Sorry — those were pages 2 and 6.

That is a difference in reporting. We report fatalities that are on the compensation side of the business. It would be where there is a claim resulting from a fatality, but we also, as an organization, recognize that there are times when there is no claim filed, but we still count those fatalities. We may investigate something on the occupational health and safety side, and we count that, but when we are reporting our fatalities for the purpose of our annual report, we use the Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada's reporting structure so that we are consistent across the country. For that, it is where there is a claim for compensation, but when we talk about our target of zero, we are not limiting it only to where there's a compensable claim. There are incidents where you may have a worker who does not have any dependants or any beneficiaries, and so nobody files a claim. We still feel that it is necessary to report those.

Ms. McLeod: I want to thank the witness for sorting that out for us.

When the witnesses appeared in the House last year, we spoke a little about funding that was expected to be provided in the 2018 year to Northern Safety Network Yukon to the tune of \$557,400, with an additional amount of \$90,452 for return-to-work training funded under a separate agreement.

Can the witness confirm whether these amounts have changed, or if this is what was provided for services from this organization?

Mr. Dieckmann: The Northern Safety Network did use the full budget allotment from the agreement that we do have in place with them. In that agreement, there is a cost-of-living escalator built in for subsequent years, so it does go up slightly on a year-over-year basis.

Ms. McLeod: When an individual is unable to return to work for whatever the reason and is collecting WCB benefits and then there's a decision with respect to not continuing those benefits, what is the standard appeal process? Could the witness outline what steps an individual must follow if they wish to appeal such a decision, and what is the highest decision-making body that the worker can appeal to if he or she is not satisfied with the decision that was made?

Mr. Dieckmann: I would start by saying that I would recommend that, if a worker does feel that any decision made by the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board is not correct, they go to the Workers' Advocate Office where they can get free assistance with the claims process, but if a worker does wish to appeal a decision, the first level of appeal goes to a hearing officer, which is an internal resource.

We have hearing officers who will do a thorough review of the claim and make a decision based on the evidence before them. If there is new evidence provided at the time of that hearing officer review, then that new evidence would go to the original decision-maker so that they can reconsider their own decision. If they say that the new evidence doesn't change their decision, then the hearing officer will continue with that review. Once that hearing officer review is complete, they will issue a decision. If the worker does not agree with the decision that is rendered by the hearing officer, they can then continue on with their appeal and go to the Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal.

The Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal is an independent body. They are a creature of the legislation, so they are created through the legislation. They are completely independent of our organization, and their decision is final and binding on the worker, the employer, and the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board.

Ms. McLeod: Is there an ability to seek redress through the courts?

Mr. Dieckmann: A person can ask for a judicial review. Judicial review will generally look at whether or not there was jurisdiction to hear the case and whether or not the decision is within reasonable bounds. But they don't tend to overturn decisions. They may send a decision back. But there is always the opportunity for judicial review.

Ms. McLeod: I think I have one more question.

What's the role of the minister in the appeals process? So, in the *Workers' Compensation Act*, section 125 states that: "The Minister may, by written order, require the board of directors to investigate any matter under its jurisdiction in the manner requested by the Minister."

So, if an individual has been wrapped up in the process of appealing a decision for any amount of time and brings the

matter to the minister for investigation, what then is the role of the minister in this situation, as I say, with regard to section 125 of the act?

Mr. Dieckmann: As it says in the act, the minister can refer anything to the board of directors to investigate. The minister cannot become involved in any claim for compensation. That is outlined in the statute. But if the minister feels that there is a sufficient enough reason to ask for an investigation, the minister could ask the board to investigate any matter under the act. If a decision has been made by the Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal though, that is binding on us and the minister can't interfere in a decision of WCAT. So, I guess it would really depend on what we're being asked to investigate. If it was process or something like that, there could be an investigation. But if it was the correctness of the decision, that would be something that would be very difficult for us to investigate if WCAT has already ruled on something.

Ms. McLeod: I am going to end my questions there. I want to thank the witnesses for their good answers today and then I want to turn the session over to my colleague.

Ms. Hanson: I welcome the witnesses as well this afternoon. I just want to follow up on a couple of questions raised by my colleague from Watson Lake.

In the response to the question about worker fatalities, we have the data with respect to 2017 and 2018. I just wanted to know from the witnesses: Have there been any fatalities in 2019?

Mr. Dieckmann: I am very sad to say that, yes, there have been three fatalities in Yukon so far in 2019.

Ms. Hanson: Can the witness tell us in what sectors those fatalities were?

Mr. Dieckmann: One was in the outfitting industry, one was in mineral exploration, and one was flight services.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the witness for that sad news.

In the response to the question about the board issuing penalties for infractions — and the witness compared it to data from 2010 and noted the decrease, so the last two years would have given us the impression that things had gone up. I was just curious because, when I looked at the Occupational Health and Safety branch's activities in the annual report, there's mention of visits to workplaces. In 2018, it was noted that the OH&S branch conducted 237 inspections and issued 840 orders to correct deficiencies and issued 21 penalties, 10 of which were to employers, four to supervisors, and seven to workers.

What I'm interested in is two things. Those sound like high numbers to me in terms of 840 orders to correct deficiencies, but I'm interested in knowing — given that the witness was keen to tell us in the previous area in terms of the financial penalties that there had been a change or a decrease — so, just a little bit of the historical perspective and then if he could give us a sense of what the trend is for 2019.

Mr. Dieckmann: So, are you looking for the trend in OH&S penalties?

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Dieckmann: Okay. I don't have that number with me, but I would be happy to get it for the members.

Ms. Hanson: I'm also curious — we have a number of orders issued, and it says that there were 237 inspections completed. The reason why I'm asking about the number of inspections is that I have had the opportunity to have conversations with Mr. Dieckmann — I think as recently as this summer — with respect to some matters with respect to WCB and some concerns that I had raised in this House. I was very happy and pleased that we had an opportunity to meet.

One of the conversation pieces was that there's a change in the nature of Yukon's workplace and the number of workplaces, particularly when you look around Whitehorse and the growth here — and the nature of work sites, I guess I would say.

When I see that in 2018 there were 237 inspections, I'm trying to get a sense of — is that up or down, or is there is a change? When I asked about the change since 2010 — if, in 2010, there had been \$500,000 in penalties issued and now it's down to \$390,000, that sounds like a good trend — are there more inspections being conducted in the Yukon because we have more work sites, or am I misunderstanding the fact — and it is my perception only — that there are more workplaces? Is that too complicated to follow?

Mr. Dieckmann: I think I know where you are going with this. First, I need to clarify one thing: The penalties that we were talking about when the Member for Watson Lake was asking are assessment penalties, so they are not OH&S penalties. As far as the number of workplaces, there are more workplaces in the territory now than there were back in 2010. There is a lot more economic activity in the territory than there was back then. The nature of our work has become more complex. If you look back in 2010, you will probably find that there were more inspections and more orders written, but what we are finding now — in 2018, in this report, there were 40 investigations that took place. Those usually start from an inspection and turn into a very long and drawn-out process. As we go through and do a thorough investigation of the workplace, the policies and the procedures, and what is happening in the workplace, it usually involves multiple visits. So, the amount of time in the field is the same, but the number of inspections has gone down, and the number of orders that will be generated from one of those investigations can be considerable and then also can end up in penalties either through administrative penalties or prosecutions in the court, which then take a whole bunch more time as well.

To make a long story even longer, the complexity has increased, and the nature of our investigations has become much more in-depth than it was in previous years.

Ms. Hanson: That is reflected in the notion that, if there were 237 inspections and 840 orders issued — then that kind of correlation, I would imagine.

In line with this notion of inspections and the responsibilities for workplace safety, I was pleased that, this summer, the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board implemented a new — what is called a "good Samaritan report" function. I congratulate the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board for doing so. It's on their website. Although I have to say this afternoon that I had one of those "okay,

boomer” moments because one of the people in my office — a much younger person — said to me that this function is really hard to find, that it can’t be accessed from the home page of the website, and that reporting an unsafe workplace also can’t be done from the home page — whether a good Samaritan or worker.

I had gone looking for this after the conversations this summer, and I was pleased to see it and still am. I guess what I’m looking for, as we do these continuous exercises in improvement, is whether the witness has plans to assess the state of the Workers’ Compensation Health and Safety Board’s website in order to create a plan of action for greater website usability so that somebody doesn’t have to go through several places to be able to make that good Samaritan report. I don’t imagine that there are that many of them, but it’s just the importance of having that function accessible and then known. That’s the second part of the question — in terms of any intention to make that function known more publicly.

Mr. Dieckmann: I’m really glad that you asked that question, actually, because it is something that we are definitely looking at. We’re examining our website. We have recognized that there are some challenges with the platform. It is getting old, and so we are working on that.

It also fits very well into our act review that we’re doing, because we do recognize that, with both the regulations on violence and harassment and with updates to the act, there will be a lot more demand on us to be providing our stakeholders with good information that they can use so that they are able to comply. Our website is an extremely important tool in that work that we are doing. So, yes, we will be doing it. It won’t be an immediate fix, but it is definitely going to happen and it will happen in conjunction with the review of our acts.

Ms. Hanson: I’m pleased to hear that. I have to say that I have had one or two people over the last month tell me that they’ve used the good Samaritan function, which I think actually surprised me when they said that.

Over the last couple of years, we have raised questions with respect to coordination between WCB and the Hospital Corporation around fully utilizing the MRI. We asked the WCB about whether or not they had had any conversations with the Yukon Hospital Corporation. Then we also asked the Hospital Corporation a week later, but that was in 2017. What we’re wondering is: To what extent have the Workers’ Compensation Health and Safety Board and Hospital Corporation worked out any arrangements to minimize the number of people being sent south for MRIs and maximizing the use of a machine that has a finite life? If we’re going to get the most out of it, we should be using it more often. We were sort of looking at it as an opportunity for cost-sharing — perhaps extra staff to make sure that, as they do in other jurisdictions, this expensive piece of technology is available more than sort of 9:00 to 5:00.

Mr. Dieckmann: Thank you very much for that question. I was hoping it would come up, because I am very pleased to say that we have an agreement with the Hospital Corporation, and we are using the MRI to the full amount that we can. We’re at the point now where the only times that we’re

sending people out for MRIs is if it is in conjunction with a referral outside the territory.

I think last year, we had approximately 80 percent of our MRIs done locally. This year to date, two-thirds of our MRIs have been done locally. This is a really good-news story, and I’m really happy to be able to say, yes, we do have an agreement in place.

Ms. Hanson: I am very happy to hear that, so I appreciate the witness bringing that information forward.

Also in 2017 — it’s amazing what you find when you go back and look at Hansard — we had actually raised some questions with respect to — at that time, in response to the potential for the conversation, I said that you could be a money-maker, but don’t believe that there’s any money that would be changing hands on that MRI business.

In 2017, I had indicated that there were potential concerns for all workers under OH&S with respect to questions that had come up in December of 2016, so the year previous. There had been issues raised that indicated to us as members that Health and Social Services had been working with Workers’ Compensation Health and Safety Board to look at mitigation and working to ensure that testing and retesting in childcare centres was done and that mitigation measures had taken effect. I had asked the witnesses at that time what the role of Workers’ Compensation Health and Safety Board and Occupational Health and Safety had been — not so much with government facilities, but with private day homes and daycares.

It was interesting — and I’m not sure if you remember this, but I’m going to raise it, because this is current, given the focus this month on radon testing throughout the territory. Mr. Dieckmann had indicated to us that, in 2008, the Workers’ Compensation Health and Safety Board had done a large radon project, which was actually done at the request of the federal government, to assist them in radon mapping. The witness obviously remembers that. They had looked at facilities that were private facilities and government facilities, and they had since gone back to all the places where the facilities did not meet the standards to do long-term retesting to verify whether or not they met Health Canada standards.

When we asked the question about revisiting, we were told then that the Workers’ Compensation Health and Safety Board had started doing long-term testing in 2016 and had provided some information to those day homes that were not meeting the standards and were issued orders. I asked: Under occupational health and safety, is there a requirement for day homes and private daycares to ensure that there is testing to ensure that there is no radon present in their facilities? The response is that all employers are required to ensure that their facilities — but how do we know that, Mr. Deputy Chair? I speak to this from the point of workers’ safety.

How does Workers’ Compensation Health and Safety Board and the Occupational Health and Safety branch satisfy itself that the safety of workers in private day homes and daycares — facilities that are often at ground level or in basements, which is where we see the higher incidence or high testing levels, at least from our experience. What kind of follow-up has been done, and what assurance does

Occupational Health and Safety have that whatever follow-up was done? Maybe there's an update on that follow-up from 2016, but it would be helpful to get it on the record.

Mr. Dieckmann: As I had mentioned earlier, whenever we do any kind of inspection or issue any orders, we follow through to the end to make sure that order is complied with. So, if we don't get notification of compliance, we will go back into the workplace.

With regard to the radon testing, we did follow up with all the facilities that we had tested that were over the limits — I believe it's 400 becquerels — yes, 200 becquerels, 400, you have to do immediate — sorry, you have two years to get into compliance.

We have gone back and verified in all those places that they had done the remediation that is required.

Ms. Hanson: In general terms, what steps has Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board taken to make radon measurements part of a workplace hazard assessment — given, as the witness just mentioned, that Health Canada has set safe radon levels at 200 becquerels per cubic metre? So, we certainly have a heightened awareness that radon testing is something that needs to be done and that radon is real.

Is this part of hazard assessment in workplaces?

Mr. Dieckmann: What we do, the way we handle it is, when we are meeting with employers, when we're looking at employers' programs, we discuss with them what types of hazards that they would regularly run into in their workplace. In buildings where there is a high potential for radon, we will have discussions with those employers or with those building owners, telling them that it is something that should be included in their hazard assessment and that testing should be done on a regular basis.

We work with a lot of different employers to provide them with information on how to go about testing. We don't do the testing ourselves in most of those instances. It is encouraging the employers to do it and then following up with conversations to see if they have done the radon testing and, as I say, helping them to understand how to go about it — what times of year, how to develop those programs — that is the approach that we take.

Ms. Hanson: Just to confirm — is this part of a checklist in terms of workplace hazard assessment? Is radon awareness and testing part of a workplace checklist?

Mr. Dieckmann: We don't have a workplace checklist for all hazards that need to be done. It would be really difficult for us to come up with checklists for all industries. Those are more conversations that we have with the employer to help them to understand what they should be doing. We have helped employers to develop their own checklists as to the types of hazards that they want to be reviewing on a regular basis, but it is not something — we don't have a checklist posted on our website saying “check these boxes”.

Ms. Hanson: My follow-up would be, then — Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board worked with the federal government in 2008 to do mapping of radon through the territory. How does that mapping of radon's presence throughout Yukon — how does that inform in which

workplaces you would raise the issue of radon as a potential workplace hazard, or does it?

Mr. Dieckmann: As far as the radon map goes — if a workplace is in an area that has known high-radon concentrations, yes, it is something that we would bring to the attention of the employer. That being said, you may be in an area on the map that has a high incidence of radon, but a particular building may not exhibit it. What we would tell the employer is, “You should do your testing.” If it comes back that there isn't radon, then what we would suggest is that your retesting periods could be longer than if it's a building that came back showing high levels of radon and that remediation was necessary.

Ms. Hanson: I don't want to belabour the point, but I just want to confirm. So, there is no checklist, but are inspectors or those who are responsible for working with employers aware of this mapping that was done 11 years ago?

Mr. Dieckmann: We do have an occupational hygienist at the board, and he has been working extensively with — radon being just being one of the potential occupational exposures. He is very well aware. Newer safety officers probably wouldn't be as aware of the radon map and that radon mapping project, but, yes, we do have people who are very aware of the incidence of radon, the areas where it occurs, and the higher areas of occurrence.

Ms. Hanson: So, when we go through some of the things that we were looking at as we were going through both the reports and other related documents, it appears to us that the code of practice for young workers, as of last year's appearance for the witnesses, hadn't been updated, and it still hasn't been updated since 2009. I'm wondering, given that this code is the code of practice for young workers and is now 10 years old, is there a plan to update the code of practice for young workers?

Mr. Dieckmann: We have reviewed that code of practice, and we do feel that, as it is right now, it is still a good document. I mean, the focus on it is making sure that workers are properly oriented to the workplace and that they are properly trained in the work that they do. It sets out how to deal with situations that arise where a young worker may come back and say that they don't have a clear understanding. It talks about how employers should be verifying that the workers are properly trained. So, we feel that code of practice is meeting the need that it does have right now, so we're not looking to update it, but we do review our codes of practice.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the witness for that response. I asked the question because it's my observation that accepted claims for the 15- to 19-year age group have risen since last year. I understood from the previous response when replying to the Member for Watson Lake that there's a two-year cycle of doing outreach, but if there has been even a slight increase in claims in that 15- to 19-year-old age group, do the witnesses have a plan to do further outreach to that age group in order to diminish workplace injuries in our youngest workers?

Mr. Dieckmann: The work that we're doing in the schools is very comprehensive, and we will continue to do that work. When I look at the injury numbers for that group, it's a

very small increase. I think it's an increase of one injury. Statistically, it's really not relevant.

What I will do is — we'll take a look at the young worker incidence over, say, the last few years, and I'll get back to the House and let you know if we're seeing a general increase or a general decrease in that, because I can't really speak to it. I don't have the numbers in front of me.

Ms. Hanson: I do appreciate the witness getting back on that, because it's those kinds of trends that actually sometimes tell a story that we may not have observed.

One of the other things that we noted was that, in the last three years, not a large number — so this is very small, like 3.4 percent by our calculation — of claims accepted by the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board have been from workers aged 65 or older who appear to fall under the provisions of the legislation.

Can the witnesses speak to whether or not there are any claims that are rejected based on having reached the age of eligibility for old age pension, old age security?

Are there any age-related limitations? Is there any point when you are too old to get workers' compensation if you are working?

Mr. Dieckmann: No worker is rejected for eligibility to compensation due to their age.

In the legislation, there is a restriction that any worker who is 63 years or older is only eligible for indemnity payments — wage-loss payments — for a maximum of two years following the injury, but they are eligible for all other benefits — such as medical benefits, et cetera — for life.

Ms. Hanson: I guess that response is really what I was trying to get at. We talked earlier and Mr. Pike had outlined that, last year, we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the workers' compensation framework. In a time when most people wouldn't live to 65, the notion was that, if you lived long enough to get an old age pension, you wouldn't be working, and so therefore you wouldn't need to have compensable payments made because you would be on a pension. But in the 2019-20 era, we are now talking about many seniors going back to work because the combination of their OAS, CPP, and GIS don't cut it in terms of the cost of living.

Is it a legislative restriction? Is it something that is covered in the survey with respect to recognizing the reality that 2019 is very different from what it was in 1917?

Mr. Dieckmann: Just to clarify, is the question that you are asking, "Is this something that has come up during our consultation?"

Ms. Hanson: It is partly that. Partly, it is the question — has it come up? Is it structured into the survey documentation or the kind of issue that the board is asking for the public's feedback on? Are they asking for any information that would give a sense of the demographics of people working beyond that period of time when they would get to 63 or 65 — and then, after 65, what do they get? If they are working full-time and they can no longer work — and if I'm incorrect, the witness can correct me. What I am hearing is that, if they are working full-time, they would not be eligible for any compensation from the

Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board for time lost due to an injury on the job.

Mr. Dieckmann: As I said, no matter how old they are when they get injured, if they are over 63, they would be eligible for two years of indemnity payments. This is an issue that has arisen as part of the consultation. So, it is one of the issues that we are looking at bringing into the consultation process.

Ms. Hanson: I look forward to seeing how that is addressed in the consultation process, because my understanding is that there is the possibility of — there is going to be a second survey, so I will be looking to see how that is addressed.

Related but not exactly the same — when I look at the survey that is currently underway, one of the questions that is in the survey, Mr. Deputy Chair, is number 5, and it says — a statement here speaks a little bit to the annuity that the witness identified. It says — quote: "Some workers with long term workplace injuries for a benefit called an annuity, which is paid out to the worker when they reach age 65. Currently if the amount is valued at less than \$50,000, workers can choose to receive this amount as a lump sum payment. If the amount is valued at \$50,000 or more, it currently must be paid out into an annual annuity set up with a financial institution. Would it be beneficial to workers if there was no cap on being able to have this amount paid out as a lump sum."

I guess one of the questions that arises from that question is: Is that question that is in the survey also intended to address the issue of flexibility for situations where somebody has been on long-term workplace injury benefits, and in a situation where that person is diagnosed with a terminal illness and may foreseeably not live to 65, could that question be interpreted to provide an opportunity to have it paid out before 65, or would that be something that could be added to the second survey? You know, some people who have long-standing injuries that come as a result of their workplace also — as we have seen, because we have provisions in our legislation — some people may have various forms of cancer or other diseases that may terminate their life before they get to be 65. So, we're looking at ways — how we address, in fairness, the needs of workers — not just solely if they can make it to the bar of 65, and get the lump sum, but if they don't make it to there, is that issue somehow going to be addressed somewhere in the survey or in a second survey?

Mr. Dieckmann: When we did our consultation on that piece, we asked if there were any other issues that people wanted to bring forward. That issue has not come up yet. So, it's not something that was on our radar, but it could still come up through the consultation process.

Ms. Hanson: Consider at least two submissions making reference to that, then, because I do think it is a material issue.

We had a fair amount of discussion when legislation amendments were being done on PTSD as a presumptive rationale for coverage, but have the witnesses examined reasons for the rise in mental health claims since 2016? Related to that, is there some reason that the witnesses can explain as to

why, from my understanding, 68 percent of mental health claims were rejected in 2018?

Mr. Dieckmann: The rise in mental health claims was fully anticipated with the introduction of the presumption for PTSD. It raised awareness, and so there was an increase in the number of people coming forward and filing claims, which also resulted — and there was an increase in the number of accepted claims.

The reasons where claims are not accepted are, in the vast majority of the cases, because there is no injury. In order for a claim to be accepted, there has to be a mental health condition or mental health injury as diagnosed in accordance with the diagnostic and statistical manual for psychological injuries, or the DSM-5. If a condition is not a mental health injury or condition as listed in there, then it's not an injury.

A lot of the claims that we get that are rejected are for workplace stress from normal conditions of work. So, somebody is reassigned work, they're terminated, they are being performance-managed, and they are filing claims for stress that is not a compensable injury under the DSM-5.

Ms. Hanson: Thank you to the witness for that. It's interesting.

On a different area of presumption that was added a number of years ago — well, not that many years ago, because I was here. I was just wondering, in light of the general acceptance of what we are facing as a result of the climate crisis — a rise in extreme fires and other events, but particularly firefighting — I'm wondering why Wildland Fire Management workers wouldn't be included under the firefighter presumption in either of the subsections that deal with that. It's my assumption or my understanding that they are not. I guess my question would be: Why not?

Mr. Dieckmann: So, the wildland firefighters are included in the cardiac section of the presumption. They are not included in the cancers piece.

As to why that is, I'm not in a position to answer that. The legislation says that they are not included, and so when we enforce the legislation, we enforce it the way it is drafted.

Ms. Hanson: Understood. So, as part of the survey or the second phase of surveys, given that we're seeing — it's a reality that we have more wildland fires. We have our wildland fire workers being more occupied both here and elsewhere as a result of wildland fires. Is that something that would be added to the survey as a potential additional category as part of the legislative review?

Mr. Dieckmann: That is another issue that hasn't been raised with us as an issue by any parties.

Ms. Hanson: I'm curious, as we're looking at the legislative review that's underway — in retrospect, following the consultation that was done on PTSD presumption, what cross-jurisdictional analysis has the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board conducted? Do the witnesses anticipate that occupations other than those currently included in the legislation may require PTSD presumption moving forward?

Mr. Dieckmann: When the PTSD presumption was introduced previously, we had done a full jurisdictional scan,

but we have not had anyone bring forward anything on consultation to this point on the PTSD. We are doing our consultation on psychological injuries — it will be with our external stakeholder group and held next week, I believe. Issues may arise there, and things could come to us at that point.

Ms. Hanson: It is curious because, when we looked at the consultation that occurred around the PTSD presumption, that survey saw that 76 percent of respondents suggested applying PTSD presumption to a broader range of occupations. I am wondering if the witnesses anticipate — if it's not in the first round of surveys, but in the next round of surveys and perhaps as a result of both reflecting back on the previous consultation and whatever may come out of the stakeholder group that is going to be meeting to talk about psychological injuries — whether or not that would be another aspect that could be included in that second round of the survey.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I think that, at this point in terms of the discussion that we're having today regarding the consultation that is ongoing, we're in the process of that consultation. There will be decisions that we make within the Cabinet Committee on Legislation. Based on what we've heard through the consultations, we will be making those decisions at the Cabinet committee level and then bringing forward draft legislation.

Those are certainly areas — we will consider what we hear throughout the consultation, and that is what we have committed to throughout this process. I think it may be difficult for the witnesses to answer those types of questions as they will be matters that will be decisions that we make as legislators.

Ms. Hanson: With respect, the question was with respect to expanding the survey. We heard from witnesses that there was a second round of surveys to occur. I'm simply asking the question. I think it's a legitimate question. I will move on, though, because I have had this happen to me before — where a government doesn't like questions asked.

When we're talking about occupational health and safety training — and there was mention of outreach and working with the programs to familiarize foreign workers, like the nominee program, and other folks who come to work in the Yukon from all around the world — are the occupational health and safety training programs offered in English only?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I just wanted to make one comment, as the member opposite has made a comment that I would like to reply to. We will consider everything that we hear throughout the consultation. I wasn't meaning to cut off questions regarding the legislative review. I just simply wanted to say that we will take into consideration everything that we do hear regarding all matters. I just wanted to make that clear.

Deputy Chair (Mr. Adel): Mr. Dieckmann, would you like to answer the question that was presented?

Mr. Dieckmann: Could you repeat it?

Ms. Hanson: The question was asked about the programs offered for occupational health and safety training for workers who are participating in foreign worker programs, like the nominee program and others. Are those courses offered in English only?

Mr. Dieckmann: Unfortunately, we are only able to offer them right now in English and French. We don't have any speakers of any other languages.

Ms. Hanson: I appreciate that. It would be interesting, given that, say, 11 percent of our population is Filipino — that we might be following examples from elsewhere where we try to offer a diversity of languages.

I just want to come back to an area — this is related to statistics, and it's also getting a sense of going back to some of the mental health questions.

In 2008 — and I'm using 2008 because it's the most recent report that we were able to find where Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board published this kind of information — it said that 48 incidents were reported within the homes for children and seniors industry. We have heard concerns and had people speaking to us about concerns about reported incidents from this broader industry, specifically with concerns of incidents arising in group homes and seniors facilities.

Can the witnesses speak to reported incidents for this industry — those assorted services for children and seniors for 2018? Can the witnesses speak to the proportion of those claims that were mental-health related?

Mr. Dieckmann: Those are not numbers that I have with me. I can look and see, but the way that we record all of our injury classifications is we use what are called the national workplace injury statistics. That has the classifications laid out for all the various industries, so I would have to see if that's an industry class that is in the NWISP coding — but I will check and see if we can get you that information.

Ms. Hanson: The reason I ask is because I'm not sure what the new categories are, but when those categories — and we couldn't find anything that broke out sort of group home workers and people who provide services in seniors facilities. We do know by media reports that — well, we just had an unfortunate incident of a death in Calgary of a group home worker. Those are real workplace injuries and/or fatalities that occur in other jurisdictions. It would be interesting and helpful to get a sense — either we have baseline data — if maybe we had that going back to 2008 — and what we're projecting forward because we now have a much larger number of seniors facility beds and perhaps a diminishing number of group home situations. But it would be helpful to know. It also gives you indicators as to the complexity of the kind of situations that we're dealing with in these various quasi-institutional settings.

Mr. Dieckmann: Yes — getting that granular, I'll really have to look. The current codings that we have that would capture those types of injuries would be under health occupations or could be occupations in social science, education, government services, religion — those are the sort of catch-all ones. Getting down to that granular level of identifying whether it was an extended care or continuing care worker — I will have to check and see if that's available.

Ms. White: Just a quick question: I was going through the survey online, and one of the questions was about how you perceive if an employer will accept — you know, whether you're highlighting an incident or something that has happened. One of the questions I have is — I used to have a coffeeshop,

and I had teenage employees. One of the things I always said, as an employer, is that if something happens, I need to know about it so we can report it. But what I do know now, in my experience, especially in different job sites, is that sometimes employers view that, if a claim is made under them, their rates will be affected because of that one claim.

So, what education happens to employers so that they better understand how rates are calculated — and the example being, if an incident happens at your workplace, it doesn't mean that your rates will be affected, because it's calculated as a whole within an industry. So, how do we make sure that employers understand that we want incidents to be reported? Because maybe you knocked your elbow and it's sore now, but what we don't know is that you have actually fractured your elbow and you don't get it checked out for six months, and then when you finally do, it turns out you can't use your arm. So how do we make sure that incidents are being reported and that workplaces understand that they're not punished when someone files a claim?

Mr. Dieckmann: There are a number of things that we do to try to make sure that employers are aware. Our outreach activities — we definitely speak with employers, but one of the things that we have done is we have a contribution agreement with the Yukon Chamber of Commerce, and we have an employer advisor as a result of that contribution agreement we have. The employer advisor does a lot of outreach — direct, one-on-one outreach with employers, holds a lot of public meetings in all the communities, tries to get employers together to understand that, and puts on a compensation 101 program specifically designed to help employers to understand those types of issues — how compensation is calculated, when to report, and what to report.

He also offers the service that, if people are uncomfortable coming to us, he will act as a go-between to provide them with the information. If they have questions about our system but they don't really want to come and talk to us, we will take those questions, bring them to us, and we will provide all the answers and then the employer advisor will go out and work with those employers and provide them with that information. So, it has proven to be a very successful program and a really good arrangement that we have with the Yukon chamber.

Ms. White: I am just going to be super quick. Maybe I will not be able to get a response, but I will just put it out there. I'm curious to know if there is a requirement to have the information posted in any workplace — so how you would go about making a claim and the employer's responsibility. The reason I highlight it is there a requirement, or maybe it could be a requirement — because that way, even if your employer said, "No, no; don't do it", it is stated in a place that you could read that says, actually, "These are the reasons why you should file a claim."

I thank the witnesses for coming, and if they have a chance to respond — if not, that's okay — I am just going to put it out there.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: On behalf of Committee of the Whole, I would really like to thank the witnesses — Mark Pike, chair of the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety

Board; and Kurt Dieckmann, president and chief executive officer of the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board — for appearing here as witnesses.

Deputy Chair: Mr. Dieckmann, would you like to take a quick minute just to reply before we close this off? Or would you just like to get back to the member opposite when you can?

Mr. Dieckmann: I will get back to the member opposite when I can.

Deputy Chair: The witnesses are now excused. Mr. Dieckmann and Mr. Pike, we appreciate you coming.

Witnesses excused

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Deputy Chair, I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Deputy Chair: It has been moved by Ms. McPhee that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Deputy Chair: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and directed me to report progress.

Also, pursuant to Committee of the Whole Motion No. 2, witnesses appeared before Committee of the Whole today to discuss matters related to the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

The time being 5:32 p.m., this House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 5:32 p.m.

The following sessional paper was tabled November 19, 2019:

34-3-23

A Year in Review — Yukon Human Rights Commission — 2017/2018 Annual Report and Yukon Human Rights Commission Financial Statements Year Ended March 31, 2018 (Speaker Clarke)

The following document was filed November 19, 2019:

34-3-24

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's elimination of regional northern broadcasts, letter re, from Hon. Sandy Silver, Premier, to Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Premier of the Northwest

Territories, and Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Premier of Nunavut (Silver)



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 26

3rd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Wednesday, November 20, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
Don Hutton	Mayo-Tatchun

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King
Liz Hanson	Whitehorse Centre

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Dan Cable
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, November 20, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

Speaker's Statement in recognition of National Child Day

Speaker: The Speaker will now provide some brief remarks about National Child Day, but first I would like to take the opportunity to introduce the Child and Youth Advocate and the staff from the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate office. We have Annette King, Lynda Silverfox, and Taylor Greenland-Paauwe. As well, we have an inspirational young Yukon adult who I will be referencing, Ira Mamis, and her mother, Maribel Mamis. Welcome to the Assembly.

Today is National Child Day. On this day in 1989, the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* — UNCRC — was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. Canada ratified the UNCRC two years later, in 1991.

National Child Day reminds all Canadians that governments carry the responsibility and are obligated to uphold children's rights. There are 42 rights outlined in the convention that focus on non-discrimination, survival and development, consideration of the best interests of children, and participation of children in the decisions that affect them. Every child has the right to be protected from harm, be provided with the provisions to develop to their full potential, and to be given the opportunity to be active participants in their own lives.

Today, we recognize the actions of those who work to promote the realization of children's rights.

In 2009, the Yukon government passed the *Child and Youth Advocate Act*. Since that time, the advocate has addressed over 750 advocacy issues for over 500 children and youth to ensure that their rights under the UNCRC are fully upheld. The advocate has recently observed an increasing number of situations where service providers are including children and youth in the decisions they make about them, sometimes for the first time. The youth are encouraged to have a say and show empowerment and engagement in the process.

Over the last year, 53 Yukon youth participated with the Child and Youth Advocate in focus groups as part of the GlobalChild project, an international research project led by the University of Victoria. Students from the following schools provided feedback about how they believe rights in Canada for children are being upheld: Elijah Smith Elementary School, the Individual Learning Centre, the Youth Achievement Centre, Vanier Catholic Secondary School, Porter Creek Secondary School, and F.H. Collins Secondary School. The information they provided is helping to create a global monitoring tool for countries to use as a form of reporting to the United Nations.

The Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office has brought to my attention one particular Yukoner who has exemplified

youth participation at a local and national level. Ira Mamis is a 21-year-old student from Yukon College and, in addition to being a full-time student in the bachelor of social work program over the last year, Ira has taken action by participating in the following — and I can say in advance it's impressive: She represented the Yukon at the United Nations assembly of youth in New York. She was a Yukon youth representative at the Prime Minister's Office and attended the Canada Youth Summit with another Yukon youth, Cassis Lindsay, who was one of the recipients of the Outstanding Youth Achievement Award in 2018.

Ira also held a summer internship position in Ottawa at Parliament Hill as part of the Canadian Filipino interparliamentary internship program. Also, she holds the following ongoing roles: regional ambassador for Pinoys on Parliament, encouraging the engagement of youth in government; the youth representative on the board of directors for the Yukon Filipino association; future student ambassador for Yukon College, promoting post-secondary education in the Yukon; and finally, the Yukon youth representative on a national steering committee for U-Report Canada, a project run by UNICEF that surveys Canadian youth about current issues.

Last month, Ira represented Yukon as a newcomer Canadian at the Youth Action Gathering, hosted by the Canadian Council of Refugees in Moncton, New Brunswick, along with another Yukoner, Sebastian Cuenza, who was also recognized with an outstanding youth achievement award in 2018. Sebastian has produced a video showcasing the voices of newcomer youth.

This week, as part of National Child Day, Ira and Sebastian are launching the video and sharing their experiences with other Yukon youth, letting them know about opportunities to get involved. This is proof of what can happen when youth realize that they have a voice.

Today, we urge all Yukoners to look at how to enhance the implementation of children's rights, policies, and practices and to create space for children and youth to share their views as part of decision-making processes. When children and youth are heard, they feel empowered, and that will have positive, lasting impact for generations to come.

Applause

Withdrawal of motions

Speaker: The Chair wishes to inform the House that Motion No. 115, notice of which was given by the Member for Porter Creek Centre, was not placed on today's Notice Paper, as the action requested in the motion has been taken in whole or in part.

The Chair also wishes to inform the House that Motion No. 1, standing in the name of the Member for Porter Creek Centre, has been withdrawn from the Order Paper at the request of the member.

DAILY ROUTINE

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

We have some visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Please help me in welcoming Mayor Dan Curtis, councillor Steve Roddick, past-councillor Rosyln Woodcock, and director Mike Gau. The City of Whitehorse is co-hosting the Arctic Winter Games and we are very happy to have them here today.

We also have Mr. Philippe LeBlond with us, who is a wonderful local artist and a cycling advocate/guru who is probably here for tomorrow's tribute.

We also have with us today, from the Sport and Recreation branch in Community Services, Jared Slipp, Megan Cromarty, Trevor Twardochleb, Sue Meikle, and the deputy minister, Matt King.

From the Arctic Winter Games: Moira Lassen, Carolyn Moore, Courtney Nichol, Desiree Cook, Echo Ross, Jeffrey Woodhouse, Laura Williamson, Lindsay Smith, Lucy Coulthard, Danny Macdonald, Meaghan Kimmitt, Mia Val, Michelle Parsons, Sandy Legge — sorry, Sandy, if I pronounced your surname wrong — Shelley Williamson, Kathy Zrum, Geneviève Doyon, Adam Purdy, Ken Howard, Sophie Tremblay-Morissette, Ryan Romero, and I would also, Mr. Speaker, really like to welcome the Arctic Winter Games mascot, Däch'aw, who goes by the pronouns "they" and "them".

Applause

Ms. White: I ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming the Porter Creek GSA. We have Jason, Sam, Hannah, Taiga, Alia, Rylee, Annabelle, Shane, Jackson, Molly, Grey, Brenden, Adrian, Xander, Shania, Bella, and Fynn.

Thank you for coming.

Applause

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I would like to ask my colleagues to help me welcome a few guests here today. Paul Johnston, Dylan Smoke, Chris Boodram, and Valerie Royle, our deputy minister of the Women's Directorate.

Thank you so much for coming today.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: I would like to have members welcome Murray Martin, a local columnist and political commentator, I would say, to the House.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors? Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Yukon amateur sports

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I rise today on behalf of all members of the Legislature to pay tribute to the many accomplishments of Yukon's amateur sports community — athletes, coaches, mentors, supporters, organizers, volunteers, and mascots.

Our territory's young athletes continue to amaze my colleagues and me in their achievements. This past summer,

Team Yukon travelled to Swift Current, Saskatchewan for the Western Canada Summer Games. Yukon sent 134 athletes, 38 coaches and managers, and 10 mission staff to the games, and they came back with an amazing nine medals. Congratulations to Mia Barrault, who won silver and bronze in swimming; Julianne Girouard, who won two bronze medals in solo kayaking; Mara Roldan, who took home a bronze in cross-country mountain biking; Jack Amos, who won bronze in the men's 5,000 metre distance; and wrestlers Judy Russell and Jaymi Hinchey, who took home silver in their divisions; and flag-bearer Cassi Jensen, who took home a bronze, which means, Mr. Speaker, that all of our wrestlers medalled.

This was the highest ever medal count for Yukon at the Western Canada Summer Games, and there were also many top-10 finishes and personal bests set. Well done, Team Yukon. Bravo à l'équipe Yukon.

Now our athletes are gearing up for the Arctic Winter Games. Everyone is gearing up: coaches, mentors, supporters, sponsors, mission staff, event organizers, mascot, and volunteers. We are now up to 1,100 volunteers, and I am counting on all MLAs to be part of the volunteer crew. Everyone is prepping for what is sure to be another amazing accomplishment — the 2020 Arctic Winter Games in Whitehorse. We will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Arctic Winter Games — well, not 50 games, but the 50th anniversary since the Arctic Winter Games started. The 2020 games will happen in our capital city from March 15 to 21, 2020.

His Worship Mayor Dan Curtis and I are counting the sleeps — 116 — and we are proud to co-host this event with the City of Whitehorse. This event is being led by the 2020 Arctic Winter Games Host Society, a dedicated team of staff and volunteers who are bringing a full-court press with their talents, skills, and energy together to make this major event happen. Over five days, we expect 2,000 athletes and cultural performers from Alaska to Greenland, from Yamal jusqu'à Nunavik, to compete in 21 sports. This is no easy feat. It's not backyard badminton or the bunny slope; it's not pickup hockey or knuckle-hop scotch. The host society has great bench strength and has been doing a fantastic job of bringing these games together. In just the past few months, the team has built beds, marshalled the mission staff, vetted venues, signed sponsors, orchestrated the theme song, recognized sports in regard to reconciliation, set up sustainability, and organized Games Day Friday — whew. By the way, Mr. Speaker, games mascot Däch'aw — they have conducted community visits across the Yukon, so great to see them in the Legislature today.

So, today, Mr. Speaker, on National and International Children's Day, we tribute our aspiring athletes, performers, organizers, and volunteers. There are 116 sleeps, Mr. Speaker — 116 sleeps.

Applause

In recognition of Transgender Awareness Week and Transgender Day of Remembrance

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of our Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to Transgender

Awareness Week. Today, November 20, is a day of remembrance for trans folks. This is an opportunity to recognize and remember the trans people who have lost their lives due to transphobic violence. According to an annual report by Trans Murder Monitoring, 339 trans folks were killed in 2018 and 331 to date in 2019 — a total of 3,314 since the monitoring started 11 years ago.

Specifically, we honour the memory of Rita Hester, a transgender woman whose murder in 1998 inspired the first International Transgender Day of Remembrance. Trans folks are still living in a world where they experience violence and microaggressions in their day-to-day lives just for being who they are, from the moment they wake up to when they go to sleep. Imagine going to get a coffee at a local coffee shop — something each and every one of us does probably every day — and someone uses the wrong pronoun to describe you. Then imagine going to school or work and living in constant fear of bullying, discrimination, and violence. Imagine trying just to book a holiday but being unable to travel without facing questions about the gender listed on your passport. Imagine going home to read the news and seeing an article online about trans rights followed by a comment section filled with transphobia, ignorance, and violence.

These are just a small number of situations that trans folks experience each and every day. As a society, we can do better and we must. I am optimistic that things are changing quickly because we have a generation following us who are leading this charge. Organizations such as Queer Yukon, All Genders Yukon, Northern Gender Alliance, and Yukon Queer Film Alliance are doing amazing work to break down stereotypes, take a stand, and reject transphobia.

Gender and sexuality alliances are taking action each day to make their schools safer for their peers who identify as trans and gender-diverse. In fact, these decisions to move away from being called gay-straight alliance is a perfect example of the proactive recognition of inclusivity. The Government of Yukon is developing an LGBTQ2S+ inclusion action plan in order to make sure that, in our role both as a service provider and employer, we are more inclusive. That action plan will be based on what we heard directly from Yukoners, specifically those who identify as LGBTQ2S+, and it will be developed with the oversight of LGBTQ2S+ organizations in Yukon.

While we are making great strides toward inclusion, there is still much work to be done in modernizing attitudes regarding trans and gender-diverse folks in our community. Gwendolyn Ann Smith, the founder of the Transgender Day of Remembrance, talked about the always present need for trans people to fight for their rights, including the right to simply exist. “Fighting for our right to exist” resonated with me very deeply. We’re not talking about a wish list of luxuries. Trans people are still fighting for the right to be who they are and to live safely in our community — in their community. I urge every Yukoner to take the time today and every day to educate yourself on gender identity, gender expression, transphobia, and the many barriers that trans people are still faced with. Use this knowledge to support your friends and family to be an ally

in our community. Be the spark for systemic change. It starts with each and every one of us.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say that the tribute that we just heard to Arctic Winter Games was so uplifting, and I cannot wait for the day that we can do a tribute to LGBTQ2S+ and trans people and have that same feeling and that same spirit.

Applause

Mr. Istchenko: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to recognize today, November 20, as the Transgender Day of Remembrance in memory of those lives lost to transphobic violence.

Founder Gwendolyn Ann Smith said, “With so many people seeking to erase transgender people — sometimes in the most brutal ways possible — it is vitally important that those we lose are remembered, and that we continue to fight for justice.”

Over the last week, in honour of Transgender Awareness Week, organizations across the country celebrated the lives of transgender individuals and raise awareness around the issues that they face on a daily basis. It is widely recognized that the most powerful tool to quell ignorance is education. Transgender Awareness Week is an important time to use that tool to spread awareness and information to the general public about these issues that they may not fully understand — and many don’t.

It is hard to place yourself in the shoes of someone facing the issues of discrimination. It’s hard to empathize with a situation that you know nothing personally about, but educating yourself is a first great step. Once you have an understanding, educating others is a logical next step. Hopefully, education will continue to spread in this way and there will eventually be an end to the discrimination, to the harassment and bullying, and to the violence.

I want to note that we do have policies in place to ensure that bullying, not only against the LGBTQ2S+ community, but against any person, is not tolerated in our schools. The government needs to ensure that these policies are upheld and are not just in place as a formality. They are in place for a reason and there is no excuse for bullying, harassment, or violence in this day and age in our school system. Our kids deserve to go to school in a safe, secure, and respectful environment.

Applause

Ms. White: I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP to mark today as the Transgender Day of Remembrance. Stigma and discrimination against trans and gender-diverse people is real and profound around the world.

Today, we honour, remember, and mourn the loss of the trans and gender-diverse folks who have fallen victim to violence — violence based on fear, hate, and ignorance. Today, we remember and honour the 331 trans and gender-diverse folks from around the world — those whose lives we know were stolen by hate. We remember all of those whose deaths went unreported or unknown, who lost their lives because of transphobia and discrimination, and we remember those who, when it was all too much, took their own lives.

Today, we don't only remember the loss of these lives with sadness but we celebrate the lives that were lived, the happiness and love that was shared, and the communities that were positively impacted by trans and gender-fluid folks. We all have a role to play in keeping our community safe for all people no matter their gender identity, and media has an especially large role to play, because, Mr. Speaker, words matter.

When we allow hate speech, speech that is intended to demean and brutalize another, or language that attacks a person or a group on the basis of protected attributes such as race, religion, ethnic origin, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity — when we allow that language to go unchallenged, then we become part of the problem. A person's freedom of speech isn't being restricted when hate speech is restricted and called out for what it is. One does not guarantee the other.

Media has a large role to play in this modern age of anonymous posts on public forums. Hate fuels hate. When media allows hate speech to go unchecked, they do a disservice to us all. There's a reason why media sources around the world are restricting anonymous comment sections on articles about marginalized groups, comments that are filled with hate and directed at marginalized groups who are unable to defend themselves in that forum. It is my hope that media closer to home will start standing up to hate and monitoring their anonymous comment sections. We encourage them to demonstrate their understanding of the important role that they play in respecting and protecting trans and gender-diverse folks right here in Yukon.

It is our job as allies to listen, to educate those around us, and to stand beside, behind, or in front of our transgender friends as they need us. Mr. Speaker, we celebrate trans men and trans women and those who are two-spirited. We celebrate those who are gender non-conforming, those who are bigender, and those who are agender. We celebrate the knowledge that you are of different ethnicities and racial backgrounds, that you exist in all shapes and sizes, that your gender presentations vary, that your identities are fluid and your expressions are unique, and that your stories and experiences are uniquely your own, but that you are all beautiful.

We celebrate your phenomenal strength and resiliency. We believe that your beauty and your truth deserve to be visible. Within our culture, our local communities, and across the globe, there continues to be an amazing surge in the visibility of our trans and gender non-conforming community members. This is overwhelmingly because of the courage of countless transgender men and women and their allies who have worked and continue to work tirelessly to raise awareness and speak out and live authentically as who they are. Whenever any trans or gender non-conforming community member claims visibility, our communities are stronger and better for it. Whenever any trans or non-conforming community member or their allies speak up in the face of prejudice, that act of courage helps change our world for the better.

So, we thank those in our very own community who continue to push and advocate for what is right and just because, Mr. Speaker, trans rights are human rights. We will

stand with you as allies, knowing that you matter and that the world is a better and richer place with you in it.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Ms. Frost: Mr. Speaker, in my capacity as Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation, I have for tabling, pursuant to section 23(2) of the *Housing Corporation Act*, the Yukon Housing Corporation's annual report for 2018-19.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I have for tabling a report entitled *Making it Work*, the 2019 report of Yukon Women in Trades and Technology.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House congratulates the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation on its decision to maintain regional morning newscast services in the north.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to make stab-proof protective vests available to all Yukon correctional officers.

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

THAT this House supports recessing the Legislative Assembly from March 16 to March 23, 2020, during the Arctic Winter Games.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Beaver River watershed land use plan

Mr. Hassard: I have some questions for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources about the status of planning for the Beaver River watershed. In a letter from the minister dated September 12, 2019, the minister mentioned that the planning committee would be finalizing their work plan at a meeting on September 17 and then posting that to their website.

Looking at the website this morning, I can't find a copy of that work plan, so I'm wondering if the minister can confirm whether the work plan has been completed, and if so, where can Yukoners access a copy of it?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I'll give a little bit of background and then speak directly to the question. The Government of Yukon continues to work with the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and ATAC Resources to develop a land use plan and road access management plan for the Beaver River area.

The land use plan and the road access management plan must be finalized before road construction is authorized. The Beaver River land use planning committee met in Mayo on October 24, 2019, to review the work plan following presentations for the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun citizens.

The Beaver River land use planning committee has held community meetings in Keno City, Mayo, and Whitehorse and has met with various interest groups. A "what we heard" document on the information received is available online.

We are aware, through our public meetings hosted by the planning committee, that increased access and harvest pressure on moose seem to be two of the key issues concerning the plan. I will endeavour to find out if everything has been finalized after that October 24 meeting that just occurred and make the members opposite aware of where the plan is available.

Mr. Hassard: We're certainly hoping that, since October 24 is almost a month ago, the minister would have been able to provide us with a little more information than that. We know the Liberals cut the Yukon mineral exploration program by \$200,000 this year so that money could be redirected to support work in the Beaver River watershed. Now, this geological work is important to the process and we're getting close to the March 2020 deadline that the minister set to complete this overall plan.

I can't find a copy of the work that resulted from the cut to YMEP on the planning website. Mr. Speaker, when will this work be made public and where will it be made available?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I think it's important to set the record straight concerning the dollars from YMEP. First of all, if you look at the history of YMEP — which is the Yukon mineral fund that we used just for early grassroots exploration and where we take a portion of the cost and we offset the cost for the prospectors or even junior mining companies.

In the last number of years — previously, in the last mandate of government, it was as low as \$575,000. Upon taking on this role, we increased it to the highest it has ever been. It was undersubscribed for the last number of years, so internally, and also with support and endorsement from the Yukon Chamber of Mines, instead of having that money not being used, it made good sense to take it and allocate it to this baseline data work that's available.

I would think that, as this work is completed, which is still ongoing, we'll have a better opportunity to see where the parties want to provide this information and what platform that will be. As we have stated from the start and in our agreements, we are absolutely making best efforts to have this completed for March 2020. It is a tough piece of work, and we continue to strive to complete it in that period of time.

Mr. Hassard: If we look on the website, it says that further engagement will be coming in the coming months. The question I have for the minister is: How will this affect timelines? We know that December is not a good month to be engaging with people, so that would only leave January and February in order for this work to be completed by March. The question is quite simple: How is this further engagement going to work and not affect the timelines that the minister has put in place?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I think that the next important step in this process is that there is a meeting in Na-Cho Nyäk Dun traditional territory, and I believe it's on November 23. It's between the community, as well as community citizens, and I believe the chief and council, and that will be very important to define when some of that collective and collaborative consultation should happen, especially in the communities that are most impacted.

I don't think it's appropriate to get into trying to come up with potential impacts of dates that may or may not happen. I agree that December is busy for everybody in the Yukon; it's busy for all people; it's close to the Christmas season. Our focus is to continue with endeavouring to complete it on the dates that we have identified, which was March of 2020. There's a tremendous amount of pressure. That's why this is a significant and important question for the opposition to ask me, and I'm sure that the Third Party will also ask me. It's a very tough file, and many Yukoners know that.

But we will continue to follow the agreement that we signed with the chief and council of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and continue to ensure that all of the technicians are doing the work as we move toward March 2020.

Question re: Government of Yukon website

Mr. Kent: I have some follow-up questions for the Premier on the website.

In February 2018, the Liberals launched their new website and logo rebranding project. They had originally stated that the new website would only cost \$250,000. But yesterday in Question Period, we confirmed that this cost has now skyrocketed to at least \$550,000 for the website alone, which is a massive 120-percent increase. However, as the Premier stated in Question Period yesterday, these costs do not include staff time. Well, associated staff time is still a cost that taxpayers have to pay, so it needs to be factored into the overall price so that Yukoners can know the true cost of this new website.

Can the Premier tell us, once you factor in staff time, how high the costs of this project have skyrocketed? Can he also please be open and accountable and provide Yukoners with a number?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I wonder if the member opposite calculated the staff time in the litigation for the Peel watershed case.

Mr. Speaker, as we did mention, this does not include Government of Yukon staff time. Our goal, though, with the overall process here is to complete the migration to yukon.ca and to decommission the old website by the end of March 2020.

We made these comments on the floor of the Legislative Assembly yesterday as well.

We already estimate that almost 85 percent of the most useful pages, first and foremost, for citizens of the old site have been already migrated over to yukon.ca. It's important to note also that not all content on the old site will be brought over to the new site, but on average, a department will transition about 50 to 60 percent of their web content from the old site to the new site.

Again, as we talk per department, this is a whole-of-government approach when we talk about content and the prioritization over to the new website, yukon.ca. The overall migration so far is approximately 70 percent complete.

I want to thank all of the department officials who work on this process. Again, yukon.ca improves access to government information, expands online services, and enhances our ability to receive and respond to feedback from Yukoners.

Mr. Kent: As we discussed yesterday, in 2018, the Liberals bragged that the new website would cost only \$75,000 a year for ongoing annual maintenance.

This, of course, was supposed to save Yukon taxpayers' money; however, that assumption is based on the old website shutting down. Yukoners need to understand the true cost of the Liberals' website. Remember, Mr. Speaker — no one was asking the Liberals for this new website and logo. Yukoners are asking for things like enhancements to medical travel, not wasted money on websites and new logos.

So, Mr. Speaker, how much has been spent on operation and maintenance of both websites since the Liberals decided to make this poorly thought-out decision?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I beg to differ with the member opposite. Again, we believe that providing the modern website is fundamental to citizens being the centre of an open and transparent government. It is disappointing to hear that the members opposite do not believe that this is money well-spent.

The new website has been designed to meet today's standards for privacy that weren't there in the past — for security, accessibility, and compatibility on mobile devices. It's too bad that the members opposite don't think that this is a good use of taxpayers' money — the increased ability for accessibility to Yukoners.

In 2018-19, as we said, we spent \$200,000 on the continuing development and improvement of yukon.ca, and this does build on the one-quarter million dollars that we spent in 2017-18 for that future-year planning. We also plan to spend an additional \$100,000 through the rest of this fiscal year to assist departments in updating and migrating their content to the new sites. We also anticipate spending another \$100,000 to maintain the old website this year.

The member asked the questions. I have provided the answers. We still, again, commit — and we know that this will happen — that, once we have completed the transition, the ongoing maintenance will cost \$75,000 a year, which is half of what the old website costs. The members opposite are saying that this is more expensive than it really is, and they really don't see the modernization as being a priority.

Mr. Kent: Here is what we know, Mr. Speaker. The Liberals said that they would spend \$250,000 on a new website. That has now increased to at least \$550,000, but we will go through the numbers that the Premier provided here today. However, the Liberals have conveniently forgotten to factor in staffing costs. The Liberals said that the new website would save us money because it is cheaper to run than the old website; however, we are now running two websites. It is now clear that the Liberals have completely bungled this project.

I am going to ask the Premier a couple of things. Will he provide us the business-case analysis that says that this new website will save us money, and what is the total cost of the website project once you factor in costs to all departments, including staff time and operation and maintenance for both websites?

Hon. Mr. Silver: We have been clear from the beginning and open and transparent on the process and on the cost to the departments. I went back and talked with the Executive Council Office to double-check just yesterday after questions in the Legislative Assembly. We're still very confident that, when we complete this transition, the ongoing maintenance will be \$75,000 a year, which is half of what the old website cost. Also, we're very confident that, by providing a modern website — this is fundamental to what a citizen-centred, open and transparent government should look like. Members opposite — there is a theme here that they want to go back to the ways of old, but I think that, when we look at a progressive, modern Yukon, Yukoners demand that our technologies are keeping up with the new options of mobility and also accessibility. Security and privacy are extremely important on this side of the Legislative Assembly.

Question re: Greenhouse gas emissions

Ms. White: At first glance, the government's recently announced draft strategy for tackling climate change appears to be an ambitious plan for reducing Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions, but upon closer inspection, one will notice that the targets do not take into account mining-related emissions. It fails to provide many specific statistics on the current trends in Yukon. The plan says — and I quote: "... Yukon's non-mining greenhouse gas emissions were 620 kilotonnes." It begs the question: What are the Yukon's mining-related greenhouse gas emissions?

The draft plan says — and I quote: "In the past, Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions have gone up and down, driven in large part by the level of mining activity in the territory." Given this statement, we would expect to have some numbers associated with Yukon's mining activities, especially concerning greenhouse gas emissions.

Can the minister provide the amount of greenhouse gas emissions currently produced by Yukon's mining sector?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: First, it's important to identify the fact that, when this work was being undertaken on our new plan — actually, data overall was difficult to gather. There were questions here in the House about — what the baseline was that we were looking at working from? Why did we look at 2010?

Really, one of the things that we found — it was identified in the work undertaken post-audit — was that it was difficult to find good data.

Also, there has been discussion publicly around the work in Faro and the remediation work and reclamation work being undertaken there. That information — I won't challenge the accuracy, but a lot of that has to do with the clearing of some of the areas. It is actually tree-clearing that has to be done in order to get to some of the ground movement. So, some of that upfront activity is what is really leading to some of the numbers.

I will go back to our departments and have a discussion about current — because, of course, we just had one mine reopen and another mine just open, and both of those, luckily, are on our grid, where about 93 percent of the energy is clean, but we would have to see what the numbers are based on what happened just over the last couple of weeks and months.

Ms. White: I look forward to receiving those numbers.

We are all happy to see an increase in economic activity due to mining in Yukon. However, this government's plan to set intensity-based targets for mining operations could create a situation where Yukon's overall emissions actually rise by 2030. There are several mines planned to open in the upcoming years. Among these are the Coffee, the Kudz Ze Kayah, and the Casino projects.

In its 2014 executive review submission, the Casino mining project anticipated that, during the mine's peak of operations, its CO₂ emissions would be 716 kilotonnes per year. Not only would this more than double Yukon's 2017 non-mining emissions, it would amount to 2.7 times the 264 kilotonnes that the government is trying to cut by 2030. The mining industry's greenhouse gas emissions are an important part of the calculations that need to be made in measuring Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions.

Does this government believe that its proposed intensity-based targets for mining will make a large enough impact on the mining industry emissions to ensure that Yukon's overall emissions do not increase by 2030?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: There were a number of items there to address. In the first question today, the member opposite identified that we weren't taking into consideration the impact of mining. That question then, of course, was contrasted by saying that the plan does take into consideration the intensity of mining activity, and that is exactly what we're looking at doing.

The end of that second question was essentially a long-term projection for a project that has not entered an environmental assessment yet — although that project could be a major driver in the production of copper in a global state. When we look at places where there is a lot of geopolitical instability right now — like Chile or challenges that are happening in other places — what we believe is important is to work with industry and to consider, especially with commodities that are needed for a clean future, that we take a look at exactly what the emissions are associated with that extraction in our territory and benchmark that, as well, against other regions in the world, because what we hear when we talk about climate change is: "This is part of our contribution and

we have to be responsible with the planet." We think that we can do it cleaner than anywhere else can, and that is what we are taking into consideration.

Ms. White: The *Our Clean Future* draft is an important project. However, intensity-based targets for the mining sector could result in major shortcomings for Yukon's overall greenhouse gas emissions reduction. The NDP is supportive of inventive and environmentally forward mining projects, but we question how this focus on intensity-based targets fits within the strategy to lower Yukon's overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. I will quote once more from the draft: "... there is a risk that a decrease in mining activity could cause us to reach our target..." By this same logic, even if every single objective outlined in the draft is achieved, a boom in Yukon's mining sector could result in Yukon falling short of its 2030 goal.

Can the minister confirm that, even if all of the objectives set out in the draft climate action plan are achieved, Yukon's overall emissions could still rise should the planned mines go online in the next few years?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Well, first of all, thank you for the third question. There are a couple of things that I will leave on this last one. One is that it is a draft — the final draft. We believe that we are going in the right direction, so that gives a great opportunity for the Leader of the Third Party to respond to the strategy on behalf of the NDP.

On this side, I think that our prerogative has been that the mining sector is important, it has to be done in an environmental way, and we have to respect the community that we all live in. We also have to take into consideration that projects — Minto being a perfect example of where you are on grid, you are using clean energy, you are working in a respectful manner with the First Nation, you are using good practices, and you are pulling out a commodity that is absolutely in demand and needed if we globally are to shift to a clean economy. Those are all facts. I will say that this is how we are approaching it.

I am looking forward to seeing if the NDP thinks that we should stop building projects if it will adversely affect our emissions in the future, or do they think that, in the Yukon, we can do it in a cleaner way than letting someone else in another part of the world do it where there are lots of emissions. That is a very fair question.

Question re: Yukon parks strategy

Mr. Istchenko: From August 16 to September 29, the Liberals ran one of their so-called consultation surveys on the draft Yukon parks strategy. This consultation was advertised as a way for Yukoners to help chart the future of Yukon's territorial parks.

As part of this, the government spent taxpayers' money to run ads promoting the consultation on social media. One of the ads read: "We are looking for your thoughts on the draft Yukon parks strategy." It sounds good; however, the ads were targeted to southern Canadians and were being received in Toronto and Nova Scotia.

If you go back and look at the post that was being advertised, it appears that every single person who engaged with it is from outside of the territory.

Can the Minister of Environment tell us why her department was pushing this consultation to southerners?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would suggest that, when we do look at improvements in all of our parks in Yukon and we look at the significance of all of our parks and campgrounds, we consider all of the users, and that includes the visitors to Yukon. As we look at added value from improvements, we certainly want to ensure that we capture all of the various user groups using the various campgrounds so that improvement is significant, and it's essential that we look at ensuring that we get the necessary feedback from campers and look at improvements. But we also want to ensure that we look at not only improvements, but perhaps adding more resources if necessary. Those are some of the things that we consider when we look at data that we've collected from the 2019 season and look at future-year projections.

Question re: Mineral staking

Mr. Kent: My question today is for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources regarding mining within municipal boundaries.

Yukon's demographics have evolved over the years as have Yukoners' land use requirements, which are impacting access to many long-standing mineral claims — claims that predate expansion of many municipal boundaries.

We've seen an increasing number of cases of municipalities denying development permits to operators. The minister committed to fixing this problem shortly after being sworn in, in December 2016, and for three years, we have seen little to no action from his government and no resolution to this problem.

When will the minister follow through on this commitment and provide certainty for municipalities and claim holders and address mining within municipal boundaries?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: First of all, as always, it seems that I have to start off after questions from the opposition with, "Let me set the record straight."

I said that we would take on this challenge. We would do our best to bring clarity to something that has been left in a very grey area. I think that our team and our department will probably get to a place to fix portions of this. I'm sure that there will also be people in the opposition who may disagree with some of the fixes, but that's some of the work that you have to do. It's better to take it on than to let it build up and fester like we've seen in the past.

The Government of Yukon is engaging with Yukoners to understand how we should manage mineral staking and development activities within community boundaries. As a first step, officials will meet with First Nation local governments and Yukon communities and municipalities, as well as industry stakeholders, to discuss issues and solutions. These meetings, which are currently taking place and will include several communities, will help us shape our second step — our public engagement.

Communities that we have representation going into at this time are Dawson City, Whitehorse, Carmacks, Faro, Haines Junction, Mayo, Teslin, Watson Lake, Keno, Hamlet of Ibex

Valley, Hamlet of Mount Lorne, Marsh Lake Local Advisory Council, Tagish Local Advisory Council, and South Klondike Local Advisory Council.

I will just carry on for question two and three.

Mr. Kent: While I'm pleased to hear that there's finally some movement on this file, we're curious why it took the government three years to start working on it. However, I'm also pleased to hear that limited discussions with select community groups have started, because the government's lack of action to date means uncertainty for our mining community and uncertainty for municipalities.

I have to ask why we haven't heard about these consultations in the media. Why have we not seen a government news release or a ministerial statement announcing this initiative? As I have mentioned, the government is fond of doing ministerial statements to re-announce things 10 times over, so why didn't they announce this through one of those? Why are we just hearing about this now?

My question for the minister is: Will he commit to immediately releasing all details surrounding this initiative and any discussion paper or other materials that are associated with it?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I will confer with the department. It seems that, from time to time, the opposition is missing some of the advertising on some of these items, so I'll make sure that we get a list of that information. I think that it is appropriate just to make sure that it's in place.

This is something that is really important, but it's also very sensitive. There is historical mining activity that has happened in many of these areas. It has taken a little bit of time to get this out the door — for probably the same reason that the members opposite had five years in which they could have done it, and they didn't do it — because it's a touchy file. We felt that it was time to take this on. We have heard from municipalities, and mostly from unincorporated areas, where they just felt that this was something that had to be dealt with.

It's difficult. I mean, we're dealing with lots of different policy pieces on it. I think that our Department of Energy, Mines and Resources has worked well — when you walk into a piece of work and you have to deal with an independent power production policy that was promised but didn't happen and you have to conclude the work on the Peel and then you have to start the Dawson City land use planning and then you have to make sure that the agriculture policy that's not done is there and then you have to make sure that all the policies that were never consulted on need to be worked on.

That's a lot of work for a lot of people at Energy, Mines and Resources. The good thing is that they are doing that, and we are doing this.

Mr. Kent: Being a minister is a lot of hard work, that's for sure.

As indicated, many of these mineral claims predate the subsequent expansion of municipal boundaries, and therefore, the claim holders' legal rights must be respected and upheld, especially considering the significant financial resources that are often invested in keeping the claims in good standing year after year. A claim to exclusive mineral rights is of little use

without the ability to access those minerals. While we are not in favour of expropriation, we recognize that, in some cases, a claim may ultimately have to be expropriated.

Will the minister commit to this House that the government will provide fair compensation value for claim holders if those claims have to be expropriated?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, again, just to clear the record, I didn't say that being a minister is hard work. I said that the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources has been working extremely hard to deal with all of that work. The member opposite was a minister. If he felt that it was hard work, he is allowed to say that and say that, he did. I am just saying that the department has worked extremely hard to continue that work.

I appreciate the perspective on the respect toward the claim holders. I appreciate the advice and guidance about how we should handle these particular issues. Right now, of course, we are going through a process where people within these communities — Yukoners as well — are having an opportunity to give their response and to give their perspective on what is happening in their community, on the streets in their community, and maybe in their own backyards. We are going to listen to that, and then we are going to pull that together to see steps forward.

Thank you for the experienced voice. I will take that into consideration, but I will first listen to the Yukoners whom we are going to visit in their communities to understand what is the appropriate way to go forward.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

OPPOSITION PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 116

Clerk: Motion No. 116, standing in the name of Ms. Hanson.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Whitehorse Centre:

THAT this House urges the Government of Canada to restore funding to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in order to restore services in the north; and

THAT this House directs the Speaker of the Yukon Legislative Assembly to convey the decision of this House to Canada's Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, and the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, at the outset, it is really good to be able to speak to this motion in light of the decision, phrased in different ways by different people — but ultimately the decision by CBC North management to sort of walk back on the decision that they had made earlier in the week with

respect to the consolidation of service delivery in the north. I think that what we can do is recognize that, as we saw this week, there are indeed times when, through the concerted efforts of so many across our community, change happens and can happen.

Members of this Legislative Assembly — from the Premier to government backbenchers to both opposition parties — have been clear in expressing our support for the importance of CBC Yukon. This week, the news that the northern regional newscasts were to be consolidated and based in Yellowknife galvanized support in a way that should and does inspire.

Mr. Speaker, I think that, at its core, the news that the local morning newscast positions were effectively being cut in order to address CBC's budget constraints was, for many, the straw that broke the camel's back.

Today, we are debating a motion that speaks to how those straws got piled on over the past 25 years and a motion that urges the restoration of funding to the CBC so that we can address these types of actions that were announced this week — so that they can not only be prevented, but also allow CBC North Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut to re-base and become again the vibrant force that it has been and deserves to be.

There has been some discussion about why we would be structuring a motion that would suggest that we come together, all members of this Legislative Assembly, and endorse the restoration of funding for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and that we ask you, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of us to convey that message to our sister territories as well as to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism.

I chose to do that because I'm respectful of the fact that the Speaker is the spokesperson and representative of this Assembly in its relationships not only with the Commissioner, but also with other bodies outside of this House. We want to reflect that this is not simply the Government of Yukon — as much as we respect the Government of Yukon and the governing party — but it is all members of this Legislative Assembly whose wishes and whose will are being conveyed to those named in this motion.

As a self-declared CBC fan, the importance of Canada's national public broadcaster — to my understanding, of both the country that I live in as well as the region that I live in — has been reinforced many times over in my lifetime — whether it was in CBC regional offices in Calgary where I was growing up or regional CBC radio in PEI, Vancouver Island, or Ottawa — and for the past 30-plus years here in Yukon. The CBC has been an important aspect in terms of who we are and who I am. I think that, for many Canadians, it is the same.

As the oldest existing broadcast network in Canada, CBC is truly important as a unifying force from sea to sea to sea. There have been, over the years, a number of budget cuts to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. I'll come back to those in a moment, but I want to talk a little bit about the importance of the local CBC in terms of the development and celebration of local talent.

Over the years, we have said, and we know, that Yukoners have reacted in part to the cuts — and, as I said, these were the

last sort of straws that got piled onto that camel's back. That we reacted this week was, in part, a statement that, even though we are northerners and we may enjoy many pan-northern activities — and today, we talked about one of those pan-northern activities, the 50th anniversary of the Arctic Winter Games next spring which we will all be involved in — we also celebrate the fact that each territory is unique.

We are different. Our languages are different; our cultures are different. We want to hear from people who live and who work in our communities about what is going on in our communities. We have watched over the many years how this voice of the north, our regional CBC presence, our public broadcaster, has been whittled away piece by piece.

In some ways, it's sort of like the fable of the frog and the boiling water. You know the story — I'm sure everybody in this House does. If you put a frog in a pot of boiling water, it will jump out, but if you just slowly heat it up, eventually it will die, and that's the concern about allowing CBC to be whittled away. We're saying now that it's time to restore the funding for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to not let it die.

We have seen funding cuts that have resulted in the loss of local weekend programming and the loss of afternoon local news programming. We have seen the inability of staff to visit communities and report on community issues on a regular basis, the inability of staff to participate in events such as the Yukon Quest and the Canada Winter Games. Too often, Yukoners and northerners are having to rely on others to provide our information, including public radio from Alaska, to tell us what's going on in Yukon.

We have seen a decrease in the ability of news reporters to report or attend events on weekends. We have seen the loss of special events that CBC North Yukon used to host. I'm sure that there are many in this room who remember *A Christmas Carol* with guest readers from CBC and community members — a tradition long gone.

Mr. Speaker, I would also add — adding to the list of the loss of a Yukon-based regional CBC voice — that I don't believe that I'm alone in expressing frustration, to the point of turning the radio off on Saturday and Sunday mornings after hearing nothing emanating from the Yukon and being subjected to weather reports for unknown places like “Telsun” or “Klu-ane”.

We have to ask ourselves, How did we get here? How did we get to the point where our local radio station — radio CBC North — has become a diminished force, one that we love and we want to see reinvigorated?

Mr. Speaker, when you think about it, the mandate of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation goes back to 1991. It was set up as the national public broadcaster and it was to provide a wide range of programming that informs, enlightens, and entertains — all of which CBC Yukon has done over the years.

The programming under this mandate under the *Broadcasting Act* of 1991 said that the corporation should be predominantly and distinctively Canadian; reflect Canada and its regions to national and regional audiences while serving the special needs of those regions; actively contribute to the flow and exchange of cultural expression; be in English and in

French, reflecting the different needs and circumstances of each official language community, including the particular needs and circumstances of English and French linguistic minorities. The CBC is charged with contributing to a shared national consciousness and identity and with reflecting the multicultural and multiracial nature of Canada. It's a big charge.

Mr. Speaker, members may recall that the federal government in the mid-1990s made across-the-board cuts to all government departments and agencies, including the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. When I went back and looked at articles back then, I found one from *Maclean's* in September of 1996. At that time, the article said that “Phased in over the next 18 months, the cutbacks will bring to \$414 million the total CBC budget reductions, which were first imposed by the Liberal government in 1994. The cuts will affect every aspect of the national broadcaster, whose current budget...” — so this was in 1994 — “... including ad revenues and parliamentary disbursements, totals about \$1.4 billion and includes 9,000 employees.

“English-language CBC Radio will lose one in three staff positions...” as a result of the cuts made in 1994. The English-language CBC Radio would be losing “... about 500 jobs — and budget cuts will total \$34 million. Program budgets for CBC Radio will drop by 28 per cent.”

Funding for regional CBC stations would be decreased over time according to market size. Now, this is where it gets kind of strange. We are talking about a Canadian broadcaster — a publicly funded broadcaster — and they have this mandate. Then you say you are going to do a market-driven approach. How do you expect the same kind of services and the same quality when you're trying to do it across a diverse region like the north as opposed to the 905? It doesn't make sense.

Of course, as we recall, a number of programs would be cancelled — and they were. French language radio budgets were also reduced, with 238 jobs eliminated from the existing 900, and they downgraded their French language stations in Vancouver, Regina, and Edmonton. I say this, Mr. Speaker, to give a sense of the context. The cuts did not stop there. With it, the debate was often polarized along partisan lines about the role of the public broadcaster. Unlike Britain's BBC, which is fully publicly funded, CBC has faced increased requirements to generate revenue.

After the federal Liberal government made the cuts in the 1994 budget, the Conservative budget in 2008 led to more repeats of radio programming. When you think about it, how many times do we listen or get replayed *Ideas, As It Happens*, or any of the national programs because there is no regional programming and there have been so many programs cut? We have seen shorter seasons for popular radio programs. CBC has been forced to reduce its cultural programming because it is costly to produce, and most worrying in this age of suspect news driven by bots — most worrying to me as a citizen committed to open democracy fuelled by informed citizens is the dramatic decline in investigative journalism at both the regional and national levels. This is to say nothing about the axing of CBC's global presence. We are at risk of falling prey to the dumbing down of our own media and our news. To watch

the CBC, an institution with such a proud and deep history of journalistic integrity — Mr. Speaker, I find that sad.

There are network defenders — and I count myself as one of them — who note that CBC's mandate does differ from the private media, particularly with its focus on Canadian content, and much of the remaining budget should and does try to underpin the radio networking. CBC supporters — and, as I said, I count myself as one of these — point out that additional long-term funding is required to provide better Canadian programming, including radio drama and improving our local programming, to attract and sustain strong viewership. Because if we dilute the regional and local programming to the extent that it is just a repetition, then people get turned off and turn it off. Or if you can't find anything about your local region because the program is emanating out of Yellowknife and speaks nothing to what is going on in the Yukon, that eventually gets Yukon citizens to turn the radio off.

Mr. Speaker, according to the Canadian Media Guild, the \$115-million reduction in annual cuts — annual cuts started with the 2012 budget; there were previous cuts in 2008 after the ones in 1994 — but the ones that were scheduled in 2012, which were \$115 million a year "... amount to one of the biggest layoffs of content creators and journalists in Canadian history" according to the Canadian Media Guild.

In 2014, when they were fully realized, those, combined with the earlier ones, totalled 3,600 jobs lost at CBC since 2008. Between 2008 and 2014, it was 3,600 jobs.

You know, Mr. Speaker, as we saw this week, leadership makes a difference in an organization. Decisions or choices that make sense from a Toronto perspective sometimes simply don't work outside of that golden triangle of Toronto, Montréal, and Ottawa. And the choices by political leaders as to who leads the Canadian institutions such as the CBC also have lasting impacts. For example, in September of 2015, the then-president of CBC Radio-Canada spoke at an international public broadcasters' conference in Munich, Germany, and he claimed that, for the first time, public broadcasters were — quote: "... at risk of extinction."

The Canadian Media Guild responded that the same president of the CBC had made a career of shredding the CBC by cutting one quarter of its staff under his tenure. More than 600 jobs were cut in one year alone, in 2014, in order to plug a budget shortfall.

Over the last 25 years, CBC — and I applaud all the journalists and the technicians who work for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, those who have survived a roller coaster of cutbacks that have to be incredibly undermining in terms of confidence.

The good news was that, in 2015, the federal election saw the new Liberal government pledge to start to fill the funding gaps faced by the CBC after years of cuts. The fact is, however, that the cuts made to the CBC in the 1990s have played forward. Mr. Speaker, we have seen this replayed in departmental budgets as well. It's like reverse interest — and I have said this before — if you made these two-, five-, 10-percent cuts to budgets and then you just keep cutting and cutting and cutting

each year. When we have interest, we increase our funds each year, but this has been the opposite.

So, governments are now starting to realize, as they did, for example, on one that I was familiar with at the time in the 1990s — the indigenous file — when it was two-percent cuts and played forward significant deficits and a whole range of programs and services that should have been available. It's analogous to cuts made to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Media Guild says that, if the CBC was to be funded at a level comparable to 1990-91 in constant dollars — that's inflation-adjusted — its parliamentary appropriation in 2019 — this year — would have amounted to more than \$1.8 billion.

The amount that it received is closer to \$1.2 billion, a gap of approximately \$600 million. That's what we're talking about today, Mr. Speaker. We're talking about restoring the funding for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation so that it can properly and fully deliver on its mandate, which I outlined to you earlier.

So, terminating — which is really where this death by 1,000 cuts appears to be going — and/or reducing CBC's local presence to a mere shadow also entails the disappearance of vital local and regional voices and perspectives from the CBC's national network programs. If funding is not restored to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, in effect, CBC would contract into a Toronto or Montréal broadcasting corporation, turning its back on the far-flung diverse reality of the other 75 percent of Canada.

We heard one of the motions this week talking about the fact that CBC North represents 40 percent of the land mass. But if there is this concentration of power and this concentration of where the resources go to the golden triangle, that will not serve the mandate of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. So, Mr. Speaker, we owe it to the citizens of Yukon and to Canada to not allow that to happen. We need to ensure that our public broadcaster is able to deliver fully on its mandate in the north and in the Yukon.

I look forward to hearing the views of members of this Assembly and, as a result of our debate this afternoon, reaching consensus on our request that the Speaker convey the support of Yukon's elected representatives for the restoration of stable and robust funding for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and that this message of support be conveyed by the Speaker to our sister territories and to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would like to begin by thanking the Member for Whitehorse Centre for bringing forward this motion. I would also like to thank all MLAs yesterday for agreeing to debate on this issue without our normal full day's notice on the motion. I think that speaks to how important we all believe, in this Legislature, this issue is. I also just would like to thank all of the parties and all of those involved who expressed concern right away.

I saw some differences in the approach to how we were trying to get there, but underneath it all, I saw that we were all

concerned and wanted to address the issue. We all wanted to work across all three of the territories to express our collective concern about the situation. I would also like to thank CBC for deciding to pull back their decision. I think that we are in a better place today than we were yesterday.

Just this past weekend, on November 17, we marked 50 years of CKRW. We stood in this Legislature to praise this radio station as the longest standing commercial radio station here in the Yukon. One of the things that was in the news was a quote from Mr. Rolf Hougen, who founded the station, and he was talking about radio stations across the country, especially smaller radio stations, and how they can sometimes be absorbed into the larger media conglomerates over the years and the importance of maintaining that local notion of radio. His quote through the media this weekend was: “Our belief is that radio stations should serve a community.” I am going to get to that notion of reflecting the regions, but I want to just talk a little bit about the north for a second.

For several years — nine years — I wrote for *Encyclopedia Britannica* on current affairs in the Arctic. I wrote about shipping and sea ice, diamond mines, offshore oil and gas, wildfires, salmon populations, and climate change. Some of these topics are shared across all of the territories, but some are not. Whenever I was asked to talk to southerners about the north, I would always try to explain that it is actually the “norths” and that it is not just one homogenous place. From Nunavut to the Northwest Territories to the Yukon, there are a lot of differences. As the Member for Whitehorse Centre noted, we have different geographies, going from the Arctic maritime to the massive Canadian Shield to the mountainous boreal forests here in the Yukon. We have different languages. Here in the Yukon, we range from Tagish to Gwich’in and English and French. In the Northwest Territories, it ranges from Chipewyan to Inuvialuktun to English and French. In Nunavut, it’s pretty much Inuktitut and English and a bit of French. We have different first peoples. Here we have 14 First Nations, 11 of which have land claims and self-government agreements. In the Northwest Territories, there are several regional land claims and self-government agreements. Nunavut has one agreement, which encompasses and, in fact, created the territory.

We have different histories, from whaling ships to barges to paddlewheelers. The Yukon is connected by a year-round highway while Nunavut has no roads and is dependent on air travel.

We all have climate change happening more rapidly in the three territories compared to the Outside, but it’s still experienced differently. Our big issue is wildfires. In Nunavut, they don’t have trees. It’s just different. For us, sweet clover is an invasive species. I remember in Nunavut when they saw their first wasp, and I remember them talking with elders about it. In Northwest Territories, their invasive species is salmon.

I understand that we’re all territories; I understand that we’re all north of 60, that we’re large places with relatively small communities and that we think of ourselves as different and distant from the south, but that doesn’t mean that we’re all the same. What’s news for Nunavut might not be meaningful or might not connect with the Yukon and vice versa.

It doesn’t make sense to think that local stories in the Yukon have the same immediate relevance for the Northwest Territories or Nunavut. I reflect on the comments on the weekend radio — when I listen at times to the CBC on those mornings when it’s a broadcaster from NWT — and I listen to them talk about the Yukon, and I think, “Ah, not really — kind of, but not really.” I too agree that we want to be very careful to protect that sense of regional relevancy, reflecting our regions.

Last night when I was thinking about debating this motion today, I was looking on Google Earth, and I looked at the distance from Whitehorse to Yellowknife. It’s about the same distance as Whitehorse to Grande Prairie or Edmonton. While I’m still a fan of Tara McCarthy, I don’t think her Edmonton news stories would be top of mind for us here in the Yukon.

The distance from Whitehorse to Iqaluit is farther than the distance from Whitehorse to Los Angeles. It would sort of be like sharing our news with the news out of Vancouver Island and Disneyland. It feels a bit like an apples-to-muktuk comparison.

I would be more than happy to hear a pan-northern newscast if it were in addition to local news. I’m very interested to hear what’s happening in the other territories and what’s important for them, but never as a replacement for the local news. I don’t think that it can actually be local in a pan-northern notion.

We currently span three time zones — three hours’ time difference, or maybe someday it will be four hours in the summer if we drop daylight savings and stick with Pacific Standard Time as Yukon time. I’m even trying to think of the coordination a bit from a time perspective.

Let me talk for a minute about local reporters. One of the great things that happens on the morning show on CBC is that they introduce local reporters from Old Crow to Ross River to Watson Lake and even to Skagway. By the way, I was very sad to learn of Buckwheat Donahue’s death — my condolences to his family and the community of Skagway.

I had an opportunity once to be the Marsh Lake community reporter for one day. I was the rec director and manager of our local community centre, and the CBC called me up and asked if I would, on the morning show, talk about events that are coming up. I said, “Absolutely I would.” It was a very fun day because, just earlier that day, public health had come around and dropped off a bunch of condoms, and we had our North of 60 café, which is for our seniors, and we decided to share the condoms with the seniors. We just had a great laugh over this thing. That became our story that we talked about with Sandi Coleman — before, of course, she had retired.

After that I had expressed my interest to run in politics, and as soon as that happened, I was no longer to be the local reporter — and terrific — but every time I listen to those local reporters, the relevance to each of their communities is so real and so significant. Of course, I’m not talking about the newscasts that would be there, but it just resonates on how important it is to us that the stories come from the communities themselves.

I will tell one small story about Sandi Coleman. I think that it was in May 2017 when there was an earthquake. That

morning, I felt the earthquake. It was pretty early in the morning — 5:00 or 6:00 in the morning, somewhere around there. I felt the earthquake and immediately I was on the phone with the Deputy Minister of Community Services because we deal with emergencies. We talked about gearing up to deal with the situation, and they already had things in hand. It was quite amazing to me that — a call in the wee hours of the morning — our public servants were already on top of it.

We discussed it, and I said, “I think this is going to end up being on the radio. Maybe I should come in.” I was on my way into town, and Sandi Coleman was on the radio at that moment. I think she was even talking to an expert seismologist about earthquakes, and suddenly there was an aftershock or another tremor or earthquake. She got scared, and you could hear it in her voice. She got under her desk while on air. I remember pulling over, picking up the phone, and calling in to CBC to talk to them, as well, in the next minutes or so, to talk about our public servants and how they were working to make sure everybody was safe — going to check bridges, buildings, schools, et cetera — and make sure that everything was going to be okay for the community. That is a purely local thing. That happens here; it happened in the immediate.

Last year, here in this Legislature, we tributed the CBC. The date was October 4, and it was in celebration of the 60th anniversary of CBC North, their proliferation across the north, and the importance. The Member for Porter Creek North, the Member for Whitehorse Centre, and I all stood to speak about the importance of CBC North. I will just now add one thing that I thought maybe would be too cheeky to say that day, but I was going to say, “Congratulations on turning 60 — now you’re half as old as the *Whitehorse Star*.”

When we talked about it, I think that all of us in this Legislature spoke about the importance of local radio, about the ability to connect with citizens here, and how important a service that is for all of us as citizens — of course, to represent the regionally different cultures and languages, but the stories and how they resonate with each of us.

I was looking through some of the comments last night on social media. I’m going to share one here for the record. It comes from Dave Bidini, who many of you may know is formerly of the Rheostatics.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Sorry — thanks. The Premier has just helped me out there, Mr. Speaker. They are back together, so great news — and my apologies to the Rheostatics.

I quote: “We ignore the north at our own spiritual and intellectual peril. This compromises the room and space for indigenous stories and beyond. If CBC won’t acknowledge the difference in regions and importance of serving them, who will?”

I am going to quote one more, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, my favourite political commentary on Yukon social media had this to say about the situation with CBC North — and I quote: “CBC All the north is the same. They all have igloos and outhouses right? Same news same difference.” And they go on to say — and by the way, this is me now saying that this is all with sarcasm. I hope that it is reads that way in Hansard. The quote

goes on: “Canada’s national broadcaster announces plan to turn northern news into one part homogenized mush and two parts yellow snow. Eat it up #Yukon #NWT #Nunavut it’s good for your national identity.”

I think there was a strong voice coming not only from all sides of this Legislature, but also from the community.

I would also like, just for a moment, to give a shout-out to Ms. Elyn Jones. I know that this “proposal” — let’s call it that — was not about individuals, but I have to say that she is an exceptional presenter of the news and a clear voice of and for the Yukon. If this had gone through, I am sure that a whole lot of Yukoners were going to really miss her in that role as a newscaster. This is not to take away from all the folks who fill in when she is not there or when she was filling in as a host. They did a fine job, but you have to say that she is pretty good at what she does. One of my first thoughts when we started to hear this news was: “Oh my gosh — I’m going to miss Elyn in that role.” Not to take away from the newscasters in the Northwest Territories or Nunavut — it is about a connection with the Yukon.

I know that our media has been changing, and I think that here in the Yukon we are blessed with quite a wide range of media. Well, depending on how you count it, we have three territorial papers — local papers as well — and we have three radio stations and one shared TV outlet. Again, it just tells me — I focus more on the radio because it’s more local. It just provides that additional sense.

Mr. Speaker, generally again, I wish to acknowledge all of the thoughts that came from all of the motions that were brought forward. I would also like to thank the Premier for writing his letter to the other premiers. I will say again that I was really happy that the CBC saw that it was important to keep local news here and make sure that we are reflecting the regions as per the mandate of CBC.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to propose what I think is a modest amendment to the motion that is before us. I will speak to it in a second.

Amendment proposed

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I move:

THAT Motion No. 116 be amended by:

- (1) deleting the phrase “restore funding to” and inserting in its place the phrase “continue funding”; and
- (2) deleting the phrase “restore services” and inserting in its place the phrase “maintain regional services”.

Speaker: We have a proposed amendment on the floor of the Assembly. It appears that we have the copies that one of the pages will provide to all members for their review and then I will review the same with Mr. Clerk in order to determine whether the amendment is in order.

I’ve had an opportunity to review the proposed amendment with Mr. Clerk and I can advise that it’s procedurally in order.

It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services: THAT Motion No. 116 be amended by:

- (1) deleting the phrase “restore funding to” and inserting in its place the phrase “continue funding”; and

(2) deleting the phrase “restore services” and inserting in its place the phrase “maintain regional services”.

The rest of the body of Motion No. 116 remains the same.

The Minister of Community Services, on the proposed amendment — you have 20 minutes.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Thank you. I am going to be brief. First of all, I want to try to explain how I landed here with this amendment. I want to say that, as I was speaking with the members opposite on the floor of the House, I got a new sense of the word “restore”. The interpretation that I heard from the Member for Whitehorse Centre was “restore”, not meaning the proposed change right now but back to an earlier time when there was more funding.

What I came here today — and in prepping for today, I was under the — I was focusing on the change that had been proposed just two days ago by CBC. I thought that’s what we were discussing, and I just had a different interpretation. That’s just how I landed at this place.

Because it was already given back, it was, I thought, already restored, so I thought this was just adding clarity to the motion. Also, Mr. Speaker, I will say that, as we work through this, as I said in my opening remarks, there was an interest on all sides of the House to address this issue. We had different approaches; okay. The principle at the high level, I believe we’re all trying to achieve something in common.

I did my best to try to work with the members opposite, but I just ran out of time. That’s all I want to say. It’s not to make an excuse, but when we put this on unanimously yesterday, I noted that the wording that I heard in the Legislature yesterday was not exactly the wording that I saw on the Order Paper today. All those subtle things make a little bit of a difference. I’m sure it’s all with the good intention of trying to get it appropriate.

Mr. Speaker, what I caught was the word “multiculturalism”, so I will go back and check that as well.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Sorry; it’s just a small change. As we were working through a discussion on this, those little things are important, if you’re looking at amendments.

My intent here and what I have proposed as an amendment, Mr. Speaker, was simply to acknowledge that CBC had already altered their position. When the motion came forward from the member opposite, that was not the case and I was merely trying to uphold what has just happened. That’s the point that I will make on the amendment.

I appreciate that the members opposite had a broader perspective about the word “restore” which I’m now understanding, and I’m happy to hear debate on the amendment as I’ve proposed it.

Ms. Hanson: Today, we sort of seized defeat from the jaws of victory. We had an opportunity, I thought, where everybody in this Legislative Assembly had indicated that they were happy that we had seen the regional management of CBC North backtrack on a decision made on how they were going to implement the latest in a series of cuts that have happened to

CBC. The three positions that were being consolidated for this newscasting position that the Minister of Community Services was lauding so greatly in terms of the work of Elyn Jones, our local newscaster — those are three of 35 positions that were being cut. The 35 positions are part of a series of cuts that have occurred. If you think for one moment that next year there won’t be more cuts and we’ll be debating the same damn thing in this Legislative Assembly because we — I mean, it’s naïve to think that our motion is going to change and see a restoration. What we are asking and what I thought could come out of this Legislative Assembly was an expression of the will of this Legislative Assembly — the members of this Legislative Assembly to say, “We would like to see the restoration of the CBC. We would like to see the CBC able to deliver the diverse range of programs and services that it did before a series of cumulative cuts” — as I said at the outset — over the last 25 years, and the net effect in real dollars — in 2019 dollars — is a difference of \$600 million.

I don’t anticipate that the federal government is going to turn around, but it was an indication of our will and our belief in the Canadian broadcasting system.

But if you want to go with the incremental little bits and pieces here, then you can continue to say in a motion next year, “Well, we’ll continue to support the CBC, and geez, wouldn’t it be nice if they didn’t cut that position or the next position they are going to cut?” — because there will be more cuts.

As I said, it’s unfortunate that this government’s members seem to think that every motion that comes from the opposition must be tweaked and must be amended to suit whatever — that doesn’t have anything to do in terms of respecting the fact that you could possibly come out of a motion that reflects the will of Members of the Legislative Assembly — that it would be the will of the Legislative Assembly. It’s an expression of will; it’s not a direction. We don’t direct the federal government on what to do, but we can say that, on behalf of Yukon citizens — and I am sure that every single one of them — I heard the minister opposite express some of the same sentiments. We know what CBC has been and what it has been able to deliver in the past. We know how hard it is for those professional broadcasters and journalists to be denied the opportunity to do the full scope of their work.

But if that’s not the will of the government members to express their belief in the integrity of the CBC and they’re quite prepared to see it continue to try to limp along and to continue to be cut little cuts at a time — as I said in my opening comments, the consolidation of those three positions into one was for many people the latest piling on of the last piece of straw on the camel’s back. The minister himself read a number of the online comments. I too read them. But they’re not going to stop there.

That’s unfortunate. We made an effort. I do — and I know my colleague, as a member of the New Democratic Party caucus, does firmly believe in the need to restore the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation before it’s gutted from its capacity to do the work from its mandate that was set out in 1991 on behalf of us all. So, we made it clear where we stand and I guess the

incrementalistic approach across the way will stand its majority and they can pass the motion as amended.

Mr. Cathers: This amendment, while there are parts of it that — the reference to “regional services” is perhaps a positive addition. It’s unfortunate the deletion of “restore funding” and replacement with “continue funding” does seem like the Liberals are more concerned about not offending the federal Liberal government than they are about simply standing up for the Yukon on this issue.

Something that I would note is that we had also proposed two motions yesterday on this same topic of CBC funding. The wording contained within this original motion brought forward by the member of the Third Party was not the same as the wording that we had in our motions. Personally, I like some of our wording better, but that being said, it was our plan to support the motion rather than arguing about semantics here in the House since the principle of what members were driving at yesterday seem to be the same.

The point made as well by the member of the Third Party in talking about the impact that the CBC has already seen, in her view, due to the reductions in funding is a valid point. We have seen some previous reductions. I have also noticed personally that there seems to be an increase in the amount of news from the NWT or even other parts of Canada in what used to be an entirely local newscast with very few exceptions. I would assume that this is due in part to the resources that CBC has. I am not intending to say that as a criticism to the local staff. It’s just a cause for concern for me if local news becomes less local and more about other parts of the country that, while valuable and unique in their own way, do not have the same interests and issues as the Yukon. The value of local reporting not just from Whitehorse but from rural communities is one that does matter here in the territory.

I will wrap up my comments on the amendment and save further comments for the main motion, but I would just note that this amendment does not seem to be a positive trend in terms of the impact on the motion. It is definitely watering down part of it. I would note as well for the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes, who is usually the first to criticize members of this side for not sharing amendments to motions with them before making them and using that as a reason to vote against our amendments, I certainly never saw a copy of this wording before that member made the amendment. To my understanding from the comments of the Third Party, they didn’t see it either, so we have a government that applies one standard to itself and a different standard to everyone else.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I wasn’t going to stand on the amendment. I have some other comments I hope to get to later, but I think that I need to note that, with respect to the amendment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think you have heard my colleague indicate that this was done with the best of intentions, that work was done with the Third Party, which is completely contrary to what the Member for Lake Laberge has just said. I think it’s a valuable opportunity to correct that information.

It was done with the best of intentions. Clearly, the substance of this motion is supported by all members of this House — not to speak for them, but there were no less than four motions brought forward yesterday indicating various wording, which all substantively spoke to the concept that CBC should maintain, restore, continue — whatever words you want to use — the local broadcast and certainly the local news broadcast, and that those are very important to northerners, they’re very important to individuals here in the Yukon and presumably to individuals in Nunavut as well.

I will just take this opportunity to reiterate what has been said by the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes, which is that the intention was only to clarify wording with respect to funding, not to change the support, not to question what that might look like, and certainly not the intention that all motions need to be amended. There have been many, many motions that have come to this House and been passed unanimously without amendment by any party. Quite frankly, the opportunity for amendments on the floor of this House is what this is all about. It’s what this process is all about. The debate — the concept that ideas might need to be adjusted here is an opportunity, but it’s not done all the time, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It’s not done in this case with anything but support, and it’s not done, as the Member for Lake Laberge has noted, by, I will say, using terms, and his characterization of this — that is simply not accurate.

The motion has been amended here for the purposes of us having the opportunity to debate the substance of this. Funding restored, I appreciate — funding continued, I appreciate that could have a different meaning, depending, but that doesn’t change the support for the substance of this, and that’s what we’re debating here. I suspect that many of the other members of this Legislative Assembly will have things to say about their support for CBC, and that’s what this is about.

Ms. White: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We talk often about different things in the House. I appreciate that the interpretation from the members from the government side were different from what was actually written down. When we talk about “restore” — the definition of “restore” is “bring back”, so reinstate; bring back; bring it back. The reason why we’re talking about that funding was because, if the funding was restored, then obviously we’d be able to have the regional broadcasting. We appreciate that CBC made the quick about-face.

As far as the work that had been done together between the Minister for Community Services and I, I have received two notes today about it. The first note said that the government was going to move an amendment — that it would be the Premier who would relay the motion and asked if we needed to chat about it. I said yes. I said that the Speaker is the non-partisan member of the Assembly and speaks for all members in the Assembly. The Speaker can speak on everyone’s behalf, so I said, “Yeah; I disagree with that.”

Then I received a second note that says, “Discussed quickly and drop our idea of Premier to support Speaker/all MLAs/House. Still bringing a small amendment to change ‘restore’ to ‘continue.’”

That was the indication that we were given then that there was going to be a change. I understand the frustration from my colleague for Whitehorse Centre because the wording is different — not only the wording, but the intention is different. I don't think that there's any challenge in this House that we all support the CBC and we all support regional broadcasting. We all support the work that is done, especially those of us who listen to CBC. But we can say that there have been changes recently. On Saturday morning, I listen to CBC out of Yellowknife when they're talking about the weather and that doesn't affect me at all. I haven't been to the places that are listed. I appreciate that, on Saturdays, we still get the Franco hour that's broadcast to Whitehorse. I think we still get the community reporter in Old Crow, but the weekend is predominantly read out of Yellowknife.

Maybe if we were looking at restoring the funding, maybe it could be focused on Yukon again but it's not. The wording is different — quite a bit different. Is it the intention that was there? I don't think it was. We know we highlighted the pre-1994 — the pre-2008 funding and the difference it is now. I appreciate that we're talking about CBC North and I guess I'm going to stay focused on that. But I just want to highlight that I did get two notes today. One was not moved forward with and the other one was. To be fair, the Yukon NDP didn't fully realize the changes that were going to happen, so I would prefer it if we weren't told that we were because that's not exactly true.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to hearing from more members from the government side and to continuing the conversation.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on the proposed amendment to Motion No. 116?

Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Disagree.

Mr. Kent: Disagree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Disagree.

Mr. Cathers: Disagree.

Ms. McLeod: Disagree.

Mr. Istchenko: Disagree.

Ms. White: Disagree.

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

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the amendment carried.

Amendment to Motion No. 116 agreed to

Speaker: Is there further debate on the main motion as amended?

Mr. Cathers: I'm not going to be too long in speaking to this. I do just want to note and thank the Third Party for bringing this forward. As I mentioned briefly, we ourselves had brought forward motions yesterday on this same topic. On this issue, I just wanted to note that feedback from constituents and from Yukoners has been notable since the announcement was made by CBC to amalgamate all of the north together into one news desk for the morning show. It is something that has been widely criticized by Yukoners and by elected representatives, including me.

We were pleased that the CBC has announced this morning that they are cancelling that plan to centralize morning newscasts for the Yukon, NWT, and Nunavut out of Yellowknife. But another thing; regardless of the exact wording that passes in this motion, in my view and on behalf of our caucus, I would note that we think it is important to ensure that the CBC has adequate resources across the north to sufficiently cover locally relevant news in our territory and that it is also important to note that, together, the land area that the Yukon, NWT, and Nunavut comprise is about 39 percent of the country, and people making decisions in Ottawa or Toronto don't necessarily understand that.

It is a fact that many people in southern Ontario mix up Yellowknife and Whitehorse, don't know which is where and have misconceptions about the north. They apply generalities and stereotypes to their understanding of what northern life is like, and the reality is that, in 39 percent of the country — this vast area of the second largest country in the world — life in Nunavut, life in the NWT, and life in the Yukon are each unique in their own ways.

It is important, in my belief, that if there is a national broadcaster receiving public funding as part of their mandate to provide local and regional programming, that they do focus on that. I do believe personally that having the resources for them to do that and to focus on providing programming that would not be provided without that national broadcaster — to see that watered down is disappointing.

As I mentioned, the increase that we have seen already in NWT news being included in the local news on a regular basis does seem like a situation where we are not seeing as much Yukon content. The reality in each community of the Yukon is different from what it is in the Whitehorse area.

In terms of the value of CBC, I just want to speak briefly on the fact that we have seen the reduction in services, as the member from the Third Party noted. That includes when CBC's AM tower — that transmitter — was shut down, I tried at the time, as minister and on behalf of constituents, to see them

replace the AM tower, which is being moved from Whistle Bend. I was not successful in that, unfortunately. I was successful in getting the dismantling of that tower delayed by a couple of years and that provided some service for a longer period, but the decline of that service as well is having an impact for Yukoners who previously were able to receive CBC's AM service at cabins in the bush and use it as a source of news as well as information about the world Outside when they are out — whether on a trapline, hunting, or just in the bush. Losing that service did have an impact. Losing local reporting and losing the locally focused news would have a bigger impact.

I would just speak briefly about the fact that it can have benefits that are not always thought out in discussions of this type, including getting young children more interested in politics and the world around them. Speaking personally, when I was little, CBC was a big part of developing my early interest in politics and national and local affairs — that, coupled with discussions around the kitchen table. I know that the value I got as a young boy hearing *Morningside*, hearing *The House*, hearing *Double Exposure* and other programming on CBC as well as local newscasts was informative and educational. Losing that type of local news for others who might, like myself, grow up with their parents listening to CBC radio in the background or to another local radio station with local news, such as CKRW or CHON-FM, those newscasts from all three radio stations that we were fortunate to have locally do provide value to the community. They are informative to both adults and children, and they help keep each and every one of us more in touch with what is going on in the territory around us.

We will be supporting the motion as amended. As I noted, a part of the amendment appeared to actually weaken the motion. Fundamentally, what I wish to put on record on behalf of me as well as the Official Opposition is that, while the exact resourcing requirements of CBC are something that are left to federally elected representatives to debate and discuss, from our perspective, it is important that they receive the appropriate and adequate resources to ensure that they can provide regional programming across the north and reflect the perspective, the news, and the needs of communities across the Yukon, as well as in our two sister territories that, while we share many things in common, are each distinctly different and far away from life here in the Yukon. With that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my comments.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I want to thank everybody today for their comments on the floor of the Legislative Assembly — and if I will get a little bit of latitude from the members opposite about a little bit of a preamble here — if I can.

I do believe what I witnessed today and yesterday was a whole bunch of concerned MLAs wanting their best to, first and foremost, address the topical issue that we saw pretty quickly. I remember first hearing about the proposed changes to CBC just in the morning two days ago. I was kind of taken aback, and it was interesting listening to CBC interview CBC, and that was an interesting concept in general.

Then what I saw as well was three political parties on the fly, very quickly — I won't say scrambling, but really working in earnest to make this an issue. I applaud all parties in that pursuit.

What I also saw yesterday was our government and the Official Opposition working unanimously so that we could get this particular motion on the floor of the Legislative Assembly. Again, kudos to the Yukon Party for that — and also a good working relationship with the Third Party. Making that happen was something that was important to all of us.

What I'm noticing here now — where we did we get? Well, we saw some motions being taken off of the Order Paper because certain actions had been taken and some hadn't been. I saw — and I will just be very frank — our whole team really scrambling to understand the intricacies, I guess, of why certain ones were taken off and other ones weren't. Then I also saw House Leaders get together and have a great conversation again about this concept. Never at any time — and this is the quite honest truth — did we assume that the motion on the floor today is about historic funding. Again, that's on us as much as on anybody else.

But I think it does speak to how we prepare for private members' day as well. I would be totally amenable to having a conversation about notice for those motions. Currently, we give 48 hours' notice before we start debating. If the members of the opposition would want to have a conversation about maybe giving more notice, which would then allow more conversations at House Leaders' meetings — whatever. To me, when you take a look at the drafting of a motion, guidelines for — I'm really trying my best to work and lend an olive branch to the opposition.

If the Member for Whitehorse Centre has any reservations on me being somehow disingenuous here, I will have a conversation with her later. It's about being clear and concise. When we talk about being clear and concise, I honestly believe that we would alleviate a lot of issues if we were allowed together to have a little more notice. That's my only point, because what I did see today as well was the Minister of Community Services, who was attending events, trying to work with the opposition — but then again, when he's heading down to have those conversations, the members of the opposition are attending events as well, because it's important to other issues that we're dealing with. It's not a lot of time to really work together as much as we possibly can.

Best intentions — and thank you for not calling me out of order that I'm not speaking to the motion as amended as opposed to just the concept of motions. I really do appreciate the latitude from both opposition parties — to just state my point on that one small piece.

Mr. Speaker, with the motion as amended, I did want to start my contribution to today's conversation, which is about CBC and the importance of local representation of CBC, with a quick story of my first experience in the Yukon in Dawson City engaging on a community level with local CBC radio icons. It was one of my first years in Dawson, and it was my first year as a board member for the Dawson City Music Festival. We were hosting a winter concert series that was of

certain merit — of certain enough merit that we had the honour of hosting several CBC hosts in Dawson City for a whole week, pretty much, in March — one winter's occurrence too many years ago to count.

The board of the Dawson City Music Festival — we thought it was going to be really fun to host a friendly road-hockey tournament — Dawson City Music Festival versus CBC. I had already known some of the CBC cast and crew — Dave White, for example, no stranger to Dawson today and no stranger to Dawson certainly back in the day. I'm aging him as I'm aging myself. But there was also another friend of ours — a former DJ, Dave King. I'm sure people remember Dave King. I had met David King earlier on. He had come up a couple of times that summer, and we did some recording in my home studio with Dawson musician Fred Squire. We did a little piece for CBC for Dave's show that suggested that Dave King was a member of the underground pirate vampire club of Dawson City — younger days, Mr. Speaker. I'll just say that.

We had Sandi Coleman. She took the opening face-off against former producer Dominic Lloyd. I managed to intercept a pass and did a dump and chase of the puck behind the CBC net, and as I made my way to the rink end — and mind you, I wasn't necessarily at full-tilt — I was enjoying the day maybe a little bit too much — I was suddenly shuffled unceremoniously to the snowbank by a very tenacious force whose competitive chase to the puck got my attention and my respect. Mr. Speaker, that was my first time meeting Nancy Thomson. Not only did she kick my butt on that play, but she continued to out-hustle our whole team for three periods. I think that we won the game, and I also think that CBC let the home team win the game.

The whole weekend — and this is the point of the story — I witnessed and participated in — but mostly I witnessed — interviews with the whole community not just for the music festival, but we saw CBC take that opportunity to speak with elders, with artists, with leaders, with the Rangers, and with shy movers and shakers who might be more intimidated by someone they don't know. The point is that the snapshot in time that was recorded that day, because of the local know-how of CBC, was really important, and that story would not have been told if it weren't for the local content and the local connection to the communities that CBC brings to us on a regular basis.

The importance of local radio and local news cannot be overstated, and rural communities especially rely on radio to remain connected. Yukoners kept their radios always tuned to CBC as a means of connection across the territory. In my home of Dawson City, CBC is an absolute institution. Big changes, small changes, really affect everybody. When CBC in Dawson changed from the FM dial to the AM dial, that was a massive change for our community, because it affected a different range of people. Some people got a better signal and sound, but it wasn't as broad. That was a massive change, and the whole community voiced their opinion on that because broadcasting is such a critical part of our society, and CBC is certainly a significant part of our Canadian identity. That identity and that importance extends to the north, and our identity is threatened if local news is threatened.

Yesterday, I wrote my fellow northern premiers and I urged them to join me in condemning this decision, so I was happy to do so, but I do want Hansard to reflect that letter, so I will read that letter into the record.

“Dear Premier Cochrane and Premier Savikataaq,

“I am writing to ask you to join me in sending the attached letter to the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Catherine Tait, concerning the Corporation's recently announced decision to eliminate regional AM news broadcasts in our three territories in favour of a pan-northern news broadcast. As I am sure you will agree, this decision will negatively impact residents in all three territories.

“In addition to this proposed letter, each member of our Yukon Liberal Caucus will be sending a letter on behalf of our constituents and will urge our colleagues in the Yukon Legislative Assembly to do the same.”

Mr. Speaker, the letter that I proposed northern premiers send to the president and chief executive officer of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Catherine Tait, reads as follows:

“Dear Catherine Tait,

“We write as the Premiers of the three territories to express our concern regarding the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's (CBC) recently announced decision to eliminate regional AM news broadcasts in favour of a pan-northern news broadcast. We believe this decision will negatively impact residents in all three territories by reducing the availability of regionally specific news for residents of Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut, respectively. We call on CBC to stand by its mandate, as stated in the 1991 Broadcasting Act, and ensure that programming reflects Canada and its regions to national and regional audiences, while servicing the special needs of those regions.

“We value the CBC and its contributions to telling the vital stories of Canadians across the North. CBC has consistently been a strong voice for northern culture and has gone to tremendous lengths to share northern stories with the entire country. To lose the regionally specific news coverage would greatly diminish the voices of northerners and decrease their access to important information that impacts their daily lives.

“We request that you reconsider this decision and ensure that consideration is given to the distinct cultural and regional differences that exist across the North between three separate and distinct territories that comprise 40 percent of Canada's land mass. Each territory is unique and each relies on CBC for thorough coverage of local news stories.”

Mr. Speaker, hundreds of Yukoners as well as residents of Northwest Territories and Nunavut expressed their disapproval in regard to this decision. I was pleased to hear this morning that CBC did reverse their decision.

Throughout the decade, CBC Yukon has a steady, strong voice through times of terror, times of tragedy, but also times of wonder. When a comet streaks across Yukon skies leaving a dazzling trail of light in its wake, we turn on the radio to find out what just happened. When an earthquake shook us all out of bed — or out of a shower, in my case — in the early

mornings, it was local reporter Sandi Coleman who advised us from beneath our desks about this news and also the risk of aftershocks and what to do. When Yukon First Nations settled their land claim agreements, when the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in favour of Yukon First Nations in the fight to protect the Peel watershed — these are the stories that CBC Yukon stood beside us for, and we need to stand for them now.

I hope that today we can all rally — you know, there has been a lot of frantic movement from a lot of political parties and MLAs who have a huge concern — and not lose touch and sight of the general debate here, which is support for CBC. I hope that we can get unanimous consent on that. I honestly believe that, on this side of the House, the endeavours we had to reach across the way to have a progressive conversation and try to wrap our heads around how we can work together is something that we absolutely aspire to today. I want to thank members of my caucus, but also of the opposition, for their care and consideration for the mother corp.

Ms. White: I would just like to take the opportunity to thank the Premier for his comments. Yesterday, there was not just an effort in Yukon, but I would say a pan-northern effort by residents, citizens, government officials, and people who were elected and not elected to make sure CBC understood how important northern broadcasting is and how important the differences that we have are. Although we have the commonalities of living in northern climates, we all have different realities. I just want to focus on the positives. I want to thank him for his comments. I believe that if push comes to shove again, the Leader of the Official Opposition and I are happy to also send a letter. That was one of the things that had been proposed yesterday at the House Leaders' meeting.

We know that the amended motion is a bit different, but I don't think it changes how we feel about the CBC, which is that everyone has stories, just like the Premier shared — although I have not been chucked into a snowbank by Nancy Thomson, but she can run very fast so I'm not surprised that it happened. We all have stories about how the CBC has affected us.

We know it's important and we appreciate that there were motions from the Official Opposition, from the government, and from our side, and we do appreciate that there was the unanimous support yesterday to bring this motion forward because, to be perfectly honest, none of us knew that this morning there would be an announcement that things would have been different. The reality when we brought this forward yesterday is substantially different from the reality this morning. I appreciate what the Premier said and we also confirmed this morning that it would be in order just because of the language that we chose.

I hear all those things and I think that the most important thing is that, although there is frustration because the language has changed, it doesn't change the intent, which is — sorry, it changes the intent of the original motion, but it doesn't change the intent of how we feel about the CBC. That's what we're focusing on because yesterday we didn't know what January would look like and so today is a different reality, so I do

appreciate that we were all trying to come at it from that angle, although we came from different angles.

I just want to thank the Premier for the tone. Although it's not quite what we imagined the day to be like, it doesn't mean that anyone cares any less about the CBC and that's what today's focus is about, and there is a reason to celebrate. There is a reason to celebrate because in January we won't be having the news coming out of Yellowknife. I can't even imagine how they would report about the Legislative Assembly business come sitting time and I'm pretty sure Yellowknife wouldn't care to hear any of us on their radio station. We wouldn't be familiar voices in the grocery store and people couldn't stop us on the side. So, I think that there are a whole bunch of reasons — some that have been shared and some that people are just thinking about — and of course every single person who has ever listened to CBC in Yukon has a story.

I know that our intentions were all good and we come at them from different angles, but I just want to say that I believe that our intentions are ultimately good. So, Mr. Speaker, I thank everyone for their comments today.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I appreciate the opportunity to be able to speak on this motion which I think is highly important and deserves the time we can give it this afternoon.

That is not only because it was so vitally important to listeners and to CBC listeners from across the north who responded yesterday to this poorly thought-out decision by the CBC to change the newscasting, but because we have by unanimous consent agreed that this motion should be brought forward. I think it is an important opportunity for us to speak about the importance of CBC.

I will come back around to this, but I don't disagree with the Member for Whitehorse Centre that this isn't about today; I think there's a bigger fight to be had and I think we're all in it together.

I moved here — which I think Mr. Speaker is aware — almost 30 years ago. That's longer than some Yukoners and much less than others. I was offered a job over the phone to come to the Yukon and I was faced with the prospect of moving to Whitehorse sight unseen. I thought about that decision very carefully. It really only came down to two questions for me. I asked my then-potential employer and the people I was speaking to about the move two things. One was: Is there a daily newspaper? The other one: Is there CBC Radio? I remember that distinctly because those were two things that I thought were very important to me. A new job, a new place to live, interesting adventures in the north — all of the things that have since come as a result of that. Those were the two things I was concerned about at the time. That is the only thing that I wanted before I made the decision to move to the top left-hand corner of Canada. I cared about the daily newspaper because I believe that they build and support community. They share news and stories. There's a local focus. They spread news of community events and these are all really important aspects of building community and becoming part of one.

I cared about the CBC because I believe that it is the fabric that binds this amazing country together — not only nationally

but on a local basis. I've lived in several places all across this great country and at each place relied upon the CBC to teach me about other great regions and the inspirational people and their stories across Canada.

At the time, I was a big fan of Peter Gzowski and *Morningside*, so that tells you how long ago that was. Like many other Canadians, I considered him to be a national treasure. He has maybe singlehandedly — although there have been many, many other brilliant CBC broadcasters — taught Canadians more about themselves and about each other and our diverse ways of life than anyone in Canada.

With respect to the local CBC, it serves to complete the tapestry with the national CBC that is this great country. It plays a vital role in our community at a local level. I know that we can all remember listening to CBC and the reports that they have done — clearly, on September 11, 2001, and the importance of the role they played not only with respect to the connections they had with the RCMP, but the connection that they had on that day of informing our community on what was happening because, whether we liked it or not, we were drawn into that international world-renowned story.

They talk to us about earthquakes and about local elections. They talk to us about forest fires and about highway conditions. They talk to us, just this morning, about highway conditions and gave information to travellers. They talk to us about local emergencies of all kinds. They talk to us about critical national and international issues that arise here and that arise in other places, but the voice of local CBC gives us the opportunity to tell the rest of the world about things like the Peel watershed and the changes that have been made there — the land use plan — and like modern treaties of our First Nation governments and the leadership that the Yukon shows in relation to them — by that, I mean the broadest of Yukon communities, the First Nation governments, the First Nations and their work as leaders in the world.

These stories cannot originate in places where they do not occur. Well, they can, but justice will not be done with respect to that approach.

To those stories, to the people who are at the heart of those stories, and to the listeners who rely on the local content, our local culture, and stories that are relevant to and reflect our community — they must be done at a local place. They must be done here.

It seems obvious to us — who have the benefit and pure joy on many days of living here in the north — how unique we are, but it's often referred to as a single region in Canada — “the north”. We all know that it simply is not.

As mentioned earlier by the Member for Whitehorse Centre, the distinct ways of life across the north are vast, unique, and real. One aspect alone — and we could spend all afternoon listing them — is the differentiation of First Nation communities or languages. It's vast. Yellowknife is over 1,100 kilometres from Whitehorse as the crow flies, and it's over 2,200 kilometres from Iqaluit. There are no roads between them. This is a fact that is known to us as obvious, but it is perhaps not so well known in the south.

The details of our region continue to be much of a mystery in other places of Canada. That often benefits us. For instance, in the world of tourism, the Yukon is larger than life, and we ask visitors to come and discover our year-round beauty. We ask them to discover what is unique about the Yukon and what makes it unlike any other place in the world. That uniqueness doesn't always serve us well when we are trying to explain the needs or the wishes on a national forum or, even closer to home than that, at a gathering of family or friends from Outside. I am sure that I'm not the only member of this House who has been asked some completely irrelevant questions by otherwise well-intentioned and well-meaning southerners — things like: “How is the diamond mining up there?” or “What do you do when you see a polar bear?” You get my point. We have all been there. We have all had those kinds of questions brought to us and had the great joy of explaining the situations that we may be in wherever we may be from — Yellowknife, Whitehorse, Iqaluit, or other parts of the great north.

This illustrates my point that we are not all the same, Mr. Speaker. Again, while that seems obvious to us, it is not the case. In debating this motion and the decision that was made yesterday — or made before yesterday but conveyed yesterday — by the national CBC, it is clearly the case that they needed to be reminded that we are not all the same, and therefore we cannot be served by a centralized service of any kind.

It is critical that we remind ourselves — and that we remind the rest of Canada on a daily basis, if necessary — that, as the Member for Whitehorse Centre said, this conversation isn't over. I think that we all agree on the importance of the CBC for various reasons, but I hope that we will agree, going forward, to support this notion.

I take the point and agree that it is important that we remember that reminding the CBC about this decision and them reversing it is just one piece of the puzzle. We have seen the CBC, over the years, restructured or reduced — and I'm not concerned about modernization. I'm not concerned about new technology. I'm not concerned about that, but I think it's important to make reference to the *Broadcasting Act*, which is the legal authority for the CBC to operate — both radio and television. I won't torture all the listeners with much of the details. It's not a very long act, but it is the legal authority for the CBC to operate.

It was noted by the Member for Whitehorse Centre earlier, and I think it's important — she made reference to several pieces, but this is the mandate of the CBC. I'm very pleased that we did not have to resort to reminding CBC of their mandate in this particular instance. We did not have to write the letters to remind them about these details, but I take the point, and I think we're not finished. I think this will proceed, and presumably, some day we will need to do this or we will need to make sure that they remember these very important concepts.

The CBC is owned and controlled by Canadians pursuant to this legislation. They are required to provide public, private, and community elements. They are required to provide programming that's a public service “... to the maintenance and enhancement of national identity and cultural sovereignty...” of this country. Those are pretty heady

concepts, and they play out every single day in a real way at the local CBC level for communities like ours and communities across the country.

The Canadian broadcasting system is required to "... serve to safeguard, enrich and strengthen the cultural, political, social and economic fabric of Canada..."

I note that, as the Member for Takhini-Kopper King said with respect to the political, social, and economic fabric, cultural fabric — the idea that these could be done in some other place is really mind-boggling. I appreciate that it has to be done in a way that is properly responsible with Canadian taxpayers' money, but I assure you that this is an argument that — in my view and certainly in the view of the people I know who support the CBC — it is broadly supported across Canada — perhaps less so in some larger markets where they have a variety of opportunities, but we have great broadcasting here. We have other great local broadcasting here. We have just celebrated some in the last couple of days and those are also valuable, but the CBC is an important part of that process.

This act requires that the programming provided by the Canadian broadcasting system should be varied and comprehensive — I am paraphrasing and won't read it word for word — and it must provide a balance of information, enlightenment, and entertainment, which has been mentioned earlier. It is to draw from local, regional, national, and international sources. It's pretty clear.

It is to include educational and community programs. It is to provide a reasonable opportunity for the public to be exposed to the expression of differing views on matters of public concern. I have emphasized "differing views" because I think that, if we get news only — we've all mentioned Saturday morning, and the news and the programming that only comes from Yellowknife doesn't really seem like differing views. It doesn't really seem relevant to most of us who are used to having a local opportunity.

Programming provided by the corporation — the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation — should reflect Canada and its regions to national and regional audiences while serving the special needs of those regions, and it must actively contribute to the flow and exchange of cultural expression. As we've noted, the cultural expression of our communities, of our First Nation communities, and of our individual communities that might exist here in Whitehorse or in the Yukon certainly aren't the same as the ones in Iqaluit or in Yellowknife or in the Northwest Territories or in Nunavut.

It also has a mandate to have programming reflect the aboriginal cultures — again, to our point and to my point and to the points of other speakers here today that they're not the same. It's not appropriate to understand that they are the same.

Mr. Speaker, I will close by saying that I agree with the Leader of the Third Party and other speakers today that this is really about the CBC and that the wording going forward — the lesson learned today with respect to how motions are called, and we should take that into consideration in the near future — that the value here is in supporting the CBC. But I also take support from the ideas mentioned by the Member for Whitehorse Centre, because I have watched the CBC be —

maybe it is a bit like water torture in that there have been small decisions — maybe it's more like a melting ice sculpture. There are pieces that disappear, and so long as it is not too drastic, it can go relatively unnoticed. But 30 years ago when I was going to move here, I believed in the importance of CBC and the fabric of this country. I have not changed my mind. It has probably only become more important, especially for small, unique regions like ours, and we need to continue to voice that to the federal government, to the CBC specifically, and to join our partners from the other two territories across the north to maintain and to hopefully gain back some of the services that have been lost at the local level. I very much appreciate the opportunity to speak today.

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to also take a bit of time to speak about this very important issue. It is important for all of us. It is important for those of us who live in remote parts of Canada. It is important when we speak about CBC and the connectivity across the north and, for that matter, our connection to the rest of the world. It connects our stories, it connects who we are, and it helps us to share our experiences.

So, I rise today to speak to Motion No. 116 as amended. I want to just take some time to speak as the MLA for Vuntut Gwitchin and a few of the thoughts and experiences on one of the oldest radio stations in Canada — in fact, it is the oldest radio station in Canada. As Yukon's most northerly remote fly-in community, our links to broader Yukon — and the rest of the world, for that matter — are sometimes tenuous. Geography, climate, and infrastructure are factors that play into our ability as northerners to communicate within our territory and connect with both our identities as Yukoners and as Canadians.

For generations, radio has been one of the most reliable sources of news for all of us in the north. I recollect many stories from my grandparents speaking about war times, about going into the cabins, blinding the windows out, and just turning the radio on to hear about what's happening in the world — what's happening with the world war and the pending pressures and how that was detrimentally impacting and affecting their relatives and those who had gone to fight to protect the country. The only connection that they had in the far northern regions of our country was to listen to the radio. Those are some real-life stories, Mr. Speaker.

The geographical connection — and the generations that radio has been in our midst — so the most reliable source of news in the north. We often get, of course, some copies of newspapers, but often not until several days after they have gone to print. In my particular community, we didn't have that. We had a plane that maybe came in once a month — that was in the early 1960s — and at that time, we got some news, but other than that, it was relying on the radio.

In the fall when the fog hangs low over the Porcupine River or in the deep winter when it's simply too cold for the plane to land, what do we do then? We turn on the radio. Radio has always been the way in which we've been able to connect in real time with the rest of Yukon and Canada.

I have personal stories and memories of being out on the land with my family on our trapline, huddled around the

campfire in our wall tents, all crowded around our small transistor radio, turning that on and listening only at a specific time. Every Saturday morning, we would get caught up on where things were at in the world. At that time, if there were some significant happenings in our region or messages to be transferred or relayed, it would come through CBC in Inuvik. The messages would come to us through the small little transistor radio that we would huddle around at our campfire and listen to — knowing when the plane was going to come to pick us up or when there was going to be an airdrop coming over to drop us food. Mr. Speaker, those are my times — the times that I remember very well, relying on the radio. That is still the case today.

Mr. Speaker, we know that local news is of vital importance to those in the north, especially in our rural and remote communities. My community has a distinct relationship and perspective with the importance of local news shared by local people. We still get that today. We hear Glenda Bolt speak on the radio, giving local news in Dawson City. We hear Stephen Frost speaking about the local news from Old Crow. We hear others speaking about what's happening in their specific areas and in their specific communities. It is important that we stay connected that way.

Our past elder Miss Edith Josie put Old Crow on the international map with her local community-based coverage, *Here Are the News*. Miss Josie covered her own unique stories in her own unique way of sharing her stories, which were broadcast worldwide — stories about how well John Joe Kay or Dick Nukon did out on their muskrat trapline or how bad the mosquitoes were. Those are things that she spoke about that were relevant to her at that time and relevant to the community. She talked about who was going to go out on the land and who we should expect. An example would be, in my specific era, that my grandmother would get a message on the radio to tell her — on the CBC morning show on Saturday from Inuvik — that Donald is coming out today and that he would be there at such and such a time, and that would be how the news was transferred. We would sit and wait in anticipation of the arrival. That's really important. She also spoke about what it looked like in the summer when autumn was coming into the community — the changes before us. These stories endure through everlasting time. We are still hearing about them today, finding their way into our hearts, the hearts of the people of Old Crow, and those in the Yukon and around the world. We saw that recognition most recently with Mr. Hougén's acknowledgement of Miss Josie. Her column appeared for 40 years in the *Whitehorse Star* and in syndicate papers in Toronto, Edmonton, and elsewhere around the world.

I would like to mention another Gwich'in broadcaster who has found a way into our ears and into our hearts through CBC, through her time at CBC, both in Inuvik for many years and through the local Whitehorse station. Ruth Carroll helped to preserve the Gwich'in language through her daily, hour-long program *Nantaii* and the weekend call-in *Voice of the Gwich'in* program — the connection of the elders through the radio waves from one community to the next and the elders sending and relaying messages via CBC to share their condolences if

there was a passing or to share good news and also to just let others know how they were doing. The work Ms. Carroll did to preserve and revitalize the Gwich'in language would not have been possible without regional CBC programming.

I would like to take a moment to share two particular Old Crow news events that stand out in my memory — perhaps in the memory of other Yukoners as well. Many, many years ago when our winters were still the kind that went below minus 40 — periodically, we still see that in Old Crow — and stayed there sometimes for weeks — the Yukon, at this particular time, was in the thrall of a particularly long and brutal snap. The temperature remained below minus 40 for weeks. At that time, the temperature in my home community of Old Crow went below 50 and stayed there, which was common back then.

I spoke about Stephen Frost, and this kind of reflects on that. The plane couldn't land on this one particular occasion, and there were no groceries in the grocery store. It was very difficult for the community. So, groceries couldn't get into the community, and it was a local CBC radio reporter who called to check up on the community and to share our experience with the broader Yukon public. The reporter got hold of my uncle, Stephen Frost — and those of you who know Stephen know that he is quite the character — and asked him about the cold snap. My Uncle Stephen said, "Up here, we know that winter comes once a year, and that's how we started." The reporter recovered from this and tried again: "I heard the plane couldn't land. Are there food shortages at the co-op?"

And my Uncle Stephen replied, "You know, I did meet a man this morning who was pretty hungry, but I think he just didn't eat his breakfast yet." So, that was some of the humour that was shared, but it also reflected that there were challenging times and the connection to the rest of the world, and it is just an indication of the survival and the means by which the community banded together in circumstances like this and more or less telling the rest of the world and the Yukon that we are okay and all is well.

Another memorable story that I will share about the importance of local, regional news coverage — or in this case, lack thereof — happened — and some may recollect this Yukon territorial election — and I believe that it was in 1985. This was a very tight election, the results of which depended on the outcome in Old Crow. Well, at that time, communications went down and many Yukoners went to bed not knowing the results of the territorial election. In the end, the way Elections Yukon and CBC got the results was by flying a plane over the community and having the results relayed by ham radio to the pilot. Just a reflection of the extreme measures that CBC had gone to in the past to get results to Yukoners.

It is another indication of why it is so important to garner support from everyone and just show our collective support to CBC. Without local journalists, without local connections, telling stories, we are disconnected and practically speaking, I guess, sometimes we are fragmented, because we don't see what is happening in all of our communities or we don't get to share stories. That is why it is important and I want to be able to kind of reflect that by sharing some of the real-life stories in the north — 40,000 people sprawled over 500,000 square

kilometres of land is vast — and my colleague, the Justice minister, spoke about that earlier — about the vastness of our country and how it seemed possible to connect stories between Nunavut and my little community of Old Crow and to try to have some correlation between them.

Local news coverage delivered locally is where we focus our sense of connection, community, and trust. When we hear stories of Bob Sharp starting a seniors café in Mount Lorne, we remember our friends who built that community. We remember a beloved teacher — my teacher — and we reflect on what a good idea that is and how come we don't have that in Mayo, Dawson or Old Crow?

Local news coverage covered and delivered by local reporters during times of stress and times of tragedy is incredibly important. Many years ago, a small child went missing in a rural Yukon community. The search for the child garnered national media attention. Fortunately, the child was found. However, a national news broadcaster contacted the local reporter and demanded to know the name of the family. Knowing that, in a small community, naming a family would identify the child and have detrimental impacts on the family, the reporter refused. That's the connection CBC has to our communities — very much so for the reporters. This is the type of integrity and compassion Yukoners have come to know and depend on from their local reporters.

The voices of our local reporters are the ones that we trust and that we turn to in times of extreme crises. In 2001, I was here in Whitehorse from Dawson City. My sister happened to be away. Her daughter was at a high school in Porter Creek and I was at the Council of Yukon First Nations on Nisutlin Drive and I was trying to get to my niece who is in Porter Creek, and we were having some jets land in Whitehorse and there was pure chaos in the city. I was listening to CBC Radio about the quickest way I could get to Porter Creek high school to get my niece and take her back home. There are times when we have to turn the radio on and the connection is there in time.

On September 11, 2001, authorities reported that a hijacked Korean airline would be landing at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport. Yukoners will never forget that day or the important role CBC reporters played — staying on air throughout the day, updating all of us on what was happening. We knew through the CBC that Whitehorse schools were evacuated and, in the end, that the landing of the Korean airline resulted in a peaceful conclusion. I do not want to imagine having to face a local crisis like that broadcast from a news desk located 1,000 miles away in Yellowknife.

There is more I can say on this subject or on the vital pieces local, regional reporting plays on weaving the fabric of Yukon and the unique northern realities of our three distinct territories and the importance of upholding and honouring the mandate of the CBC as outlined in the CRTC *Broadcasting Act*. But for now, I will leave it at this. Any one of us can cast our minds back and remember major news stories over the decades that would not have been possible without local, regional newscasts.

The CBC stood beside us in those moments and we stand beside them now. I am happy to hear that the decision to amalgamate the morning newscasts have been reversed.

As the Member for Whitehorse Centre said, we should be celebrating this, but we really should be cautious as well. Why should we be cautious? We should be cautious because there's always a caveat or some connections to what is announced and decisions that are reversed. Why was the decision made in the first place? What was the objective?

When the decision was reversed, the director, Janice Stein, announced this very morning, on reversing the decision: "Overall the response we received from staff and the community was not supportive of the change..." She goes on to say that the original change was made with the "best of intentions..."

Now, the important piece to this is that communications from the most relied-upon radio station in the north did one thing and one thing that wasn't appropriate and that was — these are the words from the director, Janice Stein: "The communication of our plan was poorly executed... We need to start at the beginning, which is consulting with our staff", which is an indication perhaps that the decisions that were made now may come back at some time in the future that we should be obviously cautious of. Therefore, the amendments as outlined reflect on maintaining regional supports and maintaining long-term funding support so we don't ever have to end up in a situation of trying to defend a decision, as we did yesterday. I think we all reacted and were obviously with all good intentions wanting to support our colleagues.

I'm happy our Premier wrote a letter asking the premiers of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut to write a letter to the president of CBC asking him to reverse the decision. I'm happy to have seen so many Yukoners stand up to express their views on CBC North. Finally, I am happy that the local morning newscast from Yukon will continue.

Mr. Gallina: I'm happy to rise today to speak to Motion No. 116 as amended. I'm also happy that the members of this House granted unanimous consent to bring this motion forward for debate, as the Minister of Community Services had mentioned. It's clear that this matter is important to many members of this House. Yesterday, several motions were tabled on this topic, including a motion that I tabled, that I think fairly represent our caucus and the views of the broader community.

We have heard from other members today, and as I began to prepare my notes, I found it fascinating to learn about the transformations and developments of broadcasting in Canada taking us to today and how Canadian and northern content is prioritized and how Canadians across the country consume this content.

I would also like to share some of my experiences in working with CBC and reflecting on northern content.

In a northern land with a fragmented population, the communication provided by Canadian radio and TV was, from the very beginning, crucial. Before Internet, broadcasting was not only a principal source of entertainment, it also linked citizens to the world outside of their homes and helped develop a sense of community. It was Canadians' public space.

Canada developed a more elaborate and advanced physical structure for delivering radio and television programs than

could be found in any comparable country in the world. In 1979, the US had 982 transmitters in operation, but Canada, with one-tenth of the population, had 1,045, including rebroadcasting transmitters — a number that grew steadily over the years. By 1981, there were 1,225 in operation in Canada. By early 2010, there were 4,918, including digital.

Canada was a pioneer in satellite communications and was the first to use geostationary satellites in domestic communications. The national broadcasting service, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, distributes most of its programs nationally by satellite, also using them in assembling programs.

Historically, the weak element in the broadcasting system was rooted not in physical facilities, but in the amount of original Canadian programming. Over the years, CBC produced an impressive number of radio and TV programs in English and French, many of high quality.

The private TV stations broadcasting in English depended mostly on imported foreign — principally US — programs for prime time. Many of the imported programs were popular, but such dependency led to a continuing struggle to devise public policies that would ensure more distinctively Canadian broadcasting content.

Throughout much of its history, Canada has employed a combination of public and private enterprises, falling somewhere between the strong state-owned element of the British system and the less regulated, private enterprise system of the US. The stages in this evolution can be related to successive acts of Parliament and to the regulating bodies set up to license stations and to establish and administer these rules. I feel that we can all appreciate the significant infrastructure and content challenges faced by Canadian broadcasters, especially those wanting to cover important northern happenings and events.

Mr. Speaker, in 2004, I was hired by the 2007 Canada Winter Games host committee as one of their marketing managers. It was an honour for me to work alongside some formidable Yukon pioneers: Paul Flaherty, chair of the sponsorship committee; former Whitehorse mayors Ernie Bourassa and Bev Buckway; former Premier Dennis Fentie; Peter Milner, chair of the sport committee; Judy Gingell, the Member for Whitehorse Centre; and many other Yukoners who all have had a strong influence on me. One person who stood out for me while I worked to plan this event was the chair of the 2007 Canada Winter Games host committee, Piers McDonald. As I quickly came to learn, Piers has vision and he inspires others.

These Canada Winter Games were the first games held north of the 60th parallel. Piers saw opportunity. The vision of Piers that was shared by his colleagues and ultimately Yukoners and northerners was to create a northern national marketing campaign that would allow each territory to capitalize on this event and leverage the significant promotion that an event of this nature could yield. Mr. Speaker, as many here today know, this national marketing campaign was very successful in raising awareness of our tourism capacity,

economic opportunities, and the pride that we take in our cultural and heritage roots here in the north.

This campaign came to fruition because of the significant support of CBC as a host broadcaster. Yukon and our territorial partners realized a significant amount of content being generated by CBC for these games with advertisements, athlete profiles, volunteer profiles, stunning cultural displays and events, plus the games themselves.

Mr. Speaker, when CBC typically partners with an amateur event such as the Canada Games, they agree to do their best efforts to cover the event. This is just to cover the event itself; this doesn't include the additional programming that I have just described, and it could be interrupted by a special news event or really anything that the CBC deems to be a priority to cover.

There was vision from Yukoners to leverage the Canada Games and to partner with the CBC to profile our unique northern region, and it is touching to think about the people involved to make this happen and the willingness of CBC to partner in these dreams to focus the attention of Canadians from across the country on our northern homes.

I have touched on broadcasting across Canada and the infrastructure and challenges that we face. I know that some of my colleagues want to touch on other aspects of this fascinating and complex industry and how it impacts CBC and the north.

I will begin to close my remarks and reference that CBC North had announced that it was going to centralize its morning radio newscast in Yellowknife. Since then, there had been a tremendous amount of support generated to not make any changes to its English morning newscasts in Yukon and across the north.

Yesterday, the Hon. Premier tabled a letter addressed to the premiers of Northwest Territories and of Nunavut, urging Catherine Tait, the president and CEO of CBC, to reconsider her recent decision. I, along with other MLAs, tabled motions yesterday urging the House to reconsider their decision, and support from the broad community was also consistent.

I was pleased to see in today's news that CBC North has reversed its decision to consolidate morning newscasts. In looking at a news article from the CBC, it states — and I quote: "The about-face comes after strong backlash from newsroom staff, listeners, and politicians, including the premier of Yukon..." It goes on to state: "On Tuesday..." — the Hon. Premier — "... asked fellow northern premiers... of the Northwest Territories and... of Nunavut to join him in writing a letter to Catherine Tait, the president of the CBC, asking her to reverse the decision."

As I look at the comments on social media — as some others have pointed to — it is encouraging to see and to read that so many Yukoners are supportive of this decision to have CBC North include regional aspects throughout the north.

I quote from some of the posts on the article: "Yay!! Thank you for listening... and not destroying what is a treasure."

"I told my husband yesterday that I don't think I'd enjoy listening to the morning newscast after the change. So glad CBC is not going through with it."

"Great news! Thanks for listening, CBC North!"

“... thank you for listening to our response.”

Mr. Speaker, these people stand up for CBC, and so do we in so many ways. As we've heard from members throughout this House, CBC North has touched us in so many ways — personal experiences, experiences in our work, in our life, and with our families — memories that we will cherish forever. I'm encouraged to see that this decision has been reversed, and I look forward to further debate on this motion as amended.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I rise today to speak to Motion No. 116, brought forward by the Member for Whitehorse Centre and further amended by the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes.

I'm happy to be speaking to this today. It's very important as a Yukoner to support our local broadcast station — CBC. It certainly has been a part of my life always. We just did a tribute to CKRW recently, and that was one of the statements that I made in that tribute — that CBC or CKRW were always on in the house. It certainly becomes part of us as Yukoners, and some of the background music and the dialogue that happens — it has this strange kind of ability to become part of your life and who you are. When you think back to all the memories, there are always those types of memories that are embedded in us, and so I'm really happy to be able to speak to this motion today.

I thank the members for all of the comments that have been made so far, and to hear that outpouring — I hope that all of the broadcasters who are there today and those who may look back at Hansard or may be listening know how appreciated they are, because they have done tremendous work.

Now, being in the positions that we're in now — it's interesting because it's kind of a love-hate relationship sometimes, but they are good relationships. Yukoners need to have that voice. They are part of our political system as journalists to ensure that they are telling the stories to our citizens, and so it is very important.

I want to reiterate the importance of our national broadcaster and its presence in our three northern territories, which are so unique to Canada and very diverse. In the north, many communities rely heavily on CBC to provide their news and have little or no alternative. Sometimes, I think, folks in the south forget that — that these are some of our main mechanisms to ensure that people are informed about what's happening, and when we do have emergencies or when we have different things happening in our community, our radio is our first go-to and something that, for me, is the very first thing that I do in the morning — I turn on CBC and I listen to the first news, and then I move to the next broadcaster and the next one so that we are getting that balance. I always try to get that balanced view of what's going on from all of our local broadcasters.

Here in Whitehorse, we have seen both the *Yukon News* and the *Whitehorse Star* shrink in size over the last several years. We are already losing that invaluable local coverage, and we do want to acknowledge and commend the excellent journalists who have served the territory in all of these forms of communication for our territory.

The story of the decline of media is being repeated across the south as well, most recently with the layoffs announced at the *StarMetro* papers this week, and our own Northern Native Broadcasting, Yukon is also struggling with reduced funding.

It's a constant battle to ensure that they have the resources that they need to continue the important work that was started years ago. It was really a part of the strategy with self-government. I remember those days when Northern Native Broadcasting was established to bring that other part of the voice and bring that perspective to our First Nation communities and it has grown as well. So, there are a lot of struggles going on with our northern broadcasting. I just wanted to acknowledge that as well today.

At this time when we are losing local news left and right, we need CBC more than ever. Changing the CBC to a pan-territorial broadcaster would have been another step down the slope to end local news. Really, I am thrilled that the decision was reversed and that we're having somewhat of a different conversation today, but I certainly have listened to all of the comments that have been made today, and the concern that we are maybe facing those types of decisions again down the road may be very real.

Of course, with all due respect, what happens in Yellowknife and Iqaluit has very little bearing sometimes on Whitehorse, Beaver Creek, Carmacks, Watson Lake, or other communities in the Yukon. Listeners want local news, not news from thousands of kilometres away; in fact, Yukon and Nunavut are literally at opposite ends of the country. Yukoners have their own unique voice and their own issues that need to be addressed in local media.

On December 9, 2016, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages. Yukon is known to be home to eight different First Nation languages: Tlingit, Gwich'in, Hän, Upper Tanana, Northern Tutchone, Southern Tutchone, Tagish, and Kaska. When you think about that fact, you can see how indeed Yukon literally has its own voice and is so unique.

CBC plays an active role to advance the goals identified within the International Year of Indigenous Languages. One of these goals is — and I quote: “Mainstreaming the knowledge areas and values of indigenous peoples and cultures within broader sociocultural... domains...” For instance, Paul Kennedy recently spent some time in Whitehorse co-hosting a series of radio plays with people from the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation in Old Crow and with the Gwaandak Theatre company in partnership with the Vuntut Gwitchin Government. Together, they attempted to preserve the language through a series of bilingual radio plays. I had the opportunity to go and see that live performance and to watch the community members interact and tell stories in their language, in that bilingual format, and it was beautiful. Those are some of the values that CBC also brings. I just wanted to highlight that piece.

Christine Genier, a citizen of the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, is now the host for *Yukon Morning*. Christine Genier is part of the ancient people of this land, of this Yukon. The traditional territory that they share with the Kwanlin Dün First Nation is the land that we stand on today. Having her voice as a local

broadcaster and storyteller in her own right has added so much value to CBC. We miss Sandi Coleman, but I'm happy to see a Yukon First Nation woman from this land take on that role, and I'm very proud that step has been taken. She comes from a long line of storytellers and so she comes by it rightfully for sure.

CBC is not only a provider of local news but a cultural institution, especially here in Yukon. I grew up listening to CBC, and it does become part of a lot of the memories. I remember there was one show — and I can't remember; I've been trying to remember all day what it was called; somebody will probably tell me after maybe hearing me speak about it — but there used to be a political show that you could call into every morning. My grandfather, George Edzerza, used to call into it all the time. You could always tell. They would say — you know, it was almost a morning, everyday thing. My grandfather would call in and they would have a political discussion about the issues of the day. That formed such a huge part of one of my most precious memories of my grandfather who was a very strong Liberal supporter. This debate would happen live every day. When I was thinking back about CBC, I was thinking about that and just how again CBC coverage is such a deep part of Yukon's social fabric and culture. It's more than just a radio station; it's part of our Yukon lives. CBC is so rooted in the lives of all Yukoners.

One memory I have as an adult and in my career — I remember clearly the one interview that stands out the most for me was when I was Director of Justice for Kwanlin Dün. Chief Doris Bill and I did a live interview with Sandi Coleman just after a murder of a young person in the Kwanlin Dün community. The whole territory was reeling over this. It was just one of the most devastating situations. We were working to communicate with the local community; we were working to communicate with the broader community and really just trying to have this — to communicate with the entire Yukon about what was happening in real time. That interview helped a lot of people because everyone was struggling with what to do, how they could help. When we ended up speaking — Sandi Coleman talked about being a mother of a young woman as well, and so did Chief Doris Bill. We're all mothers having this conversation about the loss of this beautiful innocent young person. That interview stood out probably the most to me because I still have people today — and this was years ago already — talk about how that was an important interview and message that they heard and realized that what was happening in the community was not a First Nation issue; it was a Yukon issue and it really resonated with the entire Yukon. It brought us together in a way that was very special and unique, and it was part of the catalyst for change in our community. Not having that opportunity to be a direct voice and to not have that opportunity to speak to a local reporter would have been an opportunity lost and potentially may have had a different outcome for Yukon in that respect. I just really admire the work that CBC does and the compassion that they have.

CBC has always been there as an institute that we can rely on for stories that relate to our lives. Whether they are tragic or positive or somewhere in the middle, it is something that we have come to rely on.

So, we need those voices to be heard. Our communities are unique. The stories are part of the canvas of our identity. As the Minister of Tourism and Culture, I know very well how media are part of the heritage and it enables us to collect those memories. I can't emphasize enough how important media outlets are to us.

Again, I was happy that the decision was reversed — I heard it just as I was leaving my house this morning — after the public outcry. I think that it is great that Yukoners have stepped up and have voiced their concern and have protected this important institution that we have. I respect the need to find efficiencies, but depriving Yukoners of local news is not the way to go. Yukoners want CBC local coverage and they deserve it.

I fully support the Premier to convey in writing the importance of regional programming in the north to the federal Minister of Canadian Heritage and I fully support the House to urge the Government of Canada to continue funding CBC in order to maintain regional services in the north.

I want to congratulate the Premier for working in a timely manner with his northern counterparts on this issue. When I attend the federal-provincial-territorial ministers meetings on heritage, I always take the opportunity, absolutely, to advocate for our Yukon and for our service providers.

My most recent meeting with the heritage ministers across the country and the federal minister happened last June in Halifax. We talked about a number of matters, and the focus of the most recent meeting was strengthening the creative economy, strengthening culture and heritage infrastructure and resources, and strengthening culture and heritage promotion in Canada. There were some good outcomes of this meeting, and I am absolutely looking forward to bringing Yukon's voice back to the FPT meeting that will happen sometime in the new year. I am looking forward to bringing our Yukon concerns and northern concerns and potentially working collaboratively with the other ministers from the Northwest Territories and Nunavut to bring that collective voice forward to ensure that our new minister is well aware of our support of CBC and of all of our broadcasters in the Yukon and how vital they are to us.

Today, we stand with CBC Yukon, and I again thank the members for all of the comments that were brought forward. I thank the Member for Whitehorse Centre for bringing this motion forward, I thank our member for the amendment, and I look forward to further discussion today.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I want to thank the House for the opportunity to address this issue today. As a former journalist, there is so much to talk about when it comes to the CBC and media and the importance of these avenues for public discourse. They are vital to our society.

Today, as a society, we're in a very strange place. As a Legislature, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we're in a strange place this afternoon — weird, even. Communication is difficult. It is tricky, and we have all learned a lesson about that today — a tough lesson.

I'll attempt to cut through the chaff to find the threads of commonality that bind us — that bind us as communities and

that bind us here in this House — because that's really what is at the heart of this debate. This afternoon, at its heart, we're debating and expressing support for that which unites us.

We all support the CBC. Every one of us here this afternoon supports the CBC. That's clear. It's clear from the heartfelt words that we've had from many members in the House this afternoon. We want it to be well-funded, supported, and enhanced if possible. This is good, and it's important.

So, this afternoon, I stand with you all. I support the various motions that we have brought before this House in the past 48 hours. I personally support the CBC. I support CBC North, I support funding the CBC, I support funding CBC North, I support a stronger CBC, and I support a stronger CBC North. I support this myriad of approaches, because I believe in news and features on sports and weather and profiles and advocacy. I believe in shining light into the shadows. I cherish accurate information. I believe in the transmission of accurate information to society. I believe in an informed society, and I believe that it is very important if we're going to have a strong democracy. I've heard that from the Leader of the Third Party, the Member for Whitehorse Centre, and the Member for Lake Laberge this afternoon. I will note that, like my colleague the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes, I have a lot of respect for broadcaster Elyn Jones' even-keel approach to relaying the news in the morning and also for the once ink-stained Chris Windeyer — who shepherded my former shop and is now a broadcaster at CBC — for Nancy Thomson and for my old colleagues, Dave Croft and Dave White, and for Leonard Linklater.

I could go on and sing the praises of many — there are so many talented individuals in this community who gather and disseminate information to Yukon citizens. Producers, writers, technicians, editors, photographers, videographers, filmmakers — the gathering, vetting, and transmitting of accurate, interesting information is a complicated and intense business. And, of course, these individuals — both in front of the mics, cameras, and notebooks and those behind them — deserve recognition as well. So, hats off to them — they do incredibly important work.

This afternoon, we were to debate the continuance of the CBC broadcast of local news in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, and Yukon. That is because it is invaluable to each individual in the unique region here on the enormous frontier of this great nation. These are our stories; they are our issues.

The issues here in the Yukon are different from those in the NWT and Nunavut. They are not better or more important, but they are different, and they are more relevant to us. The news we share locally is vital to making decisions. The local news is vital to celebrating our successes. It is vital if we are to learn from our mistakes, and today that local knowledge — that local sharing of information — has never been more important because, as a society — as I noted at the outset of my remarks — we are in a very strange place — a weird place. Why is that? It is because we are awash in information. We are, in fact, drowning in it. We are gorging on it, and yet we remain hungry for it.

We are continually searching for it, and the market is fractured. News media is transitory and ever-changing. It is rarely curated, and so, as we devour it, we must question it. We don't trust it. We shouldn't trust it, in many cases, because that supply of information from a myriad of sources, each with its own perspective or agenda — unedited or often not verified — is tainted. The flow of information isn't clean and tidy like it was. It is sometimes twisted, warped, distorted, misleading, wrong — and that dims the light and encourages shadows. It weakens us and it divides us.

Even though we have more channels, avenues, portals, vehicles, apps, websites, blogs, and blog websites available to us, there are gaps. One of the biggest gaps is curated general local news. The CBC fills that gap with professional, edited, verified, solid information, and that makes it important — crucial. Up here in the Yukon, it's one part of the mix, because here we have five or more newspapers and magazines and four or more broadcasters and bloggers, columnists, and filmmakers — we're fortunate to have such a richness.

Today, we acted together in support, and we were successful in making our concern known. We imposed a decision that did not recognize our regional differences. As communities, as one, we opposed a decision that would have seriously impeded public discourse in our regions, and that collective voice was heard. This is a good decision for the territories, because the CBC unites our nation and unites our communities, and in this case, it unites us.

Even if that message has been unfortunately garbled, we have been united in our support for this national, regional, and local treasure. Long may it continue telling our stories. Long may our local media, in all their mediums, continue telling our stories. Long may it continue to shine, Mr. Speaker, because their stories unite us sea to sea to sea and, in this case, bench to bench.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on Motion No. 116 as amended?

If the member now speaks, she will close debate.

Does any other member wish to speak on this motion?

Ms. Hanson: It has been interesting and fascinating listening to the comments and to the stories that people have told this afternoon. What we have heard this afternoon reinforces the message that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation — CBC, CBC North, CBC Yukon — is incredibly important to us all.

As I was sitting here, I was putting words down as they came to me. One of the things I wanted to say at the outset, Mr. Speaker, is that the motion that was put forward by the New Democratic Party in response to what we had heard on the weekend with respect to the announced cuts was precisely worded the way it was in the context. As I tried to outline in my speech, this is a story that has repeated itself and will repeat itself. When we heard that there were 35 jobs being cut and the impact locally was the consolidation of the morning newscast — it's that kind of information that makes you say, "We've been here before; we'll be here again. The story didn't start on

the weekend.” The 35 cuts may have been held off, as the Minister of Health and Social Services pointed out, but it hasn’t stopped. It has simply been delayed — so it may not be the front line.

When we put forward the motion to restore funding, it was deliberate, Mr. Speaker. There’s a difference between “continue” and “restore”. I was touched by some of the stories that we heard this afternoon. The Premier talked about having the benefit and the opportunity to meet and kibitz and play over the years with CBC employees and staff as they’ve been in the communities, and we all can recall — those of us who have attended back in the day — the Dawson City Music Festival — and attended and listened either at home or in the mad drive on the Friday afternoon to get to the concert at the gazebo on the river. That doesn’t happen anymore, Mr. Speaker. Why? Because there have been cuts.

CBC did a whole series of compilations, for example, of Dawson City Music Festivals — of the best of the best of the festivals and the best of the best of Canadian talent. That doesn’t happen anymore.

We talked about community interviews and the importance of having those skilled professionals out in the community in Dawson City and meeting with the broad spectrum — the horizontal and vertical sort of slice of the community. That’s not happening. Yes, we have wonderful community reporters, but they’re not the CBC. We have the community volunteers like Glenda Bolt, like the folks in Old Crow and from Watson Lake.

Hearing the experiences of the Member for Lake Laberge, the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin growing up in different parts of this territory or the Minister of Justice in Nova Scotia — CBC means something to us all. That has never been a question. I never assumed or never doubted, when I put my motion forward, Mr. Speaker, that anybody in this room undervalued the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. But what we had, we no longer have.

Yes, we’ve won a Pyrrhic victory — and it was Pyrrhic because the consolidation of those three newscasts isn’t going to happen right now. The 35 cuts will still happen. Who knows what the next fiscal year will bring? As Joni Mitchell said, you know, “You don’t know what you’ve got until it’s gone.” As I said earlier when I used the analogy of the frog in the boiling water, I guess we’re at that stage where we just don’t know what we’ve got. Maybe it will be until it’s gone because, if we’re quite satisfied and quite content to simply say, “Okay government, okay CBC, just continue; continue” — well, what evolves over the next year, five years, or 15 years for CBC will be very different. Some of those changes you can expect as a result of natural progression, but the ability to reflect that local knowledge, as the Minister of Highways and Public Works said, has never been more important.

We acknowledge the efforts of all members and the fact that the Premier wrote to the other premiers. That’s excellent. It’s what we would expect the Premier to do. I hope that this motion, which the members opposite chose to amend to simply reflect their desire to continue with the funding — continue support, continue whatever — they feel that’s satisfactory; I

personally don’t think so. It’s unfortunate too that people just assume that, when there is a motion put forward, that one party is thinking the same as the other. Perhaps it’s because I’ve been around a long time. As I said at the very beginning, I lived through being a public servant during those cuts in the mid-1990s. I saw the systemic impact of those and it wasn’t just the CBC. I saw in the mid-2000s and then in the teens and I saw the beginning of a reversal, and so I was hopeful that I would hear from all members of this House that we want to see that continuation. I don’t believe in the status quo, Mr. Speaker. When there’s a change required, I think we have the right and the ability as members of this Legislative Assembly to urge others to make change — to not be satisfied with the status quo.

I guess that’s all I have to say. It was good to hear people’s appreciation of the CBC — to know that we share that at least. I will let it rest at that.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question on the motion as amended?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 16 yea, nil nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion, as amended, carried.

Motion No. 116, as amended, agreed to

Motion No. 113

Clerk: Motion No. 113, standing in the name of Mr. Istchenko.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Kluane:

THAT it is the opinion of this House that licensed firearms owners should not be subjected to forced confiscation of their lawfully acquired personal private property without just cause.

Mr. Istchenko: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise today to speak to this motion and to give a voice

to the many Yukoners who own, enjoy, and rely on the responsible, safe, and lawful use of firearms. Hopefully, we can get through this without the power going out.

I was encouraged to listen to many of the members of the House speak to the support for CBC in the previous motion and how important it is to stand up for rural and northern people because it is a different way of life. I am hoping that members in the House here today will be supporting this motion. I sure hope they would.

Firearm ownership has been a part of the Yukon life and culture since the founding of our territory. When trappers and prospectors first made their way into the wild and beautiful part of the country, having a trusted firearm at one's side is what allowed many to eat and protect themselves and therefore survive.

Firearms and hunting rights are also given recognition in the legislation and treaty aboriginal rights. These uses and benefits are still experienced today by indigenous and non-indigenous Yukoners alike. In a land where many of its citizens choose to live a lifestyle that includes the humane and ethical harvest of healthy organic game to feed their families, firearms are an essential tool. Along with the Yukon's vast, beautiful wilderness, the abundance of wildlife comes with an equal abundance of predatory species. As such, firearms also play a role in allowing Yukoners to protect their families and livelihood from bears and other dangerous animals. Most often, their role is to protect property or livestock. But in the rare but horrible event of a predator attack, they are a means of personal protection. In that terrible moment when the threat to your life is very real, a firearm being present is often the only element that could prevent a tragedy. I've lived through that on more than one occasion.

Responsible, safe, and lawful use of firearms goes beyond these life-sustaining applications that are essential for northern and rural life. Many Yukoners also enjoy safe and responsible sport and target shooting. I know the Member for Copperbelt North enjoys sport shooting as a hobby and shares this enjoyment with his family. I think that's great. I know he has been a contributing member to the firearm community, so I thank him for those contributions.

Many Yukoners are also law-abiding collectors of firearms. Maybe someone has an interest in the tools of the Klondike Gold Rush or the Great War where so many Canadians and Yukoners demonstrated their resolve to the world in need and who deserve our eternal gratitude for their service and sacrifice. Or perhaps one may not be a firearms user technically but have inherited possessions from their since-departed and dearly loved relatives which are treated as family heirlooms. There are many very valid reasons for owning a variety of firearms. I know I have had a number of family and friends go through this type of real situation. We even have a staff member who, although not technically a firearms user, inherited his grandfather's rifle from his service in World War II. I don't think it would be fair or reasonable for the government to confiscate precious family heirlooms such as this.

Yet, in last month's federal election, we saw the Liberal Party campaign on forcibly confiscating Canadian's private and lawfully acquired property. We all know that elections have a lot of exaggeration and polarizing rhetoric that can be dismissive of the facts or purposely only tell half-stories, and this election was no exception.

I don't really want today to become a rehash of those debates. I think Yukoners and Canadians are tired of the political rhetoric and partisan attacks on this topic. Really, the purpose of this motion today is because a lot of Yukoners are concerned about a particular political promise from the governing party. I think it would be a good thing for us MLAs to say that, on this particular issue, we all disagree. This particular promise is very concerning to licensed firearms owners. The Liberals promised to ban assault and military-grade weapons. I think it's important to address some of that. I see those as purposely political words meant to stir up emotions and fear.

These terms are neither factual in the context of Canadian civilian firearm ownership nor a hallmark of a respectful government, as they are designed to frighten the uninformed. First of all, assault weapons are already prohibited for civilians to own in Canada, and they have been for many years. Just because a civilian's sporting rifle may look like something similar on the outside to a soldier's firearm doesn't mean they function the same way. In fact, they don't at all.

A true assault weapon is a fully automatic machine gun — again, something that has been prohibited in Canada for decades, as I said earlier. I think that is good, and the prohibition should stay in place, but the language used by the federal government is meant to mislead people into thinking that these prohibitions are not currently in place. Further, the term "military grade" is misleading. It is true that many varieties of firearms and their components may share common features with their counterparts employed by the world's armed forces, but to suggest that these modern civilian firearms are military grade is deceiving.

Take, for example, the .30-06 rifle cartridge. I think everyone in here would probably know what that is. This calibre of ammunition is one of the most common and widely used variety over the last century, partially because of its versatility. It has been commonly used here in the Yukon for decades as many hunters' preferred choice. It's effective for a variety of game from caribou to moose. It is legal to use for game as big as bison, although it may be a bit much for sheep. Yet this cartridge was first employed in the United States Army in 1906 and remained in use until the late 1970s. So, does the federal government consider a .30-06 cartridge military grade? Their language and rhetoric suggest so and it is concerning to lawful firearms owners, hunters and trappers in the territory.

So, what is it really about? It's about gang violence in southern Canada. It's about a very real epidemic. More needs to be done to address it. We support effective action to address gang violence and punishing to the full extent of the law any crime that's committed with a firearm, but we do not think that this current proposal by the federal government is the proper policy.

Just about every piece of restrictive gun control legislation introduced since Confederation has failed to stop gang violence or eliminate illegally owned weapons. This type of legislation often comes with the rhetoric I described above in order to distract public attention.

For example, Bill C-51 was passed not to control crime but to distract public attention from the pursuit and to persuade MPs to support the government's proposal to abolish capital punishment back in the day. Or the 1995 *Firearms Act* — Bill C-68 was passed by the Liberal government during a period of declining gun violence. Less than five percent of all violent crimes in Canada involve a firearm and despite decades of tough laws regulating civilian ownership of guns, the other three-quarters of gun-related violent crimes involved handguns and most of them are unregistered. As an aside, people who currently do not register the guns are not law-abiding and they are not going to have a sudden conversion to decide that they want to comply with the law because the government is bringing in a new act. The real motivation for Bill C-68 was a strategic political concern, not anxieties over crime or violence.

And now Bill C-71, *An Act to amend certain Acts and Regulations in relation to firearms*. It was put forward by the Liberal government in Ottawa. It doesn't actually address the issue of gang and gun violence in cities. Instead, it targets law-abiding firearms owners like those who live in the Yukon.

Canadians own guns for a variety of reasons, the most common being hunting or recreational shooting and, in the Yukon, with trapping. The newest legislation senselessly targets law-abiding gun owners. The new backdoor gun registry isn't going to keep Canadians safe, and as I've said, the legislation actually fails to address gang violence or to target gang criminals. The word "gang" doesn't even appear in the legislation.

Canadians believe that putting dangerous criminals behind bars is more important than making life more difficult for those who already follow the law and use firearms safely and responsibly. As I have said, there is no doubt that violence is plaguing the streets of our large cities — it is. These criminals and gang members are using smuggled, prohibited, and therefore illegal handguns in the commission of their crimes and must be dealt with swiftly and decisively. There is no room in a free and just society for disregard of not only the law, but human life, and we agree wholeheartedly — throw the book at the scum. Let's give the police the resources that they need to shut down these gangs and stop the flow of illegal guns. That is who we need to be targeting. We need to be targeting the actual criminals, not our hunters and our northern trappers. Law-abiding, trained, RCMP-vetted and licensed gun owners are not responsible for these atrocities.

When I was writing this, there were some interesting facts that I came up with, which I kind of figured, but this actually made them facts for me. The Yukon has the highest number of licensed firearm owners per capita in the country. We also have the highest number of restricted licence holders per capita, the licence required to own handguns. We also have the highest number of authorized-to-carry, or ATC, permits per capita. These permits are those civilians, meaning those who are not

serving in the military or law enforcement, can obtain to legally carry a handgun for wilderness protection — for prospectors, wilderness tourism operators, big game hunting guides, bush pilots, and the like. Having a rifle slung over one's shoulder is too difficult when suddenly confronted by an angry grizzly or a moose. A sidearm is designed for this very purpose, as opposed to the exaggerations and rhetoric that we sometimes hear.

That's why we are so concerned with the other decision happening federally about potentially bringing in an outright ban for handguns, because all firearms — regardless of function, capacity of ammunition, length, or rate of fire — are all designed for one purpose only: to accurately launch a projectile. What that projectile is aimed at is entirely up to the person who is operating it. Let me be clear — it is extremely important to make sure that those who are licensed are trained and of sound mental health so that they do not hurt themselves or others.

As someone who has spent most of his life around the responsible use of firearms — whether I was learning to hunt as a child or it was through my time with the Canadian Armed Forces or through my continued service with the Canadian Rangers — I disagree with the characterization that firearm owners are dangerous. I want to be clear that firearms are very powerful tools and, as such, should be respected and treated responsibly and safely.

Proper training, care, maintenance, storage, and licences are all essential components of responsible and respectful firearms ownership. I also want to be very clear that a weapon of any sort does not belong in the hands of somebody who is at risk of doing harm to themselves or to anyone.

It is incumbent upon a responsible government to ensure that we do everything that we can to keep weapons out of the wrong hands while providing the support that people with mental health challenges require. That is an important part of this discussion as well.

What are we doing to support those struggling with mental health? Is it enough? I don't think so. I think that everyone in this House agrees with me on that point, but that is a discussion that we have had many times in this House, and I am sure that we will have it many more times. It isn't the focus of today's motion.

I am not suggesting that I have all the answers to the problems that are affecting the country in our big cities, but I do not think that it is right for the federal government to suggest that it would forcibly confiscate Yukoners' lawfully acquired property. These firearm owners have followed the law. They continue to follow the law, and they are doing so safely and responsibly. The Liberal government in Ottawa has budgeted \$400 million to conduct this confiscation program.

Even if you aren't a gun owner, do you believe that it is a responsible use of our tax dollars to confiscate lawfully acquired property from law-abiding citizens? Wouldn't those hundred of millions of tax dollars be better used to stop actual criminals and provide mental health support? I think so. I don't know about everybody else, but I sure think so.

Mr. Speaker, I firmly believe that legal firearm owners are among the safest people in society. When we have this discussion, I think that we need to understand this very real and very important distinction.

There are criminals with firearms, and then there are target shooters, hunters, competitive shooters, and legal citizens who are not causing any problems at all. That is what this motion is about — standing up for those in our community, those Yukoners who have followed the law, who are doing so safely, and who will continue to do so safely.

I know that every single person in this House wants to stop gun violence, but I think we need to focus on policies that actually do that.

I hope that my words today were able to convince some members in this House or all members of this House about the merits of this motion and its intentions. I urge all members to support licensed Yukon firearms owners and support this motion. I think it's important that we stand up for Yukoners. I have said it in this House before, and I have said it many times: I don't think that we are always represented quite correctly at the federal level, and I don't think it's fair to Yukoners. Quite often, Yukoners show their voice. I'm in the Legislative Assembly today showing my voice in support of all of the licensed Yukon firearms owners, and I sure hope everyone supports this motion.

Mr. Cathers: I'm pleased to rise today, and I would like to thank my colleague, the Member for Kluane, for bringing this motion forward and for the excellent job that he did in introducing it.

This is an issue where we recognize that there were commitments made at a federal election in a very heated election campaign that — I think it's fair to say that many Canadians and Yukoners were disappointed by the tone of the rhetoric that occurred. One thing that is important to keep in mind is that we need to remember, in society, that, if democracy and society are to function and if this country is to remain a united federation where people feel that, while they may not agree with the government of the day, generally speaking, the government is trying to protect their rights — it's important for everyone to remember that we need to respect what our fellow Canadians value, even if it is not important to us. In this particular area, the right to own firearms for purposes including hunting is very important to a great many Canadians, including Yukoners. As my colleague, the Member for Kluane, noted, the Yukon has the highest number of registered firearm owners in the country and the highest rate of licensed firearm ownership in the country.

It is important to people across this territory who use firearms for hunting, including subsistence hunting, pursuant to the UFA and First Nation final agreements, as well as for self defence and defence of animals and livestock.

For an urban voter in downtown Toronto, the possibility that you might have to defend your animals from a carnivore if you live in rural Yukon is something that is not well understood, but I know that many people in this territory have had to do that.

In fact, as another small example, for people who live in rural Yukon, such as many of my constituents — not everyone even has indoor plumbing and facilities — if you have a bear on the prowl in the area, having a firearm is one way of keeping yourself safe and your family safe.

I want to go to a few specific examples here and talk about the fact that, in terms of what was promised by the federal government — as noted by my colleague, the Member for Kluane — the cost estimates that they gave at the low end were \$400 million. At the higher end, even federal Minister Blair admitted that it could cost up to \$600 million to confiscate one-quarter million guns from Canadians. It's important for people who are not aware of it to keep in mind that the past practice in Canada has been that, if firearms laws were changed, previously legal firearms that were no longer legal to sell — the owners of those firearms were able to keep those firearms but not able to resell them. The change on the step across the line into what has been called a “buyback” — but is in fact “confiscation” — is a major change that is deeply disturbing to many Canadians. It's a gentle-sounding word for what it really is — forced confiscation of private property. With the cost estimates of over a half-billion dollars, it's a significant expenditure that could better be spent in other areas.

Now, the federal government — or the federal Liberal party — in making that announcement also talked about increasing resources for police, but it should be noted that a challenge that is being faced across the country by the RCMP is in recruiting a sufficient number of people to fulfill their current duties. So, if they're already short of RCMP members across the country, adding more duties does not mean they will be able to actually fulfill those duties. Those resources, as noted by my colleague, the Member for Kluane, would be better directed to going after organized crime and drug trafficking. It's important to recognize that much of the violence that has upset urban voters is in direct connection to organized crime and illegal drug trafficking. The gun violence, while serious — and, of course, every single death from gun violence or from a drug overdose is a tragedy — the violence itself is mostly a symptom of organized crime and illegal drug trafficking.

So, returning to the principle of the matter: In terms of the buy-back program, government is telling people how much they will pay, but your legal rights are overturned and you are made a criminal if you refuse to surrender property that you legally acquired. For many Canadians and many Yukoners, the principle of this is unacceptable. For people who believe that private property should be protected by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, they believe this is fundamentally wrong. For people who believe that every person has a god-given right to self-defence and to defend their families, they believe that confiscation is fundamentally wrong. For hunters who are worried about whether their guns will be confiscated — as my colleague noted, in fact, if the term “military assault rifles” that has been used by the federal Liberals is an ambiguous term, and in terms of rifles that were developed for military purposes and used for military purposes, including assaulting enemy positions — the Lee-Enfield .303 that is widely used by many Yukoners, including the Canadian

Rangers and many people as their hunting rifle, is itself a military weapon. The question of whether the government is going to consider confiscating those is an issue that is not only greatly concerning to Yukoners but also a potential violation of the rights of First Nation citizens whose subsistence hunting rights are protected in the final agreements.

For people who live in urban areas or even in the Yukon who have not grown up with firearms, hunting, or target shooting, they may not understand why other Canadians value firearms in their lives, but as I noted, it is important, if our society is to function, to respect what our fellow Canadians value and the things that are important to them.

In terms of comparison, in terms of the opioid deaths to which I referred which violence in urban areas is largely a symptom of — according to Statistics Canada, the opioid-related fatalities in Canada in the past two and a half years were 12,800 opioid-related deaths between January 2016 and March 2019. If you look at the increase between 2016 and 2018, there is a growth from 3,023 deaths in 2016 to 4,588 deaths in 2018.

In comparison, Mr. Speaker, the types of guns that are being talked about, according to Statistics Canada data, would fall under the rifle or shotgun category, and the number of homicides in 2018 committed with a rifle or shotgun was only 56, which, in comparison to that number of 4,588 due to opioid overdose, is but a fraction of that problem, and of course, though, every one of them is a tragedy itself.

Speaker: Order.

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

Debate on Motion No. 113 accordingly adjourned

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

The following sessional paper was tabled November 20, 2019:

34-3-24

Yukon Housing Corporation Annual Report — For the year ended March 31, 2019 (Frost)



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 27

3rd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Thursday, November 21, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
Don Hutton	Mayo-Tatchun

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King
Liz Hanson	Whitehorse Centre

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Dan Cable
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, November 21, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed with the Order Paper.
 Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask my colleagues to help welcome to the Legislative Assembly, Chief Kane.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Can you please help me in welcoming a bunch of creative folks who are here for the re:design Craft Fair. We have the organizers, Leslie Leong and Darren Holcombe, and Georgi Pearson, Phillippe LaBlond, Gabrielle Dupont, Aimee Ellis, Judy Tomlin, Briana Tomlin, Sarah Gallina and the Gallina Girlz — Vittoria, Adria, Isabella — and their nonno, Peter Gallina. We have Deanna Slonski, Verda Heiland, Valerie Ross, Joanne Faulker, and we also have one of the sponsors from Zero Waste, Ira Webb. If we could welcome them all, please.

Applause

Hon. Ms. Frost: I ask my colleagues to please help me in welcoming guests here today for the National Housing Day tribute. We have with us Pamela Hine, Mary Cameron, Kate Meechan, Sandra Turner, Jillian Hardie, Al Lucier, Alison Bastien, Sarah Birch-Jones, Sarah Button, Ali Campbell, Line Champagne, Nicole Church, Brett Dietrich, Benoit Liodenot, Lindsay Neely, Catherine Pak, Lauren Ralph, Gabriel Teo, Sandra Turner, Trina Wall, Hanna McDonald, and Kristina Craig. Welcome.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: At the risk of possibly repeating one name — the minister was speaking so rapidly and I wasn't sure that I heard him introduce and welcome Jeanine Baker, a fused art and stained-glass artist, to the gallery.

Mr. Adel: I would like to welcome to the House today a constituent of mine, Marni Delaurier.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors? Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of re:design craft fair

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, it's that time of year. The Christmas trees are up in the lobby of the Legislature; lights are twinkling along the sidewalks. There is snow — sort of. For me, Christmas starts with the flurry of craft fairs: Spruce Bog, Cranberry, and the Yukon Public Library and Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre have craft fairs. Inclusion Yukon has a craft fair. There are craft fairs in our communities. I will be volunteering again this year at the Carcross craft fair.

I find handmade, locally crafted gifts to be a way to add meaning to the whole notion of giving.

Today, I would like to pay tribute to one craft fair in particular — the re:design craft fair. This Saturday, November 23 at the Old Fire Hall from 11:00 to 4:00, I invite all Yukoners to come visit the fifth annual re:design fair. Every time I go to the re:design fair, I am in awe. Not only are the items beautifully made, they are crafted out of salvaged, reused, and repurposed materials. I have seen gleaming refurbished axes, slumped glass bottles turned into bowls, tarnished silverware turned into jewelry, and warm wool sweaters transformed into pillows. These folks are transforming waste into objects of art — aesthetics meets utility, Mr. Speaker.

At the re:design fair, you will find a collection of remarkable craftspeople. As part of this tribute, let me acknowledge just a few of these artists and innovators: Philippe LeBlond recycles metal and machine parts and turns them into ravens, bugs, and crazy kinetic art; Jeanine Baker and Aimee Ellis craft useful household items and gorgeous gifts from discarded glass; Judy and Briana Tomlin repurpose fabrics, notions, and hardware into purses, pouches, and tea cozies. By the way, one artist — Kim Henckel — is coming from the Junction. It's great to see creativity coming from that community. I also should mention the Gallina Girlz — youth who have worked with reclaimed building materials to make some cool Christmas signs and reused jars for cactus containers. I hope I got that right.

I would especially like to acknowledge Leslie Leong and Darren Holcombe. Darren of the Laberge Lumber Company creates bird houses, cutting boards, shelves, toolboxes, and much more out of salvaged wood. Leslie Leong makes beautiful visual art and jewellery from old electronics. I remember her full gown made out of pop-riveted plastic milk jugs; it was amazing.

Leslie and Darren are the creative organizers behind the re:design craft fair. They have pulled together artists and craftspeople to create a circular economy in the Yukon. I understand they will have music by recently retired enviro hero Remy Rodden this year. For all these folks, it's not just a fair; it's about inspiring us to see the abundance we have in the world around us, even in the garbage — in fact, particularly in the garbage.

Christmas is a time of giving thanks and reflection. My gratitude to the re:design craft fair for their gift to the community. Happy up-cycling and happy holidays, Mr. Speaker. Please reuse your Christmas wrapping paper.

Applause

Mr. Istchenko: There's always one member of our caucus who gets excited about craft fairs, as does the Liberal caucus. I like craft fairs too.

I am pleased to rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition and the Third Party to recognize all the crafters, artisans, woodworkers, sewers, artists, and jewellers and many more as they come together. The minister spoke about a few of them already. I believe that the craft fair season officially began back in October with Jack Hlland's Haunts and Holly and now appears to be in full swing.

The Spruce Bog, which is a highlight in the season for many, took place last weekend and there wasn't parking to be found anywhere. It was the place to be on an otherwise quiet Sunday in Whitehorse. I know that shoppers are excited for the coming weekend when there will be over a handful of fairs taking place throughout Whitehorse — the Cranberry Fair, the sixth annual craft fair and open house among them — both taking place at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre. With so many other smaller fairs taking place each weekend among the more notable ones, I would be remiss if I didn't recognize a few of them: the Golden Age Society's antiques and collectibles fair, the new Heart to Home Christmas Market, and the Handmade Holiday Showcase are all great examples.

I would like to highlight something that the minister was speaking about too — the re:design craft fair that is taking place this Saturday at the Old Fire Hall. This event is supported by Zero Waste Yukon and it features artisans who have reworked discarded and salvaged items into works of art for the purpose of resale to the community. That's great.

I would also like to give a special shout-out to the organizers and artisans of our rural craft fairs, such as those in Watson Lake, Faro, and Teslin. A special mention of course goes to the Haines Junction library craft fair which took place at the St. Elias Convention Centre last Thursday. It was packed in there. I tend to be quite partial to this particular craft fair as it is arguably one of our community's biggest and most anticipated events of the season.

This year, a few constituents noted to me that they were happy to see that the Junior Rangers sat at the table and wrapped gifts for people. People wanted to give donations, so they donated them to the legion. Then they were thanked for staying after and picking up all of the tables and chairs and putting them away. It's great to see our communities coming together. Thank you to all of those who really get into the spirit of craft fair season across the territory by making and selling your creations. I'll be doing that once the session is done — in my shop, I'm starting to make Christmas presents. You really do add some local magic to Christmas across the territory.

Applause

In recognition of National Housing Day

Hon. Ms. Frost: I rise today to pay tribute to our partners in housing for National Housing Day. Historically, National Housing Day, November 22, was a day for Canadians to remember that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities identified homelessness as a crisis in this country and called on

the federal government to develop a national housing strategy. In 2017, we celebrated Canada's first *National Housing Strategy*. In March of this year, we signed our Yukon-Canada bilateral agreement under the *National Housing Strategy* and ensured stable 10-year funding for housing in Yukon. We are thankful for the contribution and the continued support of the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation toward housing in the territory. We are working steadily on the goals of the housing action plan for Yukon.

I would like to recognize the dedication of our partners who contribute to these actions. We are working toward a robust housing continuum in Yukon that captures all types of housing, from housing with services to community housing to private market rental housing to home ownership.

The Yukon government is one of the government partners of the Safe at Home plan to end and prevent homelessness. We are working to achieve the goals of the Safe at Home plan, and we made a major step this fall toward this by the opening of the Housing First residence in downtown Whitehorse. The Yukon government directly provided over 800 affordable homes in the territory and we have contributed to over 400 more housing options for Yukoners over the last couple of years. The corporation's loans and grants program leveraged new housing and helped to improve the condition of older housing in the territory. Our partners have stepped up to use our incentives and loans to build new housing and to repair and retrofit older housing. Over 400 homes have benefited from these programs in the last two years, and I want to emphasize that we achieved this with the support of our partners. We could not have done it without them.

There are still housing needs in the Yukon. We will continue to support the work underway and leverage new opportunities to increase rentals, home ownership, and housing options for Yukoners.

The third intake of the housing initiative fund is currently open. We are hoping to receive new proposals for new housing partnerships by the deadline of December 5. I am proud of the work we have done so far. We will continue to work with our partners to increase housing options along the housing continuum using the National Housing Strategy, the housing action plan, and the Safe at Home plan as our guides.

I would just give a shout-out to the staff at the Yukon Housing Corporation for doing such an amazing job and of course to all of our partners for stepping up and helping us achieve what we have in the last two years.

Applause

Ms. Van Bibber: I rise today on behalf of the Official Opposition Yukon Party to pay tribute to National Housing Day, which is on November 22, 2019. A house needs land, building material, connection to services, fixtures, and a touch of paint. A home needs people who add furniture, pictures, and their own personal touches and feel. A house is part of a town, city, neighbourhood, or street. A home is part of you. It is your sanctuary or safe place where you hold your belongings. We treasure our personal space and area. Whether it is owned or rented, we have pride of place.

Having a residence brings along with it many responsibilities to care for, clean, protect from the elements, make sure it is heated and cooled as necessary, and make it personally yours inside and out. We know that the topic of homelessness is not far from our thoughts. We know and see it in our community. People at times do not see the whole range of people who might be affected by a lack of housing. Women and children who are fleeing domestic violence, seniors, veterans, people with disabilities, indigenous people, young people, people who are racially profiled, mentally ill and addicted people, and the homeless all have separate and unique needs. As a society, we look for solutions to provide safe and affordable housing for all Canadians. It is not an easy step.

Should everyone have a house? In a perfect world, yes. Just from the list given above, we struggle to accommodate everyone. We support initiatives that address the affordable housing crisis, and as demand rises, so do costs, which in turn creates a whole new set of problems for more families and individuals. There is no one-size-fits-all.

Many creative solutions are presented and implemented, and I do hope that continues, as every effort counts. I would like to acknowledge all those who continue to do their part to put a dent in the housing crisis. Governments of all levels play a role in ensuring safe and affordable housing, as do community organizations and individual citizens.

I would like to commend all those working toward the ultimate goal of housing affordability for all Yukoners, and I hope that this goal remains a priority in future decisions made across the territory.

Applause

Ms. White: I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP to recognize November 22 as National Housing Day. The dictionary definition of “home” is a house, an apartment, or other shelter that is the usual residence of a person, family, or household. It is a place in which one’s domestic affections are centred. Outside of the dictionary, in the real world, it is much harder to define “home”. We hope that home is a place of safety and security, a place that we can afford, and a place where we are free to lower our defences and just be.

Today, from coast to coast to coast, there are 3.3 million Canadians who cannot access housing that they can afford, and an estimated 235,000 people continue to experience homelessness each year. Mr. Speaker, these numbers represent people in every community across this country. These are our friends, our families, and our neighbours.

Since 2011, I have spoken about housing in this Chamber more times than I can count. It was a surreal experience to tour the new Housing First complex — a place that offers safety and security to those who face chronic homelessness, a place that community advocates have been championing, and a cause that I was able to voice here for so many years. I am grateful to know that soon those 16 units will be occupied by folks who will finally have the security of home.

The Whitehorse Emergency Shelter transition hasn’t been easy, and we know that the shelter can’t be all things to all people, but we do look forward to the day when the clients in

the community all feel that they have been heard and that the 22 units are home to members of our community. I can’t help but notice that I have more members of the Yukon Housing Corporation in the Chamber than ever before, and I can say from personal experience that they are champions of housing, whether it is the front-counter staff who help people as they go through the monthly rent payments or applications, to loan officers, and of course to the president herself. I want to make sure I acknowledge that they are here.

All levels of government have a role to play in addressing housing. We applaud the work being done by the City of Whitehorse to encourage housing developments.

Mr. Speaker, we’re in the midst of a housing affordability crisis in Yukon, and we wonder when the change happened in Yukon that saw the Yukon government charging the market price for lots instead of whichever was cheaper — the development cost of the market cost. We know that the affordability of lots affects the affordability of housing. Mr. Speaker, land isn’t affordable in Yukon.

So, we applaud the work being done by the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Ta’an Kwäch’än Council in getting land available within municipal boundaries. We’re hopeful that this will ease both the housing shortage and the issue of affordability. Mr. Speaker, the need for housing action in Yukon continues to be urgent. We look forward to the day when homelessness is a thing of the past across Canada and right here at home, when everyone has access to a home that they can afford.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Mr. Hassard: I have for tabling a letter that I wrote to the Premier yesterday.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Ms. Hanson: I rise to give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of any documents detailing the measures taken by the Department of Highways and Public Works to require contractors who conducted highway right-of-way clearing work along the south Klondike Highway and the Tagish Road to complete the remedial clearing necessary to prevent damage to wildlife and recreational right-of-way users such as dog mushers, cross-country skiers, and snowmobilers.

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

THAT this House condemns the decision by the federal Liberal government to depart from the Government of Canada's 10-year record of principled opposition to the United Nations resolutions that single out Israel, which it did this week by joining with the anti-Israel chorus at the United Nations in voting in favour of a General Assembly resolution co-sponsored by North Korea, Zimbabwe, and the PLO that condemned Israel's presence in Jerusalem and characterized disputed territories as "occupied Palestinian territory"; and

THAT this House condemns antisemitism.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to provide details on when the following legislation will be enacted and accompanying regulations completed:

- (1) *Condominium Act, 2015*;
 - (2) *Pharmacy and Drug Act, 2015*;
 - (3) *Societies Act*;
 - (4) *Lobbyists Registration Act*;
 - (5) *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*;
- and
- (6) *Coroners Act*.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Early kindergarten — K4

Hon. Ms. McPhee: As part of our commitment to building healthy, vibrant, and sustainable communities, our Liberal government plans to offer enhanced early kindergarten in Yukon's rural communities. To support families and young children in preparing to learn, students in many rural schools have the option to start an early kindergarten class when they are four years old. We are working to expand this to all rural communities. Offering early kindergarten — also known as "K4" — provides young children with an opportunity to practice skills for learning, improve their language development, and prepare for school routines, which supports a successful transition to schools.

One example of a successful early learning initiative that we are seeing across the country is the Aboriginal Head Start Program. The Aboriginal Head Start Program is a federally funded program that enables indigenous community-based organizations to provide structured preschool experiences for indigenous children aged three to five. Some Yukon First Nations are using funding from the Aboriginal Head Start Program to run programs that support the emotional, intellectual, and physical development of children in their communities so that they are better prepared for learning at school.

We can learn from the successes of programs like this where early learning programming is making a difference as young learners transition into school. We have committed to working collaboratively with Yukon First Nation governments

and our community and education partners to improve our programs, services, and outcomes for Yukon students.

Yukon's early years evaluation survey indicated that language, cognitive, and social skills are common areas where young children can benefit from additional support as they transition into school. K4 provides a literacy-rich play-based learning environment where students can develop and practice these skills together and prepare for school routines.

The structured setting of hands-on and movement-based activities helps children to develop skills like creative and critical thinking, listening, speaking and communication, and personal and social awareness. Some existing K4 programs are run for half of the school day. Some are collaborative programs partnered with the kindergarten program at the school. Our goal is to ensure that all of our rural schools have the resources and training that they need to offer quality K4 programming that fits the unique context of their school community. A child's early development and primary school years have a significant influence on their long-term success in their education. Students who develop learning skills at an early age are more likely to succeed at school and graduate from high school.

Recognizing the positive impact that preschool programming has on children, our Liberal government will make K4 available in every rural school. K4 programming will support Yukon children to successfully transition into school, leading to more positive outcomes for their education.

Mr. Kent: I welcome the opportunity to respond to this ministerial statement. We believe that this is a worthwhile initiative; however, it lacks details at this point, so perhaps the ministerial statement is a bit premature.

I had some discussions with the Premier on this initiative on November 4 of this year, and unfortunately, he wouldn't let the minister respond at this time, so I am happy that he is letting the minister speak today as she will have a better understanding of the file than the Premier.

According to Yukon Education, there are only two schools in rural Yukon that don't currently offer this option: Robert Service School in Dawson City, and Johnson Elementary School in Watson Lake.

Can the minister tell us if these two rural schools have the space to offer this program? Of particular concern for us is Robert Service School, which recently had to close a mouldy portable down and move that programming into the school itself. We wonder how much capital will have to be spent to upgrade these two schools to ensure that they have the capacity to absorb these students and start providing this programming.

We are curious about who has been consulted so far with respect to this initiative. Have the Robert Service School and Johnson Elementary School communities been engaged in discussions as of yet? This part is concerning as, according to the Premier, decisions about the length of the day and whether it will be optional or mandatory appear to have already been made with what appears to be little or no consultation.

The Premier mentioned on November 4 that K4 will be offered in rural schools before the end of this mandate. That timeline was noticeably absent in today's ministerial statement,

so I am hoping that the minister can confirm that this time frame is still applicable for us — or are the Liberals going to break that promise as well?

The Premier also spoke about expansion of K4 into Whitehorse area schools. Currently, it is only offered at École Émilie Tremblay with 22 students enrolled as of September 30, according to Yukon Education numbers. I think that many parents of children in Whitehorse would be interested in this program being offered in their schools. There are challenges with room at certain schools in Whitehorse. We are also curious about other O&M costs, such as busing and additional teachers who would be required.

The Premier told the House on November 4 — and I quote: “All rural schools within this mandate — and again, identifying certain pressures, identifying that it would be more complicated to get it out in Whitehorse. I can’t, on the floor of the Legislative Assembly, say that we will get it all done in Whitehorse as well. We will make our best efforts.”

On November 4, the Premier said that the government would be making best efforts to have K4 in all Whitehorse schools by the end of the mandate as well. That is why I am curious as to why there is no mention of Whitehorse K4 in this statement given that this was the Premier’s promise.

Are the Liberals going to be walking away from that commitment? Maybe the Premier spoke out of turn. Can the minister tell us if that statement by the Premier was accurate or not? Are the Liberals no longer making best efforts to expand K4 to Whitehorse before the end of this mandate?

Also on November 4, the Premier told this House — and I quote again: “Yukon Teachers’ Association has expressed some concerns about reporting requirements for K4 and teacher training in early childhood development and assessment processes.”

Can the minister please elaborate for us on what those specific concerns are that the Premier mentioned that the Yukon Teachers’ Association has? The Premier also mentioned that this will alleviate pressures on daycares and day homes. I am curious if those associations — and the daycares and day homes — have also been consulted. I am also curious about what role the Yukon education advisory committee will play in this process.

Again, Mr. Speaker, there are more questions than answers at this point, but I look forward to some responses from the minister.

Ms. White: The Yukon NDP is pleased to see plans for an early kindergarten program to be offered in the communities. We would agree that support for families and children preparing for school is critical. Anything that can be done to enhance young children’s learning needs to be encouraged. Whether it is strong early childhood education through daycares or programs such as those offered by the Child Development Centre, we support the continuum of learning.

In the 2010-11 school year, the Department of Education introduced the early development instrument — or the EDI — as a tool to identify five areas of vulnerability that may affect student success. The EDI was a checklist that kindergarten

teachers completed for each child in their class. The results were to help schools identify the degree to which a child is ready to learn so that interventions can be made early on to assist all students in being successful. The data from the EDI was to be used in part to develop community and school vulnerability profiles that inform the school growth process and school resourcing.

The EDI, which is no longer to be found on any government website, showed where early learning strategies needed to be implemented and worked on. Unfortunately, the tool was used that one time only. Instead of using this tool to measure the success of any strategies put in place over the years, it was discontinued.

The Yukon Liberals say that they make evidence-based decisions, so without the EDI, how is the government now collecting information to help develop community and school vulnerability profiles that inform the school growth process and school resourcing for our youngest learners?

The Yukon NDP fundamentally believes that every child should have access to early childhood education. We have often raised the concern around the affordability of childcare, so offering K4 is one way to help children, their families, their future teachers, and their communities in supporting early childhood education.

Mr. Speaker, for all of the reasons that were listed by the minister, we look forward to the day when every Yukon child, no matter where they live in Yukon, has access to early kindergarten programs.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Expanding early kindergarten in rural communities will help to build healthy, vibrant, and sustainable communities. It will support families and young children to help set them up for successful education, and that’s what this program is all about.

We are focusing on rural communities first, particularly in Watson Lake and Dawson City, as many of the other rural schools have versions of pre-kindergarten or early kindergarten learning, and it should be available across the territory. We will look and continue to explore introducing K4 in Whitehorse as well, as the Premier mentioned earlier in his answers to questions on the supplementary budget, of which, I note, Education is not a department.

We are working with our educational partners to ensure that there is a smooth transition and, most particularly, that we meet the needs of each individual school community, because that’s critical. I note that the Leader of the Third Party noted that this is an opportunity to alleviate some pressures on daycares in some communities as well, but the primary concern, of course, is that children have the opportunity to learn skills and to get used to school and school routines at an early age. We know that there is research that indicates that this has a positive outcome on their entire school careers.

Our goal is to ensure that all of our rural schools have the resources and the training that they will need to offer quality K4 programming that fits the unique context of each of their school communities. Some of the questions asked if that is happening.

As I have noted — and the member opposite, actually, has noted — there is K4 in many of the rural schools already, so fitting that into the schools, into the programming, and into the teacher education and the training has been something that has been worked on and continues to be worked on as we expand the program.

K4 programming will support Yukon children to successfully transition into school, leading to more positive outcomes. That's really what this program is about. It is a positive step. There are some detailed questions that members opposite may have, and we're happy to provide those specifics either in a legislative return or otherwise.

The purpose of a ministerial statement — and we have taken the opportunity to do so — is to make a statement or an announcement on government policy or on matters of public interest to Yukoners. We understand that Yukoners are interested in early kindergarten, early childhood education, and the opportunities that are available across the territory, and we have taken the opportunity to give information about that today.

Speaker: This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Whistle Bend school

Mr. Hassard: On July 29, the government posted a tender for an owner advisor for the Whistle Bend elementary school. Two days later, they pulled that tender down. This tender was then reissued on October 2. When the government pulled the tender down on August 1, they said that it was prematurely posted and required more input from stakeholders. However, in a confidential briefing note to the Minister of Highways and Public Works dated August 6, it is made clear that the government had already made the key decisions around size, location, and design of the school.

Can the minister tell us what, if any, changes were made to the tender between August 1 and October 2 as a result of those consultations, or was the initial delay all just for show?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I'm happy to talk about the government's decision to build the first elementary school in about a quarter century. Building a new school for the community of Whistle Bend is a high priority for our government. Highways and Public Works will be working with Education to incorporate feedback from stakeholders and from a project advisory committee throughout the project.

The school will shape the community for decades to come, so we are taking the time to get it right, and we look forward to the community's input.

The tender was initially cancelled so we could work with key stakeholders to ensure that the school best met the needs of the community. The tender was then reposted and is now underway. It will be budgeted in the range of up to \$32 million for the new Whistle Bend school based on industry estimates, and we'll see how it goes from here.

Mr. Hassard: So, once again, a lot of words from the minister, but nothing in terms of answers. That same August 6 confidential briefing note to the minister indicates the timelines of the project. It states that construction is scheduled to start in

June 2021, but it says that this is based on the assumption that the owner's advisor tender would be awarded in September. As we know, that has been delayed significantly and likely won't be awarded until December or even early next year.

The section of the briefing note called "Potential Risks" goes on to say — and I quote: "Delays to the project timeline due to increased and unexpected consultation activities." So, can the minister tell us if the government is still on schedule to meet its timelines for construction to start in June 2021?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I will tell the Leader of the Official Opposition that we are committed to providing Yukoners with access to quality education and the tools required to learn. When complete, the new elementary school in Whistle Bend will be the first built in this territory in 20 years, and it will be a great centre point for the growing Whistle Bend neighbourhood. It is important that the community is involved in this project and we are very pleased to have the project advisory committee now in place as the project moves forward.

Mr. Speaker, it never fails to amaze me how the opposition can find fault in any action taken by this government, while completely forgetting the past mistakes. Let's not forget the debacle that was F.H. Collins School. Perhaps the opposition would prefer that we dig a big pit to signify our intentions to build the school before any of the official permits were in place. Perhaps they are suggesting that we rush a tender and ignore our commitments to working with the community.

I look forward to the member's third question.

Mr. Hassard: It would be nice if he actually told us some answers to our questions. In the documents we have, there is an e-mail exchange between senior public servants where one asks what the impacts of the tender delay will be on the timeline and the other responds with — and I quote: "Year one deadlines were already challenging to begin with, especially considering past experience with the French School where the..." statement of requirements took so "... long to complete. With this delay, it may be unfeasible to get the..." statement of requirements "... completed by March 2020."

The August 6 briefing note to the minister goes on to say that the original plan for the school was for 250 students; however, the government has decided to increase that. According to this confidential briefing note — and I quote: "The school was originally planned in project meetings to be 250 students in size as per the program area, recently the school size has changed to 425..."

Can the minister tell us what impact the decision to increase the size of the school by 175 students will have on the project costs and timelines?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: There are an awful lot of assumptions being made by the Leader of the Official Opposition on the floor of the House this afternoon. I'm going to respond to those.

I will say that the project budget is \$32 million and we expect to have the school built — one of the very first elementary schools built in the territory in 20 years, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud of that work, as is — I'm sure — my colleague, the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, we could go on about this. I have before me documents that I have from the media that say that in — when was it — 2014? Yukon government put out a \$14.5 million bridge upgrade project to public tender on April 2. It cancelled that project on April 11 after the community expressed concerns about it. Now the project is in limbo because it can no longer meet the deadline to use the \$6.75 million in federal money that had been earmarked for the project. This is the state of affairs that we took over. Procurement was really in a very bad mess. We fixed a lot of those processes. We're continuing to work to improve the way we procure and deliver on projects, and the proof is in the pudding, Mr. Speaker.

Question re: Nuclear energy

Mr. Istchenko: In last week's draft climate strategy, one of the action items was to research the potential use of nuclear energy in the Yukon, including small modular reactors. A little research tells you that small modular reactors — or SMRs — are defined as nuclear reactors generally anywhere from five megawatts to 300 megawatts, and they are designed to be fabricated and set up quickly.

The uptake of SMRs across the globe has grown over the last several years as remote regions look to address their energy needs. So, Mr. Speaker, has the government done any early studies or pre-feasibility work on the potential of nuclear energy in the territory?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: First, we have not undertaken any unique studies on pocket nuclear or small nuclear at this time. I have received interest that we have heard from the community. The committee that has been struck and that we work with under the Yukon Chamber of Commerce just sent me a letter in the last number of weeks saying that the Government of Yukon should take a strong look at this.

What I have been able to gather information on is that there is a lot of interest, but there is a lot of misinformation about where the advancement of the actual technology is and how much it is actually being deployed. So, I think it's prudent to look at all options.

There has been a much different perspective, even from strong environmentalists — we have heard them say that this is an approach that some should take. Then also, on the industrial side, people think that this is also something that should be contemplated. But at this time, we haven't done any studies. If people want us to look into that and they have an interest in it — as this final draft of our strategy consultation goes on to January 17, we urge people to respond — and specifically to this, if they want us to take a look at it.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the minister for that. As I mentioned, in the draft climate strategy, it's action item 68 that states that the government should research the potential for nuclear energy in the Yukon. However, there is no mention of this anywhere else outside of this action item in that document. There is nothing in the background section. It just appears to be in the action items, seemingly randomly. I'm wondering where the origins of the action item come from. The minister did answer part of my question, but I'm just wondering if there have been any other groups, organizations, or businesses that

have come to lobby the government on this idea and what feedback he has given to them.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: This has become a more current conversation. Natural Resources Canada, I know, has from time to time invited individuals who represent the organizations that lobby on behalf of this industry and this technology. I have not seen anybody here in the Yukon, but at the energy and mines ministers meetings on a couple of occasions — there is usually a presentation from an individual who represents that technology. The Chamber of Mines this past week had an individual here from Sweden, I believe, who is a scientist working in this field. I didn't have an opportunity to see that presentation, but on Monday night at the awards banquet, I did bump into the individual and requested to exchange information so that I could provide it to Yukon Energy.

The University of Saskatchewan has done a lot of consultation around this, of course, because of the commodity extraction that happens in that particular region, but really, at this time, it's early days. I look forward to seeing what Yukoners think that we should do on this topic. As we reflect on the consultation, this may be something that is prudent to research further.

Mr. Istchenko: A little more research tells you that nuclear is not considered a renewable energy source, as uranium fuel is consumed as an energy as the energy is spent. However, the draft strategy contains a number of targets related to the increase of renewable energy.

I'm just wondering, with the goal of increasing renewable energy, how does the minister square a circle — the potential of bringing nuclear online? Is the government actually considering being a little less strict on their renewable energy targets if this means an overall reduction in our GHG emissions?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, to be fair, there are a lot of assumptions and reaching in that particular question. Questions 1 and 2 reflected on the fact that there was a note in the strategy. Question 3 talked about us moving down a path to actually essentially procure this technology. That's not what I said in my answers. It's a good tactic to try to guide me to a place where we're not at, but once again for Yukoners, it's important that I correct the record and say that this is something that we have not done a lot of research on. I understand the elements and values of the plan that Minister Frost and I led, and we're proud of that work.

Yukoners are asking us to investigate some of this other technology. If there is something there that is actually real or if there's a technology that can be procured or deployed in a way, that would be something that we could investigate.

At this time, this seems to be a technology that has not advanced as much as the general public believes that it has. We haven't seen it deployed in other areas. I will wait to see what Yukoners say on this.

Of course, if there are discussions, we will always take into consideration our benchmarks around GHG.

Question re: Teacher staffing

Ms. White: In January of last year, Yukon teachers ratified a collective agreement that required nearly a year of bargaining. Contained in the agreement was a commitment from the Government of Yukon that they would develop a post and hiring framework that would reflect national standards and ensure that all indeterminate teaching positions would be posted so that all Yukon teachers could apply.

This summer, the Yukon Teachers' Association sent a letter to the Department of Education raising concerns about a number of highly sought-after indeterminate teaching positions that had been awarded without being posted for competition to all Yukon teachers.

Awarding these positions without posting them undermines the integrity of the collective agreement signed by teachers and the Government of Yukon.

Mr. Speaker, why didn't the Department of Education implement the hiring policy that they had committed to in the most recent round of collective agreement bargaining?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I don't have a copy of the letter that the member opposite is noting, but I am happy to answer the question as best I can today.

I will start by saying that I am aware that the Department of Education — particularly with respect to hiring practices and teacher allocations — works very closely with the Yukon Teachers' Association.

It is interesting that the preamble of the question seems to say that the bargaining took almost a year as if that was an issue. There were scheduling problems with respect to when the Yukon Teachers' Association was available. It was a very well-done negotiation. It came to an agreement between the parties relatively quickly. I know that there were a number of changes that are progressive and that the Yukon Teachers' Association was very pleased with, and the parties ultimately agreed.

I'm not sure why how long it would take would be an issue, but I don't necessarily think it is.

With respect to teachers on call, they are an important and valued support in Yukon schools. The department continues to work with the Yukon Teachers' Association in posting those positions for those hires.

Ms. White: I appreciate that the minister's focus veered away from the question, but I was asking about permanent positions that weren't posted for Yukon teachers to apply to. It's important that the minister is proactive in addressing these concerns. In their letter to members, the Yukon Teachers' Association said — and I quote: "We understand that YG intends to continue its approach to hiring in Education and will continue its nepotistic practices."

Perception matters, and while this may not be a case of nepotism, it certainly is being perceived as one. It's not easy becoming a teacher in Yukon. It takes years for teachers to get to the highly sought-after permanent positions. Awarding these positions without posting them after expressly committing to do so, is the absolute opposite, and it does a disservice to Yukon teachers.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister assure Yukon teachers that all future hires will be posted in the fair and transparent manner that was committed to?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: What I can assure the member opposite is that the department will work closely with its partners at the Yukon Teachers' Association to proceed with respect to how teachers are hired, that commitments that were made during the collective agreement bargaining will be abided by, and that we will continue — this is a situation, like many things in the Department of Education, that doesn't have an end date. Teachers come and go, hiring practices happen all year long, the collective agreement brings positive changes forward with respect to the successful negotiation of that, and the commitments that were made with respect to those negotiations — and the commitments that we make on a weekly, if not daily, basis to the Yukon Teachers' Association — will, of course, be abided by.

Members of the Yukon Teachers' Association are, of course, members of the Yukon Teachers' Association, but they are also our employees — government employees — the teachers in schools who deal with our children and educate them every single day. Working with them is an important opportunity for the Department of Education, but I think we need to remember that they are teachers as well.

Ms. White: Not only are they teachers, but they are members of a union and a union that negotiated with government, and the government isn't following that commitment. That's the problem.

Maybe, Mr. Speaker, this matter really speaks to a leadership problem within the Department of Education. The Government of Yukon's 2018 employment engagement survey highlighted that the dissatisfaction with the Department of Education was rising in a number of key areas which, according to the Teachers' Association, has led to — and I quote: "... record employee cynicism of the senior leadership..." Breaking a promise to implement fair and transparent hiring processes only validates that cynicism.

It's good that the minister has committed to ensuring that the Department of Education — actually, I'm hoping that she will commit that they will do different — will actually follow the hiring process that they agreed to after a year of bargaining, but committing to do what you said you would do after getting called out for not doing it is a low, low bar, Mr. Speaker.

I also have the letter that I will table. Mr. Speaker, what steps is the minister taking to improve the relationship between the Department of Education and Yukon's teachers?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Again, I'm sorry — I don't know what the member opposite is quoting, and I don't have it in front of me, so I can't make any comments with respect to that.

The Yukon Teachers' Association is, of course, a key, if not the most important, partner in education. We work with them on an ongoing basis to address the needs of Yukon educators. We have, as I've noted and as noted by the member opposite, successfully negotiated a Yukon Teachers' Association collective agreement in the last number of months. It resolved several long-standing issues that have been addressed through that process.

The *Education Labour Relations Act*, as members will recall, has been amended here in this House to reflect the updated provisions relating to the temporary employment, probationary periods, and layoffs of educators as part of the collective agreement.

Again, I don't know what reference the member opposite is making. What I absolutely will commit to is that the Department of Education not only will, but does, on a regular basis — despite the disparaging remarks about the leadership of the department, which I woefully disagree with — the department is working extremely hard every day not only to provide what educators need through the work with the Yukon Teachers' Association, but importantly, to provide what our children need in schools across the territory.

Question re: Access to information

Ms. Hanson: It is 2019. People expect access to relevant information, including how to navigate Yukon government programs and services, to be at their fingertips, yet this government is increasingly controlling the flow of information. Information is no longer on a need-to-know basis, but is based on what government wants you to know. It is our duty as MLAs to get answers to the questions and concerns of Yukon citizens; however, this government's dismissal of questions raised by opposition members undermines the democratic process. We have 18 minutes a week to ask questions of government ministers, questions more often met with random speaking points than with answers. Similarly, Yukon's access to information system currently operates under a principle of restricted access rather than an open, transparent access to information.

The Yukon government website fails basic usability tests. It seems that the only reliable way to get any information is if you have a microphone and a camera. How are Yukoners supposed to get answers other than through Yukon government press releases and photo ops?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am more than happy this afternoon to speak about the efforts that we are undertaking to improve the flow of information out of the Government of Yukon. We spoke yesterday. I had a great discussion yesterday about the local news and provision — how important it is to have institutions like the CBC and many of our local media outlets acting on the public's behalf, getting information to the public, Mr. Speaker. But, internally in the Yukon government, we are working very hard to provide more information. We have the open data portal. We have rewritten the ATIPP act and had a great debate with the Member for Whitehorse Centre on that piece of legislation. The regulations are in process, and we hope to have them done very soon — in a matter of months, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we inherited a woeful state of affairs when we took office. It was a long-neglected, paper-based government that was delivering services much as governments did in the 19th century. We are working to modernize our government to make it a more data-driven, modern, 21st century institution. The work that we have undertaken is ongoing, and we will continue that right through our mandate.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, “open and transparent” — the government says the words, but trying to speak transparency into existence simply doesn't cut it. The reality is that, while this government loves to talk the talk, they haven't figured out how to walk the walk. Robust legislative oversight is key to a strong democracy. While this government has passed pieces of legislation to improve oversight, they have failed to implement the supporting regulations necessary to give effect to them.

Yukoners may know that this Legislative Assembly passed new lobbyist legislation and an updated ATIPP act, but what they likely don't know is that these pieces of legislation are useless without their accompanying regulations.

So, Mr. Speaker, when can Yukoners expect this government to produce the regulations for the changes to the ATIPP act and the new lobbyist act so that those important pieces of oversight legislation can be brought fully into force?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Mr. Speaker, this system is dependent upon the members of the opposition. We know that. The work that they do every day, questioning us and holding our feet to the fire, is very important. All of us certainly respect the work that they do and take their role very seriously.

The public can also go to the media in the Yukon, and they can also come directly to members of the government. Every day, we are getting requests from the public to answer their questions, and we do so as quickly as we possibly can.

The Member for Whitehorse Centre has asked about the ATIPP act. As she knows, we have modernized Yukon's *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* to provide better service and to meet the changing needs of Yukoners in this digital information age. That legislation has passed the Yukon Legislative Assembly. It is now in the process of having its regulations written. We are writing an awful lot of regulations for an awful lot of pieces of legislation through my colleague's Department of Justice, and we are getting them done as soon as possible. As I understand it, Mr. Speaker, the regulations are expected to come into force sometime in early 2020.

Ms. Hanson: So, the minister veered off at “sometime” we will see regulations — great.

Not only are there structural problems affecting the Yukon government's oversight legislation, there are operational and staffing issues troubling it too. Take ATIPP, for example — the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* requires the records manager to respond within 30 days. Extensions are permitted under the act up to 60 days; however, Yukoners are experiencing situations in which the 60-day window elapses and they still have not received their request, with no indication of when it may come. Much of Yukon's ATIPP infrastructure is experiencing volumes that it simply cannot cope with. While these delays are no doubt unintentional, to the individual making a request for their own information, it doesn't matter. Access delayed is access denied.

What steps is this government taking to address the delays and responses to access to information requests that many Yukoners are currently experiencing?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The frustration in the Member for Whitehorse Centre's questions is palpable. I mean, I can certainly feel the frustration. As the member opposite knows — because we stood here in this House and debated the access to information and protection of privacy legislation and had a very thorough conversation about that piece of legislation, which will be one of the most modern pieces of legislation in the country and was certainly improved through our discussion and the discussion with the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

We have a great piece of legislation passed and we have regulations that are coming. Currently, Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite knows, the access to information requests are being handled under the old rules and those are frustrating. We are working very hard to get the regulations done so that new legislation hits and starts to improve the way we provide information to the public and to the members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, we have an open data portal. We are providing information — reports that were never tabled before. Mr. Speaker, we are going above and beyond trying to make sure — because it's fundamentally what we believe in on this side of the House. We believe in the provision of information. I did it for a living and I will continue that fight.

Question re: Teacher staffing

Mr. Kent: Earlier this Sitting in Committee of the Whole, we asked the Premier about the amount of teacher vacancies throughout the entire Yukon.

Initially, the Premier told us that there were currently 53 teacher vacancies, but he later clarified that he actually didn't know the answer. I'm wondering if the Minister of Education can give us an update on the number of teacher vacancies in the territory, and can she break that down by community?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I do not have that number at my fingertips of the amount of teacher vacancies which I understand to be the question — and to break it down by community — but I'm happy to provide that information to the member opposite.

Mr. Kent: We appreciate that commitment by the minister.

We've been told that there are currently two vacancies in Watson Lake, two in Pelly Crossing, and three in Ross River. Similar to the nursing shortages we are experiencing in our communities, the government needs to come up with a long-term plan to recruit and retain teachers so that they can stay and live in our communities.

What is this government doing to address teacher shortages outside of Whitehorse? When will these vacancies be filled?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Teacher vacancies anywhere in the territory are of concern to the Department of Education as well as to our government. Teachers need to be in the classrooms so that children can be learning.

There is work ongoing on the vacancies noted by the member opposite — if he is correct — two in Watson Lake and the others that he noted are of ultimate concern. There is a very active human resources division at the Department of Education that works every day to recruit and hire teachers.

Effective teachers are critically important for student success. I know that number changes rapidly at all times, whether those positions are filled by individual teachers on a full-time basis or sometimes by teachers on call depending on the actual circumstances at the school.

I know that this work is diligent and always happening, so I will find out if those vacancies are current. I know that addressing housing shortages in our communities is key and that our housing department and other departments — in a one-government approach — are dealing with those issues as well.

Mr. Kent: I thank the minister for talking about housing because that leads nicely into my next question.

It actually turns out that Liberal policies may actually be contributing to the teacher shortage in our communities. To quote from a June 10 CBC article: "The Yukon Teachers' Association (YTA) says changes to the territorial government's staff housing policy will make it harder to attract and keep teachers in rural communities."

In fact, Mr. Speaker, in a news release from the YTA, they say — and again I quote: "With growing teacher shortages in B.C. and NWT, our government has adopted a tone-deaf staff housing policy that will make it even harder to attract and retain Educators in rural Yukon." They go on to say that this new policy is being imposed on teachers.

Can the Minister of Education tell us if, before they brought it in, the government did any analysis on whether or not their new staff housing policy would contribute to the staffing issues in communities?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, we have answered this question on the floor of the Legislative Assembly a few times now as far as the new changes to the housing policy here in the Yukon government.

I do recall when I was in opposition, when my job as a teacher in the community became vacant, under the policies of the Yukon Party, that the teacher had to camp on the banks of the Yukon River for two months before getting housing and that housing wasn't even Yukon Housing Corporation's.

So, again, Mr. Speaker, when we took a look at the issues, we went community by community to find out how could we best provide community housing. I am so very proud of the connection between Yukon Housing Corporation, the Department of Education, and Community Services on a whole-of-government approach to make sure that the individual needs of all communities are of paramount consideration when we change those policies.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Speaker: Introduction of visitors outside of the time provided for in the Daily Routine.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to introduce Jacqueline Bedard, executive director

of external and government relations, who has joined us today for the next part of our business.

I would like to ask my colleagues to welcome a number of individuals who have come this afternoon for the next order of business. From Yukon College, we have President Dr. Karen Barnes; we have Beverley Keefe, integrated business manager; Nick Haskins, welcome centre host and administrative assistant; Colleen Wirth, director of student and infrastructure support; Lacia Kinnear, director of governance and strategic initiatives; Giulia Lucchini, director of employee relations and organizational development; Kim Sheridan, marketing manager; Eric Hoogstraten, department head of southern campuses; I have noted Ms. Bedard; Shelagh Rowles, executive director of communities, innovation, and development; Amanda Graham, chair of the school of liberal arts; and Tom Ullyett, the current chair of the Yukon College Board of Governors.

We also have visiting us Nicole Morgan, Deputy Minister of the Department of Education; Kelli Taylor, Assistant Deputy Minister of Policy and Partnerships with the Department of Education; Adrienne Mcilvaney, policy analyst; Kyle Nightingale, a communications and policy analyst; and Mike McBride, director of policy and planning. Thank you all for being here.

Applause

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 2: *Yukon University Act* — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 2, standing in the name of the Hon. Ms. McPhee.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that Bill No. 2, entitled *Yukon University Act*, be now a read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Education that Bill No. 2, entitled *Yukon University Act*, be now a read a third time and do pass.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I want to sincerely thank all members for their comments and contributions in support of this act and this milestone for post-secondary education here in the Yukon Territory.

Mr. Speaker, we are very proud to have put this legislation forward. The *Yukon University Act* is a landmark piece of legislation that supports the transition of Yukon College to Yukon University. This legislation marks an important moment in Yukon's and Canada's history — the moment we establish the first university in Canada's north and a moment that is the result of the hard work and innovative thinking of many dedicated Yukoners to bring this dream to life. It is an evolution of our growth as a territory and for Canada. This is truly a great opportunity for the north, Mr. Speaker.

Yukon College has been a leader in many areas of post-secondary education — from reconciliation to northern research and hundreds of topics in between. As Yukon University, it will continue to be a trailblazer as Canada's first northern university and with made-in-the-Yukon programs to meet the diverse learning needs of Yukoners and other students.

As our population grows and our economy evolves, new businesses and careers emerge requiring new skills and knowledge. In some cases, Yukoners have had to leave the territory to acquire these skills and knowledge. With the establishment of Yukon University, more and more, they will be able to access the education and training opportunities that they need right here at home. Mr. Speaker, we are very proud to support these new education and career opportunities for Yukoners and others.

As a hybrid institution, Yukon University will continue to provide the programming that Yukoners rely on, such as trades and apprenticeship programming, adult basic education, and academic upgrading. It will also offer new university-level degree programs that are rooted in Yukon's northern environment, culture, society, and economy and improve the economic and social well-being of Yukoners and Yukon communities.

Mr. Speaker, as Yukon University evolves, it will continue to reflect Yukoners and Yukon communities, including community voices at governance tables and on community campus committees. It will also continue leading its work on reconciliation in post-secondary education, including legislated responsibilities regarding the importance of our government-to-government relations and relationships with Yukon First Nations, a commitment to reconciliation, and joint priorities for education with Yukon First Nations.

Yukon College has been an ally, an advocate, and a leader for reconciliation, ensuring that Yukon First Nation language, history, and culture are a part of post-secondary opportunities here in the Yukon Territory.

In 2018, it began offering the first made-in-Yukon degree program, a bachelor of arts in indigenous governance — and rightly so, if I may say. This degree program addresses the local need to build capacity in Yukon First Nation governments. The first cohort of students from this program are already making positive contributions to their communities through co-op positions with local organizations. They will be prepared with the knowledge and the skills to be effective leaders and supporters with First Nation governments.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say that some of this cohort will graduate with their degree — a Yukon University degree — at the end of this academic year.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation reflects how Yukon University will continue its work toward reconciliation through a commitment of the university to honour and support reconciliation with Yukon First Nations, to build capacity within Yukon First Nation governments, and to implement final and self-government agreements.

This is something that, in the Yukon, we are quite used to hearing about now. We are dedicated to our relationships with First Nations. Many of our organizations have taken a lead to improve those relationships and to work hand in hand with our other governments. But this is not something that's common in Canada, and Yukon is leading the way in this work and will continue to do so. Yukon College and soon-to-be Yukon University, we hope, will continue that work and has been a recognized leader in taking up that amazing opportunity.

The legislation reflects how Yukon University will incorporate Yukon First Nation culture, knowledge, and educational opportunities and priorities into the university's programming and activities — such critical opportunities in this legislation that, I dare say, barely exist in other places in Canada, and we are all very proud. I hope this Legislative Assembly is very proud of these steps forward.

Yukon University will also open up new post-secondary opportunities for students, researchers, and professors from across Canada and around the world to work and learn in Canada's north. In September 2019, Yukon College began offering a new bachelor of business administration program. Over time, Yukon University will add new degree programs with a northern focus and learning opportunities.

Canada is one of eight circumpolar countries that border the Arctic Ocean. Canada's north, like other circumpolar countries, faces unique regional challenges. A changing climate and melting permafrost and Arctic ice are changing the environment and traditional ways of life for many northerners.

These challenges spark opportunities for research and innovation, for problem solving, and for investment in solutions. Countries like Sweden, Norway, Finland, Russia, and the United States have recognized these opportunities and have invested in state-of-the-art universities and research centres in their northern regions.

Yukon's investment in post-secondary programming and northern research will be a significant contribution to Canada's efforts to address northern and global issues such as climate change and green technology — another great opportunity that will arise from the legislation that we are passing here today.

Mr. Speaker, we are very proud that this legislation enables Canada to join the world's circumpolar countries in offering university-level education and opportunities by the north, for the north, and in the north.

I want to take a moment to recognize and thank the leaders and the staff from Yukon College for their hard work and dedication in creating and delivering post-secondary programming and research opportunities for Yukoners and for embracing the journey to become a university. I dare say that it has not been a straightforward or a smooth path on some days, but their work has been amazing. The enthusiasm and motivation shown by Yukon College staff and leadership and the College Board of Governors and Academic Council to enact this change, to inspire and lead this evolution, have been nothing short of amazing. I would like to specifically recognize Dr. Karen Barnes, Yukon College's long-serving president — I don't know about long-serving — “serving” president, I'll just say then.

Dr. Barnes has long been an advocate for expanding post-secondary opportunities here in the Yukon Territory and has been the driving force behind the transition to Yukon University. I know that she would say “a driving force”, and I'm happy to change that. Thank you to Dr. Barnes and to Yukon College for their continued efforts to improve the social and economic well-being for all Yukoners and to provide opportunities that have truly never been available to our community before.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Department of Education and the Department of Justice officials and staff who worked tirelessly on this bill. Without their dedication and skill, we would not be here today.

I'm extremely proud — I think that's four times saying “proud”, but I'm really proud, and I'm proud on behalf of all of our visitors as well — to stand here today to support this legislation to authorize and support Yukon's first university.

Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 2 proposes a made-in-Yukon opportunity. Yukon University, a hybrid institution that embraces its new challenges while continuing to do what Yukon College has done for over 50 years: serve the unique educational needs of Yukoners.

It will stand as a historic example of Yukoners working together to shape a bright future for our communities and for our country.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I thank all members of this Legislative Assembly, and I look forward to unanimous support of this evolutionary bill.

Ms. Van Bibber: I am pleased to rise today to speak on behalf of the Official Opposition on the *Yukon University Act* at third reading. I won't take long, and I will let everyone know that it is an act that we definitely can support.

From Yukon College to Yukon University, it will continue to be an interesting and innovative institution. We hope that the growing pains will prove to be small as we move forward.

Yukon University will serve the needs of the north and all who access the facility as we forge ahead. First is to complete this part of the transition from college to university by passing the *Yukon University Act*.

Certificates, diplomas, and university degree programs will be transferred to successful students who will thrive in the diverse space in all varieties of educational pursuits. Continuing with the trades, adult basic training, post-secondary courses, as well as research and science is truly investing in the north by providing people with the skills needed for our economy.

The transition will continue to provide high-quality as well as affordable education to many, both at our main campus and at the 11 satellite campuses in the community.

We have heard a number of concerns and comments brought forward from Yukoners during the consultation process. One of the main issues around moving toward university status has been the importance of upgrading and university preparation courses, and, of course, keeping the trades. There have been wonderful investments made by the Yukon government and Yukon College in the creation of the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining. It is great to know that the trades will continue to be a prominent part of the university.

The board of governors will continue to be a strong voice for the needs and wishes for all to ensure that adequate and timely courses are offered.

There was some discussion on the autonomy of the university so that the board of governors, the newly formed senate, and faculty have the complete ability to implement their

own policies and strategies as needed and required. A university has to be separate from influence from all governments, corporations, and any other interventions.

There is government oversight, though, to ensure that costs, enrolments, and academic outcomes are reported so that the institution is accountable to the public, but overall, there is a definite line.

There is no doubt that funding for the Yukon University will have to be increased, which I am sure is currently being addressed in budget discussions for next year. I do wonder how increases for the university will be weighed against other requirements from the Department of Education, and whether consideration will be given to this in the overall budgeting process for the whole of government.

I must say that I am proud to have my name attached to the Yukon College as a previous chancellor. This act also gives the chancellor a vote, as the position previously did not. This is an added benefit for the person who takes on this titular role.

So, again, thank you to the masters of the legislation writing, the president, Dr. Karen Barnes, the board of governors, and all of the college faculty, as well as the Department of Education for ensuring that we move forward together to have a new act that will encompass our unique needs for the north — the first north of 60 university — in Yukon.

Ms. White: Today, in speaking to Bill No. 2, *Yukon University Act*, there is nothing from the Yukon NDP side except for pride. I think that it is one thing to know that, in the Legislative Assembly by the time the act comes in, it is a clearly packaged document, it is easy to read, and it doesn't show the hours of work that went in to get it there. I can only imagine that if some of our colleagues here from Yukon College have desks similar to mine — that you have years of research, of consultation documents, of conversations that you have had — and that is how we got to where we are today.

I appreciate that it is those of us in this Assembly who are able to move this legislation forward, but it is not those of us in this Assembly who have definitely put in — not only hours, but years of work to get us to this point. What I really want to do right now is to offer my congratulations to all of those whose desks have been taken over by work toward this, who have had the community consultations and the conversations, and who have made sure that Yukoners have been taken along for this ride so that there isn't a fear that we are going to lose the programs that have been so important to Yukon College — but to know that they will continue to blossom and grow.

I really look forward to next May when I can have my high-five line congratulating the very first made-in-Yukon degree program achievement winners — I'm not sure what to call it, but I will be there. Maybe I will have to make a special sign that will be at the front to congratulate the very first class for reaching that achievement.

Mr. Speaker, we have the honour in this Assembly to see the finished product, but we certainly didn't — well, I didn't, of course — have the opportunity to see behind that curtain. I think that is the work that I really want to acknowledge right now, so thank you so much to all of those who got us to this

point — of course, the legislative drafters and everyone at Yukon College who have been working through what might not always be the most comfortable change. Growth, as we know, is not always easy.

With that, Mr. Speaker, we look forward to the vote.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, as we begin to conclude the work on this historically important piece of legislation, I just want to take the opportunity to reflect on one individual who is not with us here today but, under different circumstances, would absolutely be in the gallery today. When this process began — the journey and adventure toward Canada having its first university above the 60th parallel so that we could sit along with other circumpolar nations. Although the work that has been done over a number of years has been absolutely respected globally and has always been groundbreaking — but now this puts us in a position around the table to be able to have that level of institution.

Taking on a task such as this and doing it appropriately takes so much research and work and so many conversations and discussions. That is what the key lead team — of course, led by President Karen Barnes — undertook. In order to successfully navigate that process, you also have to have an extremely strong, intelligent, dedicated, and tireless chair for your board. We were so lucky, when this process started, to have Paul Flaherty in that particular role. He was an exceptional human — how he gave to his family, his community, and the organization he led across the north — but his compassion and commitment to Yukon College was always there at the top.

You can imagine a person in that particular role — the amount of information that they have to review and devour and understand in their normal work leading a telecommunications company across northern Canada — but I would bet there wasn't a document that was ever provided by President Barnes to the chair, Mr. Flaherty, that wasn't reviewed, contemplated, critiqued, and understood before the next conversation arose — and that probably would happen, in some cases, at 2:00, 3:00, 4:00 — who knows with Paul — in the morning, and then probably he was getting up in the morning to go for a run before he started his day and led this massive company and did all the things he did.

I just thought it was appropriate today to honour Mr. Flaherty, who is not with us today. I think we should all take a moment to reflect on what he contributed to this process. I would leave it to President Barnes to talk about, on her own, what a dynamic duo they both were and how they started this process together. When you have two people of that capacity working on something, you get a result like we have today.

I know there are a tremendous number of people who are here with us in the gallery, and they all contributed. There are individuals such as the Member for Porter Creek North who contributed — many people did — but I think we should all, next May when the opening happens, take a moment on our own to reflect on Mr. Flaherty and what he has done for the institution, for the territory, and for our country.

Speaker: If the member now speaks, she will close debate on third reading of Bill No. 2.

Does any other member wish to be heard at this time?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I thank my colleagues for their contributions here this afternoon. I sincerely thank my colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, for his comments regarding Mr. Flaherty. He is here with us, I'm sure.

I have the extraordinary responsibility and opportunity to stand here today — as I have on other days — with the privilege and honour of bringing forward pieces of legislation that I believe will truly affect the way that Yukoners live in our territory. There have been different topics and they've all been very important to me. I say that is a privilege and honour because really this opportunity has come with the great responsibilities of this job but is really one of the great opportunities and one of the really great parts of this job. I feel as if it is sort of dropped in my lap and that I will be the one here today to speak to this bill and to ask for us to support it. I have on other occasions been able to do that and I take that very seriously, but it is my last opportunity to publicly, on the floor of this Legislative Assembly, really thank all of the people — as the Leader of the Third Party has mentioned — behind the curtain because they're not necessarily me. I've had lots of work to do with respect to this, but it's only a fraction of what has been described by my colleague the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and by the others who have spoken across the way today in recognition of that work.

I'm very pleased to have some of the people from Yukon College here to witness this vote today, and I will take the last opportunity to thank them on behalf of all of us and on behalf of Yukoners for the work that they have done. Again, to the folks at the Department of Education who have been right alongside them in a different way and in a different role and the legislative drafters and the folks at Justice who have helped us get to this opportunity today, thank you very much. I will look forward to the vote.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

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

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion for third reading of Bill No. 2 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 2 has passed this House.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: It's a bit anti-climactic, Mr. Speaker, but 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 (Mr. Hutton): Order, please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Motion re Appearance of witnesses

Committee of the Whole Motion No. 3

Hon. Ms. Frost: I move:

THAT from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 21, 2019, Brian Gillen, chair of the Yukon Hospital Corporation Board of Trustees, and Jason Bilsky, chief executive officer of the Yukon Hospital Corporation, appear as witnesses before Committee of the Whole to discuss matters relating to the Yukon Hospital Corporation.

Chair: It has been moved by Ms. Frost:

THAT from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 21, 2019, Brian Gillen, chair of the Yukon Hospital Corporation Board of Trustees, and Jason Bilsky, chief executive officer of the Yukon Hospital Corporation, appear as witnesses before Committee of the Whole to discuss matters relating to the Yukon Hospital Corporation.

Committee of the Whole Motion No. 3 agreed to

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 200: *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Resuming general debate, Mr. Silver.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I just have a couple of responses that I want to go over from some questions from the Member for Kluane on wildlife regulations. There was a question and I have some additional information. We answered as much as we could on the floor of the Legislative Assembly but the department wanted me to come back to something specific.

The question that the Member for Kluane asked was: Is the Department of Environment providing enough information from the public to have informed input on the regulation proposal packages?

Mr. Chair, the Government of Yukon works collaboratively with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board on proposals to change wildlife, trapping, and fishing regulations.

Proposed regulation changes are submitted to the board, and then the board presents the proposal for public comment. The public engagement activities associated with this review process are led by the board, including survey, design, meetings, and public communications such as advertising. Information that is provided by the Department of Environment relates to the specific proposals coming from the department. Anyone with questions about the survey or having difficulty inputting their responses should contact the board directly.

With respect to moose management proposals, I believe that we have provided the right type and amount of information for the public to respond in an informed manner. With respect to data collection, realistically, we can never know it all, but we are looking to provide viable, adaptive management tools that we can use to bring forward to future discussions how we can better manage wildlife. We are always interested in hearing from Yukoners about engagement methods and opportunities, and we thank the member opposite for raising his concerns as well.

We had another question about the Public Accounts inquiry land and inventories for resale, and this was a question from the Member for Whitehorse Centre. The Member for Whitehorse Centre asked about Public Accounts, inventory for resale, how — and I'm not quoting directly — the designations in each of these categories are made and if the amounts are costs for development or market-value prices.

Mr. Chair, location breakdown of the inventories of land for resale held by the Department of Community Services and Energy, Mines and Resources — in that, we do have a few different categorizations. Those designations are: undeveloped land, or raw land; land under development, which is a work in progress; or developed land, which is developed lots in inventory. Basically, as far as the classification of lots — rural residential — and the sales at development costs, that's for sure — those particular ones classify as lots — as rural residential — and they are sold at development cost.

If we classify the lots as rural residential and we sell at some other value no greater than market value — and those are assumptions that will be included in the development of cost and a blended value there within. Again, if we have classifications as special — and we sell those for an amount that's not more than market value. It's more complicated than saying one or the other. It's more of the classifications of these different lots and how we determine those costs.

Just to clarify some of the extenuating questions from the other day, I understand that we'll be asking questions today on Highways and Public Works, so I'll cede the floor to my member opposite.

Mr. Hassard: I would like to thank the official for being here with the Premier today. As the Premier mentioned, I had some questions regarding Highways and Public Works. I just wanted to talk about the options paper that the government apparently based their decision on in regard to shutting down Queen's Printer and Central Stores.

The options paper says that there will be a savings of \$454,000 in the space and utility section. We're curious how those savings were calculated. Where did those numbers come from? I'm curious as to whether the government is considering selling that building for various reasons. Obviously, I understand that there are still Supply Services staff who weren't affected occupying that building, so we're just curious as to how that number was derived.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I don't have those specific numbers and details in front of me, but I will endeavour to get back to the member opposite with that.

Mr. Hassard: I was certainly hoping that the Premier would have had that information since he knew that we were talking about Highways and Public Works, and this is a document that apparently had gone through the government in a one-government approach, because that's how they came up with making this decision. I would like to think that the Premier should be fairly up to date on this.

I guess, moving on with that line of questioning — if the government is considering moving other departments or branches into the space that previously was used by those two organizations, then I guess the question that we would have is: Is the government then going to terminate any leases that they currently hold with the private sector? What's the plan as far as the space goes?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, I could give the member opposite a breakdown of the \$1.6 million in savings. He was asking very specific questions of a specific document that was provided by the minister, and I don't have that information here as we are in general debate of the supplementary budget.

I do know that the \$1.6 million in savings that was identified breaks down as: supplies; procurement improvements — that would be \$600,000; personal savings would be in the range of \$618,000; space and utilities savings as well would be just under half a million dollars at \$454,000; inventory, like liquidation costs that would be one time, would be \$50,000; then also adding design and bindery costs would be just under \$70,000, or \$68,000 to be precise; again, total annual savings of \$1,591,000. So, we do have that information,

but the specific information that the member asked for — based upon the documentation, I don't have that here because we are, as I said, in the supplementary general debate, and I don't have that.

As for the plans for the space that the member opposite talked about — there are no plans at the present. We are looking at requirements for other departments across government — but again, no plans to report at this time.

Mr. Hassard: So, no plans for the current space — and no plans to terminate any current leases.

In the document, it talked about there being \$3 million with purchasing cards. I'm curious, Mr. Chair, if the Premier can enlighten us on how the government arrived at this \$3 million. Can he give us an idea of what was purchased that made up that \$3 million?

I know that we are running out of time.

I recognize that, in the document, it says — purchases of the same types of items available in Central Stores. I can imagine that the minister or the department must have had an itemized list of what was purchased with these cards or else how did they determine how much was being spent on “similar items” through retail?

Are purchasing cards being used for purchasing \$3 million worth of paper, pens, and stationery, or did this number come from purchases of other items? I guess that we're curious, too, as to whether or not employees are able to purchase other items at cost with these cards such as computers, chairs, printers, or things other than paper, pens, and stationery?

Finally, I would ask: What is included in that total of \$3 million that was charged through P-cards and LPOs? I imagine that the Premier doesn't have that specific information at his fingertips, but if he could commit to getting back to us with that information, I would appreciate it.

Hon. Mr. Silver: The member opposite is correct. He is talking about a document that I don't have in front of me here in general debate on the supplementary budget, which this particular issue is not necessarily pertinent to, but I am happy to get back to the member opposite with some answers to his questions when I speak to department officials.

Seeing the time, Mr. Chair, I move that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Silver that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

Chair: Pursuant to Committee of the Whole Motion No. 3, adopted earlier today, Committee of the Whole will receive witnesses from the Yukon Hospital Corporation.

In order to allow the witnesses to take their places in the Chamber, the Committee will now recess and reconvene at 3:30 p.m.

Recess

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

Appearance of witnesses

Chair: Pursuant to Committee of the Whole Motion No. 3 adopted on this day, Committee of the Whole will now receive witnesses from the Yukon Hospital Corporation.

I would ask all members to remember to refer their remarks through the Chair when addressing the witnesses, and I would also ask the witnesses to refer their answers through the Chair when they are responding to the members of the Committee.

Witnesses introduced

Hon. Ms. Frost: The witnesses appearing before the Committee of the Whole today are Brian Gillen, chair of the Yukon Hospital Corporation Board of Trustees, and Jason Bilsky, chief executive officer of the Yukon Hospital Corporation. If the Members of the Legislative Assembly can please help me in welcoming the witnesses today.

Thank you for coming.

Chair's statement

Chair: The Chair has a brief statement.

I have reviewed the past practice and the Standing Orders to see what instruction they may provide with respect to time for witness introductory remarks and for their responses to members' questions. I am not satisfied that the 20-minute time limit provided in Standing Order 42(3) for members, that is currently the rule, should be extended to witnesses. The primary purpose of having witnesses appear in the House is to answer questions asked of them by members. In the very short amount of time that we have to question witnesses, the Chair must consider the needs of members to have some of that time. I must tend toward shortening opening remarks and ensuring that members are given as much time as possible to ask questions. I would therefore ask the witnesses delivering their introductory remarks to stay to five minutes in order to facilitate as much time in the two hours that they appear for members to ask questions.

Do witnesses care to make opening remarks?

Mr. Gillen: Mr. Chair, I would like to thank you, the Hon. Minister Frost, Members of the Legislative Assembly, and all Yukoners for the opportunity to speak on behalf of Yukon's hospitals today. As chair of the Hospital Corporation, I consider it a unique privilege and honour to work with and represent a hardworking and exceptional team that delivers safe and excellent hospital care, 24/7. I have seen first-hand that our hospitals are very complex, sophisticated organizations that are continuously evolving, responding, and moving in order to meet those needs.

Our hospitals are overseen by a board of trustees comprised of representatives from communities across the territory, including Yukon First Nations, medical staff, the public service, and the community at large.

With me today is Jason Bilsky, chief executive officer of the corporation. Our role is to support and oversee Yukon hospitals and their skilled and diverse teams comprised of over 600 employees, including 350 direct care and clinical staff, as well as about 265 support staff. We also have top-notch medical staff and dozens of passionate volunteers.

Yukoners may not know that our organization is established through an act of this Legislature as being independent from government. We are not an arm of government, but we could not and cannot deliver safe and excellent hospital care without the government's ongoing support, policy direction, and partnership. We meet with the minister quarterly to discuss and align on matters related to the hospitals and the health system and work with the department on almost a daily basis on a range of issues.

As an essential service provider, we must collaborate with government and many others across what we call the "continuum of care" in order to achieve a common objective, which is the best possible care for the people of the territory. In addition to delivering on our legislated mandate to provide quality acute hospital care, our staff also provides a wide range of essential health services such as diagnostic, specialist care, cancer care, therapeutics, and patient support services, to name a few.

As Yukon's population grows, it is even more important that the territory's network of caregivers works together to address individual and community needs across our territory.

In closing, it must be remembered that we operate in an environment of unlimited need, but with limited resources. Yukoners know what they expect of their health care and hospital systems. There are considerable challenges ahead for both of us, but we are working within our means to respond.

I want to thank our dedicated staff and volunteers, our physician partners, our donors, community, government, and health system partners for assisting us in providing Yukoners with the best care every time.

Chair: Mr. Bilsky, would you care to make opening remarks?

Mr. Bilsky: No specific opening remarks, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Ms. McLeod: I want to thank the witnesses from the Hospital Corporation for joining us here today and helping us with some questions that we have.

I want to start with MRIs. Can the witness tell us what the process is to get an appointment for both emergency and non-emergency reasons — specifically, what is the process to set up appointments after the doctor submits a request?

Mr. Bilsky: To answer the specific question, the process for setting it up would be a referral from the physician. The referral request would go into our MRI clinic here and then contact back from the clinic to the patient to actually establish a specific time for the MRI test to take place. It is all initiated by the physician's requisition.

Ms. McLeod: So, the process is the same, whether it is an emergency or non-emergency — the only difference would be the time involved, I'm guessing. Can the witness confirm how long, on average, an individual requiring an urgent diagnostic MRI scan might have to wait? What is the longest time frame that an emergency request has taken?

Mr. Bilsky: I appreciate the question about the MRI. Just to give a bit of context, the MRI program itself has been in operation since 2015. In September 2019, we were very proud to say that we had reached 10,000 MRIs — proud to say this

because it has a profound effect on all Yukoners. Those are 10,000 visits that didn't have to go outside the territory and away from supports, away from home, away from work, and possibly maybe putting them into uncomfortable circumstances.

So, having this local MRI program here has really increased the standard of care that we are able to provide here in the Yukon. Every year, we complete a review of the MRI program and its utilization statistics to ensure that its utilization is effective and efficient here within the context of the demographics that we have and the utilization rates that we are seeing.

Maintaining competency is very critical to us — to everybody here — and now that we are over 2,300 MRIs in the territory — originally projected at 1,800 MRIs in the territory — we are close to getting to a tipping point here where we have to probably start extending hours and we have to probably start looking at potentially another MRI technician in the territory versus running the solo model that we do have today. We are not there yet, but we probably will be there within the next few years, and we will continue to monitor that.

Having said that, we do mitigate the wait-lists that we do have, and we do that in several ways. Mostly, it's done through bringing in temporary locum technologists to try to reduce any wait-lists that we do have. As we monitor and see the wait-list starting to increase, we bring in other technologists to help reduce that wait-list. We also bring in technologists in periods of vacancy for the current technician in terms of covering off vacation requests or illnesses or sickness.

To answer the very specific questions about wait times, we actually recently went through a process like that and reduced the non-urgent wait times to 100 days or less — so that's for non-urgent. The urgent requests that go through their triage as very urgent, which I think the member had asked about — our target is seven days, and our actual average is about two days, so they're seen within two days.

Sorry — I don't have the specific answer to how long the very longest urgent request has taken, but I can tell you that, when the triage is urgent, they are, on average, two days or less.

Ms. McLeod: Thank you very much for that answer.

The last time that the witnesses were in, we spoke about the number of MRIs carried out over a day in 2017. It was approximately eight to 10 persons, depending on how many can be fit in on that day.

The witness mentioned at the time that the corporation operates within the national average. I see from the corporation's annual report that the total number of MRI scans has gone up 11 percent since 2017-18. I don't know what that translates into as far as numbers are concerned. How many MRI scans are given in a day currently? Is it still eight to 10? How does the corporation measure among the national average for scans per capita?

Mr. Bilsky: It depends on how we are trying to deal with the load of the request at any given time. A normal day — yes — is probably between eight and 10 scans. It may range higher if necessary.

Having said that, as I just mentioned, if we do decide that we need to work at increased capacity, we will bring in more technologists, or run longer days or potentially more days in a week trying to reduce that. It really depends, and it could end up with more than eight to 10 per day.

Currently, we measure ourselves against — as was mentioned there — how many MRIs per year per 1,000 — per capita per 1,000.

In the most current year, we have increased to 58 per 1,000 population per annum in the territory, which is slightly higher than what you would see across Canada in per capita estimates that we have today. By “slightly higher”, I believe it would be around 50 to 55 in Canada, so we have a slightly higher utilization rate than the rest of Canada, but it has been growing steadily internationally and nationally as far as utilization rates in Canada.

Ms. McLeod: My next question was going to be whether or not you had any plans to increase the services to reduce wait times, but I think you have already answered that for me, so thank you.

I am looking at a graph here — and I have provided the witnesses and the Third Party with it so they know the graph that I’m speaking about — and the document is entitled “Access to Services: 90th percentile summary 2019-20 Q1 Wait times”. I am just going to explain essentially what I see this document saying and ask the witnesses for clarification on some of it so they can walk me through it. This document contains data on wait times for a number of procedures from cardiology all the way up to rheumatology.

Let’s just look at cardiology, for instance. It says that the benchmark is roughly a two-month wait time. It’s difficult to tell, but let’s say that it is two months. It looks like the graph is saying that there were 60 people on the wait-list and that they were waiting at least 16 months. For rheumatology, the benchmark is nine months, yet there are 41 people who have been waiting 40 months for a procedure. I am wondering if the witness can tell me if I am reading these documents correctly, and if so, these numbers and wait times for all these procedures seem somewhat concerning.

I guess let’s start there. Let’s see if I am reading this correctly.

Mr. Bilsky: I appreciate that the member provided the graph just shortly in advance. Just to put the graph in context, the data shown on this graph is specifically only for our visiting specialist clinic here in the territory. The visiting specialist clinic is a clinic that we host — they are rotating clinics that we host here in the territory so that people don’t have to travel Outside. There are a limited number of specialties — only 11 specialties — and obviously, within the health care system, there is a much broader range of specialties available there. These are probably the most highly utilized that we have in the territory. It is not meant to cover off every and all of Yukoners’ needs when it comes to access to specialty services.

Access to specialty services can be delivered in several ways. It actually is a partnership — as far as when it comes to access to specialty services — guided by the Yukon Medical Association organization, the Yukon Hospital Corporation, and

Health and Social Services, and it’s meant to ensure that there is access to these specialty services. It can be delivered in several ways. One way that it can be delivered is through resident specialists, meaning specialists who actually live here, deliver their services here, and are always here.

Currently, that would include specialists such as pediatrics or orthopaedics that we have here. It includes visiting specialists, which you would see on this particular graph, but it also includes medical travel and travel outside the territory to access other specialties, as well as virtual health, or telehealth. There are opportunities to access specialty services in those ways.

What the graph here shows is actually — yes, I believe the member is reading this — but it’s reading one type, one way to access specialty services. It includes the wait time that you would see through the visiting specialist clinic that we have here, as well as the number of people waiting, but that’s not to say that it is the only way that they would receive service. If it was triaged or assessed to be very urgent, there would definitely be the impetus to have that person travel Outside to access those specific specialties.

Having said all that, I also don’t want to understate the fact that we’re very busy; we’re at capacity. We’re definitely bursting at the seams when it comes to our visiting specialists, and our constraint here is basically physical space — to be able to provide in our particular setting that we have within the hospital.

We continue to focus and partner with our government partners — Health and Social Services — to try to provide ways to reduce the wait-lists and provide more access to specialty services. An example of that is, in the past year, ophthalmology cut wait-lists in half and increased the number of cataract surgeries by more than double, and we’re going to continue. We have that tripartite group that I have already mentioned, and we’re working hard to try to figure out how to maintain equitable and fair access to all specialty services.

Ms. McLeod: I have two questions. Is it the hospital’s intention, desire, or goal to bring the time in months that people are waiting down toward the benchmark? If so, understanding that we may never get down to the benchmark, what would the Hospital Corporation require, in terms of resources, to make this happen — aside from space?

Mr. Bilsky: I very much appreciate that question, and the answer to that question is very long and very complex — if you were actually trying to reduce. Again, what I want to say is that we are continuing to work and to create access. It is not necessarily just about reducing these lists; it is about providing access in different forms and different ways. As I already mentioned, that could be resident, that could be visiting, that could be through medical travel and also through other forms of technology that they can access.

As far as continuously trying to reduce, it comes in many, many forms. You know, increase in frequency of visits of visiting specialists, potentially repatriating or creating opportunities for resident specialists to be here, increasing technology, as I said. In certain circumstances where we just cannot sustain critical mass of certain types of specialties, it

will always mean that medical travel is the only way to create access to certain services.

Ms. McLeod: I am going to move on to the topic of chemotherapy. We spoke in 2017 about the recent financial increase of chemotherapy drugs. Can the witness update the House on the cost of chemo drugs as compared to 2017? If there is an increase, can the witness let us know how much was due to an increase in the cost of the drugs and how much is due to an increase in the number of patients?

Mr. Bilsky: Again, just to put chemotherapy in context and cancer care in general in context — cancer treatment in the Yukon has evolved significantly over the past 10 to 15 years. It has evolved from a singular physician compounding and administering drugs — you know, 15 years ago — to the current collaborative care team that consists of four Yukon GPOs with special training in oncology, as well as a significant partnership with the BC Cancer Agency, chemo nurses, dedicated pharmacists here, as well as the cancer care coordinator.

Yes, correct — there is an issue of volume and there is an issue of complexity when it comes to chemo treatment here in the territory. In the last decade, we've seen treatments having better ability to target specific cells and having fewer toxic effects on body organs for better positive outcomes, which is great.

The challenge is that, as people are diagnosed earlier and live longer, it means that treatments are extended and the costs and the volume continue to grow. Again, that's a good thing.

New target therapies and biological medications are becoming increasingly complex. New classes of drugs called agnostic drugs have revolutionized cancer care. These drugs are not cancer-type specific and they may be used in different types of cancer. This is a new type of treatment. It is usually very expensive and it typically costs between \$150,000 and \$200,000 per patient per course of treatment. As I said, essentially, this is a good news story. Early detection improves longevity and longer treatment plans. More lines of therapy are available and more complex and different types of drugs are available at increased costs.

To answer this very specific question, we have seen our drug costs increase — from 2016 to an estimate in 2020, they have nearly doubled, although they have somewhat stabilized in this past year. When I say that they have stabilized from last year in total cost for chemo drugs, our chemo visits though have increased from 2016 from about 827 patient visits to about 910 in the current year — so not a significant amount of patient visits, but the cost per course of treatment has more than doubled.

Ms. McLeod: Thank you for that answer. As the witness has said, when we spoke last in 2017, there was a complement of persons who were dedicated to providing the chemotherapy program, and as the witness has mentioned, there was a nurse and four GP oncologists, a pharmacist, nursing care, and a cancer care coordinator — I guess we could put in there. So, can the witness tell us whether or not, in the last two years, any persons have been added to this program?

Mr. Bilsky: Sorry, Mr. Chair. I didn't actually hear. What was added?

Ms. McLeod: Has there been an increase in staffing in the last two years?

Mr. Bilsky: There has been an increase actually in probably the total dedication of FTEs to this program. It comes in probably a shift of resources in the chemotherapy nurses as well as a dedicated pharmacist. We've dedicated — I believe that we have one chemotherapy nurse who can do dual-purpose chemotherapy as well as a cancer care navigator. That's not necessarily a full new addition to the program; I think that's a partial new addition. Then over the past two, maybe three years, we've dedicated a pharmacist to this program as well.

Ms. McLeod: Has any further consideration or any consideration at all been given to expanding the chemo program into our other two Yukon hospitals? If the Hospital Corporation was prepared to look at that, what would have to be done to make it happen?

Mr. Bilsky: Sorry, Mr. Chair. I didn't quite hear the question.

Ms. McLeod: My question was whether or not the Hospital Corporation has considered or has looked at moving — expanding the chemo program into our two other Yukon hospitals, and if so, what sorts of things would need to happen in order to push those services to rural Yukon?

Mr. Bilsky: Thank you for the question, Mr. Chair. Thanks for repeating it; I appreciate that.

At this point in time, chemotherapy is a very specialized program and it requires some very dedicated and specialized chemotherapy nurses as well as pharmacists to be able to oversee and compound drugs.

At this point in time, there's not a consideration to move that program out into the community hospitals. At this point, to administer it — it would be a complex program to maintain — to have the critical mass to maintain that in the communities.

Ms. McLeod: I'm hoping to have a little bit of a chat about whether or not the Hospital Corporation is looking at being able to deliver radiation treatment at Whitehorse General Hospital — of course, allowing Yukoners to stay here in the territory if they get that kind of treatment.

My question is about whether or not the hospital has looked at this and what might need to happen to make that happen.

Mr. Bilsky: Currently, our understanding is that there are about 40 to 50 patients requiring radiation therapy treatment annually. As with many programs, as I'm sure you can appreciate, which are very specialized, such as radiation, we lack the critical mass to support radiation therapy treatment. Radiation therapy programs are very complex and intense. They require an entire radiation team — probably more complex than chemotherapy cancer treatment, because it includes an oncologist, radiation oncology nurse, medical physicist, and radiation therapist. With the small number of patients in the Yukon — although I fully understand how difficult it is to travel and what kind of an inconvenience — especially with a diagnosis of cancer — how difficult that can be and how great it would be if it was here — it's extremely

difficult to maintain the skill and competency here with the volume of patients that we have.

It would also require the addition — beyond our current CT and MRI, we would have to have specialized CT and MRI units dedicated only to radiation therapy treatment. It's something that we continue to monitor; however, it's not currently a program under consideration by the Yukon Hospital Corporation.

Ms. McLeod: So, the witness mentioned critical mass. What would that number be that would make it much more feasible — understanding that it's going to cost a ton of money. For patient care, what would that number of patients be?

Mr. Bilsky: That's a difficult question to answer. I don't have an answer that would say what that critical mass would be, but I'm fairly certain that it's going to be in the hundreds of patients daily. I mean, these are very, very highly specialized clinics, and there are few of them that you would see, even in more populated cities.

Ms. McLeod: Thank you for that. Does the Hospital Corporation track the cost to send a person out for radiation? I'm wondering if it's costed out in two different ways. Perhaps the hospital tracks and covers the radiation portion of the bill that you're going to get from a southern hospital, and Health and Social Services would cover the medical travel part of it. I just wonder how that financial arrangement works.

Mr. Bilsky: To answer the specific question, the Yukon Hospital Corporation does not track the cost of radiation therapy Outside. As far as administration of the entire cancer treatment, it is obviously a collaborative effort. Our administration component is really about the chemotherapy. Having said that, if there are additional costs for medical travel or reciprocal billing for radiation treatment or any other treatments outside of the territory, that would be tracked, monitored, and delivered through Insured Health — Health and Social Services.

Ms. McLeod: Obviously, we have had some discussions within the territory about the absence of kidney dialysis in the Yukon. Of course, the impacts of the lack of dialysis have a number of implications for the health and well-being of Yukoners living with this acute kidney disease.

Patients requiring hemodialysis, of course, are required to be treated in a facility that is equipped with this equipment as well as specialized staff. Has the Hospital Corporation done any of the preliminary work or research around bringing dialysis treatment to the Yukon? Understanding that there is also that critical mass piece to providing this treatment, do you have an idea of what that number is?

Mr. Bilsky: Again, to put dialysis into context — or renal therapy probably more correctly — there are three types of renal replacement therapy. There is peritoneal dialysis, there is hemodialysis, and there is renal kidney transplant. Obviously, kidney transplant is the last stage of therapy. Peritoneal dialysis and home hemodialysis are currently available in the territory; however, in-centre hemodialysis — and that could be in-hospital or it could be in another clinic outside of the hospital delivered by another agency — is not available in the territory.

To our knowledge today, there is one Yukoner receiving home hemodialysis, and there are nine receiving peritoneal dialysis. Those are different forms of dialysis.

Again, the work that we have done and how we understand it — the BC Provincial Renal Agency guidelines suggest that a threshold of 65 to 75 patients requiring hemodialysis per year would be required in order to support a hemodialysis service in-centre here. It would include needing a resident nephrologist and specialized nursing and equipment, obviously. Again, this is about critical mass.

Initiation of a hemodialysis service in Yukon essentially would be — anything is possible, but it would be a policy decision made by the Yukon government at this point, and I don't believe that the position on that has changed recently.

Ms. McLeod: Is it the corporation that would currently track the number of persons receiving this treatment Outside, or would it be Health and Social Services? If it is the Hospital Corporation, do you know what that number is right now?

Mr. Bilsky: The numbers that I have — and I believe that this would be tracked by Health and Social Services. The current 2019 data that I have is that there are nine patients on peritoneal — I think I mentioned that — one patient on home hemodialysis, and as far as we know, three have relocated to BC in the past year. As of 2019, there are 63 with chronic kidney disease, but they don't necessarily require any type of dialysis or treatment at the moment.

Ms. McLeod: I was going to ask whether or not the Hospital Corporation has had any discussions with the Yukon Hospital Foundation about fundraising on the next big project — as has been done for the MRI and the teaching simulation unit — with regard to bringing dialysis treatment or radiation therapy, but from your previous answers, I am guessing that we don't have the people to support that sort of thing anyway.

Has the Hospital Corporation explored what would be required in terms of staff and equipment for the Watson Lake and Dawson City hospitals to be able to deliver babies?

Mr. Bilsky: At this point, maternity births in each community — the total in the territory — actually are quite steady. I don't know if people know this, but there are approximately 400 to 410 births per year in total in the territory. We are very blessed here — our average length of stay in Whitehorse is what I would consider to be very safe and very steady at 2.5 days.

The challenge that we have with births in communities is that, today, WGH is the only Yukon hospital equipped to do planned deliveries, and that's a risk-management strategy — meaning trying to avoid any adverse events that we may have in birthing.

The feasibility of planned labour and birth in both Watson Lake and Dawson City was considered based on best practice recommendations from the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada and even taking a look at the current practice in NWT. Really, there isn't a sufficient volume of births at each site per year to maintain competency of maternity care for planned births in those communities. We even utilized benchmarks or looked at benchmarks of consults in NWT of 25 births. To maintain two professionals per year would be

required. We continue to monitor the annual births as they trend. Today, there are approximately 15 to 20 births per year coming from each community — less the 20- to 25-percent non-elective C-sections that are included there. I would estimate that we're at less than half the number of births per community required to do planned deliveries in the communities.

Again, when we talk about risk management in each community, there is no surgical backup for any type of adverse event that may occur in either one of the communities.

Ms. McLeod: Obviously, I think everybody is pretty happy to see that cataract surgeries have doubled, actually, over 2018 to reach 520 this year.

My question would have been to ask what this means as far as wait times are concerned, but if I look at this chart, then I would say that the wait time is now about 16 months. You can correct me if I'm way off the mark there.

Anyway, I want to congratulate the Hospital Corporation for making that happen. Of course, I am sure they did it in conjunction with Health and Social Services as far as some funding is concerned.

I just want to ask a question about the visiting specialist clinic and a question about how many specialists currently visit the territory in the course of a year. How many of these specialists travel to either one of our other Yukon hospitals?

Mr. Bilsky: Just to answer this very specific question, the number of specialties that we host are — there are 11 different specialties. As I mentioned before, the range of specialists in health care is much, much vaster and broader than that. It varies as the number of actual specialists — meaning the number of physicians who fill out that 11 complement — I'm going to estimate that it could range anywhere between 30 and 40.

At this point in time, there are no specialist clinics being hosted in the two communities — Dawson or Watson.

Ms. McLeod: Is this something that the Hospital Corporation would be considering — moving some of these specialists Outside to visit the two hospitals, at least, anytime in the near future?

Mr. Bilsky: I appreciate that question. We do continuously monitor the levels of patients who are having to travel to access specialty services. Certainly, if we were to determine that any of these reached a critical mass that would allow us to be able to do that — again, I couldn't tell you today what that critical mass looks like. It may be a combination of everything from cost to ensuring that we look at convenience to do so for patients, but at this point, we don't have anything.

There are some specialized services that we are planning to start to introduce in the communities, one being pre-op appointments — so having access to an anesthetist in advance. We're starting to access those specialties, potentially through telehealth, as well as access to ultrasound in the communities. We will be starting to do some rotating visits in the two communities for ultrasound. We're expecting that this would avoid hundreds of trips for people in the Dawson area and people in the Watson Lake area to have to come into Whitehorse.

Ms. McLeod: That's good news indeed.

With respect to the current O&M costs of the existing secure medical unit, what are the current number of beds in the unit? When we look at a new secure medical unit, has the Hospital Corporation completed a business case, and has it been submitted to government?

Mr. Bilsky: Just again, to put it in context, the mental health services or the secure medical unit that we currently operate — today, Whitehorse General Hospital has a five-bed plus a two-room secure medical unit. Its purpose is to provide a safe environment for acute mental health patients while we assess, stabilize, and provide basic interventions. To clarify even more, we do not have a psychiatric program available for any patients requiring specialized assessments or long-term treatment. Those are transferred out of territory, which generally makes up about four percent of the total admissions coming in.

To extend that explanation a bit further, the secure medical unit assessment that we have currently done at Whitehorse General Hospital — the current secure medical unit does exhibit some deficiencies such as safety concerns related to an ability to appropriately zone patient populations, meaning separating maybe aggressive or violent patients from non-violent patients and other overall deficiencies in the types of appropriate patient and staff spaces. It doesn't necessarily mean that it's unsafe; it means that it can be improved.

To answer the question, yes, assessment and planning has been conducted by hospital staff, physicians, and staff from Health and Social Services and Justice and Corrections were involved.

It has started to create a foundation for a recommendation that has gone forward to government. Right now, that recommendation includes the development of the second-floor shell space above the new emergency department. The development that is proposed is to build out a 12-bed unit, although initially, eight beds are to be operationalized, and four would be roughly shelled in and ready to be quickly stood up when needed.

The improvements that we're seeking here are meant to improve the healing environment, improve recognition and respect for First Nation needs and culture, support safer activities and services that are currently provided off-site, reducing the need for patients to move and reducing risk, and most definitely improving the physical space for safety for patients and staff being able to segregate staff, zoning areas, and things like that.

Obviously, this is a key part of our continued development in advancing forward, and it's also an important key part in our overall bed strategy, as this new secure medical unit would vacate existing space and then that would be converted into additional general inpatient bed space for us.

As I have mentioned, we worked with Health and Social Services on this project already. It is for consideration in front of government right now, but it has not been agreed nor committed to nor approved. We're working to see if we can move forward with this.

Ms. McLeod: When did the Hospital Corporation present this request or the proposal to the government?

Mr. Bilsky: I apologize, Mr. Chair. I didn't hear that question.

Ms. McLeod: My question was about when the proposal went to government for consideration.

Mr. Bilsky: As I've mentioned, informally, we've been working on this over several months with the Department of Health and Social Services. It was presented to the department — I would say in September — for formal consideration at that point in time.

Ms. McLeod: Has the corporation received any indication of when they might expect an answer or a commitment from the government?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the secure medical unit at Whitehorse General Hospital, perhaps I can respond to that, given that project clearly needs to go through a budgetary process and the collaboration that we — working with the Hospital Corporation. So, putting in a bit of context, the secure medical unit and the shell space that was there and built historically by the — I guess it was designed by the previous government when the new emergency units were put in with no consideration really around what that space was to entail — so it hasn't been in discussion since September. We've been having this discussion, I think, since the new emergency units have opened up and that was really to start speaking about: What are we going to do to address some of the bed pressures?

Now, we've taken some initiatives to alleviate some of those pressures — and that was to clearly look at the re-enablement unit — open up some spaces at the hospital — so eliminating some pressures and then clearly looking at the current secure unit that's there right now.

The point that was made earlier — I mean, we're clearly looking at bringing in psychiatric supports. We now have, I believe, three specialists coming on in the next little while. So that has been budgeted for, and that was done in collaboration with the hospital. When we talk about a secure medical unit, that will take some time given that we've seen some pressures, but we also need to work collaboratively together.

I just want to note that it's not just the hospital or Health and Social Services. We have a working group that has taken some internal looks and review at the complexity of that unit but also at the need for a unit like this.

Ms. McLeod: I appreciate the comments from the minister. I think she really just confirmed what Mr. Bilsky had previously told us — that they had been working on this for a number of months or longer and that indeed the project went to government in September.

The question was about when the Hospital Corporation might expect to hear a response from government — and yes, we all know it has to go through a budgetary process, so are we looking at this hitting the budget for — the budget that will be presented for debate in March — I guess that is kind of my question. I'm looking at a little bit of timing. I understand that maybe — I don't know who wants to answer that one.

Mr. Bilsky: Specifically, no, we don't have any firm time on this and I would say that it's a continuous work in progress and it does involve many other parties other than just us and Health and Social Services. It's an integral part of the entire health system, to be sure. With that, I can say that we don't have firm timing of it as far as any response.

Ms. McLeod: Thank you for that. At this point, does the Hospital Corporation have an estimated cost for the new unit?

Mr. Bilsky: As we had planned it — and, again, this is our estimate, and it is a very high-level estimate based on a functional plan and what I would call a conceptual design, so these are not detailed designs. There is work yet to be done with other partners that we have in the system to determine exactly what this might look like, but it is in the range of \$17 million in capital costs and a potential of \$2 million to \$2.5 million in annual operating costs to move forward with what we have conceptualized at this point in time — but, again, no commitment to do so. It would take a significant amount of detailed planning to actually refine those numbers.

Ms. McLeod: Excellent.

In the government's five-year capital concept, there is money for operating room expansion. My question would be whether or not the Hospital Corporation has completed a business case, has it been submitted to government, and/or has it been approved?

Mr. Bilsky: I am sorry, Mr. Chair. I think the question was about operating room expansion.

Just one moment, please, if you don't mind, Mr. Chair.

I am probably going to break this down into two components. There has been some long-term planning, and when I say "long-term", we are looking out 25 years as to what surgical services might look like in the territory. That long-term planning has come up with some priorities and definitely some concepts of what surgical services might look like, predicated both on demographics as well as on any type of expansion of services that we might have in the territory.

Having said that, it is very long-term planning that we might have, and I don't think that this is what is being considered in what the member is asking.

So, to break that down, we have actually proceeded with some — what I would call shorter term or medium-term operating hub or surgical service improvements. The improvement of the existing surgical services area in Whitehorse General Hospital was identified as a priority in a needs assessment in 2016-17. Because of the Whitehorse General expansion project overall, it provided resources to support a basic level of renovation to vacate spaces, such as the former emergency department, which were adjacent to the surgical services area. This has helped to address some immediate needs that we had and provided improved spaces to better support existing operating rooms and related supported services.

What it did for us was — first, it allowed us to increase the capacity of our surgical services in the department. This was essentially done by creating a third operating room. It's smaller in size and it doesn't have the full capability, but what it allowed us to do was decant some scoping procedures out of

the main ORs into this smaller room, and it increased our overall capacity. Also, what it allowed us to do was to improve patient flow by developing more appropriate waiting spaces. It also increased storage space for the supply of equipment. It also increased our central sterile reprocessing areas. This is where things move from being dirty to being processed, sterile, and clean again. It also allowed us to have a dedicated post-anesthetic recovery area and dedicated resources.

As far as we're concerned, these improvements were necessary. They allow us to go through the process of the full assessment of long-term planning for surgical services in the future, and they allow us several years to allow that planning process to continue as we look forward 20 and 25 years.

Mr. Gillen: Mr. Chair, I would like to make a comment on that topic, if I may. Almost every area of Whitehorse General Hospital is directly impacted by the operating room situations, because increased surgeries may mean more pressure on nursing, pressure on support services, bed availability, equipment, supplies, as well as our ability to provide post-operative recovery and the necessary occupational and physiotherapy services for the patients.

We have already started to grow one element of our surgical services, and that's orthopaedic surgery. As you may know, we now have two orthopaedic surgeons in Whitehorse. The most recent one was a Yukoner born and bred in Whitehorse who is now working in our hospital. Forty years ago when our population was around 17,000, we had two ORs. Now our population is close to 40,000, and we still have the same two ORs, so something needs to happen along there.

As I said, we have started to grow. Orthopaedic surgery — knees and other joints — is one area that we have expanded and continue to expand.

Last year, we performed over 475 orthopaedic surgeries, a 25-percent increase over the previous year. What is more — we were able to keep over 100 Yukoners for treatment in Whitehorse rather than them having to go Outside.

OR staff is — we are starting to get pressures. We are starting to get large pressures, and we have to figure out a way to better serve the surgical needs.

Ms. McLeod: Would it be fair to say, then, that a new operating room in its entirety, I guess — I think the word I'm looking for is "expansion". So, is a new operating room to accommodate this growing population on the radar in the shorter term rather than a 20-year window?

Mr. Bilsky: If I understand the question correctly — and I'm probably going to repeat myself here — we have conducted long-term planning related to the future long-term needs of surgical services. By that, I mean that we are looking forward 20 years to what the long-term needs are. That means that, as we move forward to meeting those long-term needs, we would end up with a large and complex project that would probably take five to seven years to basically gestate — to come to fruition — to meet the needs over the next — my estimate of 20 years. It requires comprehensive stakeholder involvement to ensure that it appropriately meets the needs of Yukoners and care providers and the funders' requirements.

As I said, we have completed what we think is a needs assessment. It's a very high-level, functional service program with engagement internally of surgeons and other physicians, surgical nursing, and support staff. Having said that, as I mentioned, this would be a very large and long-term plan that would take many years to get to detailed work on.

Ms. McLeod: I thank the witness for that clarification.

Moving on a bit, we have been hearing from some folks about the hospital chapel. Apparently, this has always been located in the atrium across from the old emergency room and has been relocated to a room upstairs. Folks tell us that it is not a dedicated room and that it's not really appropriate for use as a chapel because it's a storage room.

So, the question is whether or not the chapel will be re-established either in its previous location or in a newer location — but established as a chapel nonetheless.

Mr. Bilsky: As I think the chair has mentioned — and I may have mentioned already — space is at an extreme premium within the hospital, and that means using every square foot that we have as best we can in an optimized way.

There was a dedicated chapel on the main floor. Through our assessment, the number of hours that it was currently being utilized required that we had to find additional other uses — or at least multi-purpose some of that space. So, on a short-term basis on an interim basis, yes, the chapel has been moved to a different room. It's not actually a storage space. It was another multi-purpose meeting room, and it does have other uses. It is not yet determined exactly where the chapel space will land permanently. I can't tell you whether it will be a permanently dedicated space, but I think it would be prudent for us as an organization to use all of the resources that we have to their fullest advantage. I think the chapel space will be an appropriate space as a chapel, but it may not be a dedicated space in the end.

Ms. McLeod: Thank you for that clarification.

I just want to have a chat about some bed pressures. In 2017 when we spoke about this, there was considerable concern in the community around the issue of bed pressures. It was obviously hoped that the opening of Whistle Bend Place would reduce that bed pressure at the hospital. I would like the witness to tell us if that has been successful in reducing that bed pressure. How often is the hospital at capacity? How does that compare to the pressures that we were having in 2017?

Mr. Bilsky: I appreciate the question. Yes, definitely, there is no doubt that our system is continuously pressurized — not just the hospital, but all facets, I think, of the health care system.

To that end, on a daily basis, our hospital staff — and I applaud our hospital staff and our partners Outside in continuing care and home care for the hard work they do, because it is a daily effort to work together to aggressively manage hospital utilization. I think we all agree that our intent here is about ensuring that patients and clients receive the right care in the right setting all the time. That is a constant patient flow management issue that they are dealing with.

There are times when the hospital is overcapacity. It's most important for us here at Yukon Hospital that we maintain the

ability to provide acute care and ensure that patients are, as I said, in the right place at the right time and transition through settings that are most appropriate for their care. To answer the very specific question, our average occupancy, most recently — by most recently, I mean in the past eight months — has been between 90- and 100-percent occupancy. This compares to the prior calendar year and probably even the past three years where we were seeing an average of between 100 and 110 percent — somewhere in that neighbourhood.

That really meant, over the past several years, that probably more than one-half of the days, we were at over 100-percent occupancy, with no bed available. Today, we're probably down to less than maybe a third or less of being 100-percent full, which is a significant improvement, and we continue to try to improve that.

To put it in context, hospital-full challenges in the Yukon mirror those that you will see all across the country, and it will require continuous effort and work to continue to move this forward. We're actively working to monitor and improve the discharge process, utilize all hospital beds in our system, and improve the health system capacity and support for patient care in the right place with our government partners overall.

Ms. McLeod: I thank the witness for that update. I am running a little bit out of time, because I will have to turn this over to my colleague from Takhini-Kopper King, but I just have a few questions about the finances.

Last year, we know that the hospital didn't get enough money from government to cover costs until after the end of the fiscal year. According to the information we were provided by the Department of Health and Social Services during briefings on this year's budget, the government said that \$2.8 million requested by the Hospital Corporation in period 4 last year wasn't given to the hospital until this new fiscal year — this year.

So, considering that there is no funding for Health and Social Services in the supplementary budget that we are currently debating, we are wondering if that is something that is going to reoccur this year. So, did the hospital ask for any additional funding for the upcoming period 4, and if so, how much?

Mr. Bilsky: I can't speak to the budgeting process of government and I will have to leave that to government to answer that question. But, at this point in time, the Yukon Hospital Corporation has a balanced budget for 2019-20 based on a pending decision that we have outstanding for escalation through our core funding and some additional funding to make up for other anomalies in the funding process, such as an orthopaedic program that we have established and also some changes to out-of-territory and out-of-country patient revenue rates that have been established.

What I can tell you is that, at this point in time, we are essentially considering that the pending decision would flow through — we would be essentially on budget for this year to date and we are projecting to try to maintain that balanced budget through year-end.

Ms. McLeod: It begs the question, of course: How much is the current request before government?

Mr. Bilsky: As I mentioned, we don't necessarily have a current request in front of government when it comes to the budget. We had set a budget early in the year, and we are, right now, looking at making sure that core funding has been established in its entirety. We look at core funding and other funding which makes up — about 83 percent of our total funding comes from government. I believe that it is over \$72 million as far as total core funding.

Ms. McLeod: Obviously, that leaves me with a bunch of questions, but I don't think that I am going to get my answers here today.

I want to thank the witnesses for their time today. I must tell you — and I hope you pass this on to your staff — that people who I talk to are absolutely happy with the services that they are receiving from the Hospital Corporation, so thank you for that. With that, I am going to turn this over to my colleague.

Ms. White: I thank my colleague, the Member for Watson Lake, for that.

Our office contacted the Hospital Corporation ahead of time in the hope of giving some advanced warning for some answers. In the recently tabled Hospital Corporation document, it says that there were 32,500 emergency room visits. Mr. Chair — no surprise to you — I have been trying to figure out how much it costs to walk in the doors of the emergency room — not in the doors of the waiting room, but to walk through those doors into the emergency room. What is the cost of a basic walk-in visit to the emergency room? I understand that everything else will be additional; I just want to know what the cost is of a human being getting checked into the emergency room.

Mr. Bilsky: The comments are correct as far as — in 2018-19, we held steady at probably around 32,500 visits that were coming in. We are trending probably over 33,000 visits. There is a steady increase in the number of visits that we are seeing. Both community hospitals do a great job — in Watson Lake and Dawson City — at between 2,500 and 2,800 ED visits.

Having said that though, it's very, very difficult to estimate the cost per visit, because the complexity of every visit varies per visit. Costs for ED visits for all the facilities and the overall operating expenses will vary from case to case as each requires a different time to assess and treat and they have different supports, such as lab and imaging, and different supplies and different equipment that are involved.

We continue to review patient feedback on the number of visits, wait times and acuity as several of the primary means of evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of the emergency department. That is our primary concern: access to care and making sure that the effectiveness and efficiency meets the needs of Yukoners. It is not that we are not conscious of cost; it's that we don't look at cost per case because it varies so much.

Ms. White: The reason I'm asking is that there is a report that has come out of the Hospital Corporation that says that 60 percent of emergency room visits are not emergencies. So, I'm looking for a base.

I understand that everything will be added on top of it, but there must be a number. There must be some kind calculation

that one can say that someone entering the emergency room — without imaging, without anything; just being taken into a room waiting to see either a nurse or a doctor — there must be a base cost. What I'm asking for is: Is there an estimated number — before we add any additional services — of a human being sitting down in one of the emergency room rooms?

Mr. Bilsky: I think, as I've already mentioned, we don't cost — we don't have a per-case cost flowing through the emergency department, but to maybe address some of the comments about acuity flowing through and what's being said there, I would probably estimate — not dissimilar to what's being said there — that there is estimated to be probably 40 to 50 percent lower acuity versus high acuity moving through the ED at any given time.

Having said that, that doesn't mean that these are inappropriate visits to the ED. What that really means is that's an indication of how patients would be triaged and possibly how long they might wait and what services that they're being provided within the ED — meaning lower acuity are going to wait longer and higher acuity are going to take priority as they move through the emergency department. Yes, some of this is predicated on the fact of what's available in communities as far as alternate services.

Our true estimate of what I would expect and what we see as visits that should alternatively be seen somewhere else other than an emergency department is somewhere between five and 10 percent. Examples of those would be typical prescription refills or maybe possibly IV treatment that could be provided somewhere else.

Again, I understand the request to have some sort of baseline estimate, but our concern is primarily about ensuring that we have acute care access for, I would say, the 90 percent of people who present — the 90 to 95 percent of people who present and ensuring that they're triaged appropriately and that they are receiving the care that they deserve.

Ms. White: It wasn't a challenge to the service or to the level of care being offered at the hospital. It's merely referencing reports that have come out of the Hospital Corporation. I guess I'm curious as to how the information then gets shared with the Canadian Institute for Health Information — a national organization that collects information and then puts it into easily digestible packages to understand.

I'm just trying to figure out — we know the transfer monies. It is also in the same report that I referenced. There is a table, and it has the — I'm just looking for the table now. I think it was 84 percent of the money that runs the Hospital Corporation is transferred from the government. In the documents that I referenced about the 60 percent of visits that were not emergency — that is a report that I could also find to bring in.

I'm just trying to figure out, if that's the case — we know that there's a doctor shortage. We know that we don't have nurse practitioners working in clinics in town. We know that there's one in Mayo, which is fantastic. The official mentioned being able to get IV treatment elsewhere, but we know, for example — recently, there was a senior who was kept in

hospital to get IV treatment, because they couldn't access it in Whistle Bend, which is a continuing care facility.

So, I'm just trying to figure out how these all work. I'm going to continue asking how much an emergency room visit costs, and I'll leave it for today — but I did call ahead of time, so it shouldn't have been a surprise that I was going to ask for a number.

Last year, when the witnesses were here, there was a hope — a great hope, actually — that, with the opening of the Whistle Bend continuing care facility, we would have a lot more available bed space than we have. The witness just said that we're between 90 and 100 percent capacity. I would just like to know what the trend is. How come our bed pressures are still so high? Because really, what we had been told often is that it was that there were seniors who were just waiting for a continuing care facility, and then that transfer was going to happen, and it should be easier.

I just wanted to know if we could talk a bit about the current bed pressures, what we saw when Whistle Bend continuing care facility opened, and if there is any end in sight to the pressures that we're currently facing.

Mr. Bilsky: I thank the member for the question. Factors such as the opening of Whistle Bend — and in particular, I think you're probably talking more about alternative care level patients or patients who do not require acute care — meaning not in hospital — are only one component of occupancy or utilization of the system.

Factors such as the opening of the Whistle Bend respite and re-enablement program — which was initiated by government — the unit at the Thomson Centre, and the daily process for transition and patient flow and planning, including continuing care and home care, have all had a positive effect, I would say, on the ALC burden in particular that we have seen at YHC.

As a result, the ALC pressures at YHC have improved to approximately 10 percent in the first six months of this calendar year, meaning that about 10 percent of our total bed days are ALC patients. That is in contrast to several days previous to this and previous to an aggressive effort with, for example, the home first program, respite and re-enablement, and Whistle Bend itself where we were seeing days that were more like 25, 30, and 35 percent of our beds being utilized. Even more importantly to us, these patients — clients — are in environments where their care is — and I don't mean that the hospital provides bad care — it is more appropriate for what they are doing and it is better care for them. They are not exposed to risk in a hospital. They are not in a situation where they are decompensating because they are not receiving the type of socialization or program that they should receive somewhere else.

We have also seen a significant decrease in the number of days or the average length of stay that any particular ALC is in hospital for — less than 30 days on average versus before when it was significantly higher than that — which is an important thing for us to keep in mind, because as people spend time in hospital, it is much more difficult for them to move out of our institution. So, we will continue to focus on decreasing the

number of ALC patients in hospital. It's important to us. The high percentage of ALC patients pressurize the acute care system and it makes it challenging for us to ensure that acute care is available for everybody. It is, without doubt, that ALC patients who no longer require hospital care — it is both expensive for them to be in hospital and it exposes them to risk — as I said, functional decline and increased risk of an adverse event.

Thankfully, we continue to work with Health and Social Services on this — and patient flow has been relatively efficient and effective — and in trying to move this forward. It can always be improved, that is for sure.

As I think I have already mentioned, though, this occupancy and system utilization isn't just a factor of ALC; it is also a factor of acuity in the system — meaning the presentation of acuity and how many people have to be hospitalized. We can't avoid that fact — with the demographics, with the population, as we continue to age, as the demographics continue to require more and more acute care in our system. So, that will continue to creep, and it has continued to creep.

As I think I mentioned earlier, we have improved from continuously being over 100 percent to being, on average, around 90 percent or so. As an example, today was 89 percent occupancy. It can fluctuate within a day, but it's certainly better to have that extra 10 to 15 percent that we did not have before — and that had an impact on things such as people staying in the emergency department for longer when they should be admitted to a bed or to deferring surgeries. Both of those statistics that we maintain have declined significantly from several years ago.

Ms. White: How many days — I have the report that goes to March 31, 2018 — has the hospital been fully at capacity? I am not sure if we call them “stays” or “days”, but how many times have people had to stay in the emergency room as opposed to being moved out?

Just as a clarification, Mr. Chair — I am sure that you know this — the ALC is an alternate level of care. As a non-medical person, I just had to look that up because I wasn't sure what the ALC abbreviation meant, but “alternate level of care” is what that means.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Just for reference, I think that the question is a fair question, but I just want to make a note that we are working through Health and Social Services with the hospital very closely to address some of the bed pressures. We have worked quite closely with our continuing care facilities ensuring that the clients who are there and who really shouldn't be at the hospital are appropriately placed in our continuing care facilities.

Not so many months ago, we opened the 10-bed re-enablement unit at the Thomson Centre, and that provided significant relief for the hospital as well. So, we are working together on trying to alleviate the pressures. I just wanted to make that note because, as we look at the aging-in-place plan, rather than having clients referred to long-term care at the hospital after post-operative surgeries, they would enter the re-enablement unit. We work with the Yukon Housing

Corporation and the staff for the home care programs. There is lots of collaboration happening around addressing continued pressures.

Chair: Did you have something to add, Mr. Bilsky?

Mr. Bilsky: I think that I would have to ask for a repeat of the question to make sure that I address it properly.

Ms. White: My very specific question for the Hospital Corporation was: How many days was it over capacity? How many stays have been in the emergency room? I am not sure if you calculate it by number of nights — because it could be more than 365. I am just trying to figure out where we are with those numbers.

Mr. Bilsky: To answer the first part of that question as far as being over capacity, I think that I had mentioned earlier that, prior to this year — so I would say back into 2018 and prior for several years — for more than one half of our days — so over 50 percent of our total days — we were at 100-percent full or greater. Hopefully, that will answer the first part of the question.

The second part of the question about the number of days being spent in ED — what we actually track is the number of patients who have to actually overnight in ED when they should be admitted or have access to a bed. That has also declined — probably in that same period of time — to probably about half of what it used to be. So, we're less than two — about 1.8 or 1.9, on average patients are having to stay in ED overnight and sometimes zero, sometimes a little bit more than that, but on average it's about 1.9 patients who are waiting because we don't have a bed to admit them to. They are still receiving care. They are in the emergency department, but they are not admitted directly into an inpatient bed because it is not available.

Ms. White: I appreciate that we're talking about previously — 2018 and ahead of time when it was easily 30-percent overcapacity on a regular basis. I was asking for current numbers.

Mr. Bilsky: I apologize if I wasn't clear, but those were current numbers. As of today, on average, we're seeing about 1.9 patients per day who are being held in the ED and waiting for a bed. As of currently, today, about 30 percent of days reach, at some point in time in the day, 100-percent capacity.

Ms. White: I thank you for the clarification.

You mentioned before that there are five beds in the secure medical unit, and there are two rooms. It's my understanding that the secured unit — and I think the witness mentioned a bit that the two rooms are used in case there is escalating behaviour and someone needs to be in a more secure space. I have heard concerns that those two rooms at different times have actually not been empty when there have been five people in the secured wing, and I just wanted to know what that number is — whether we look at the year for 365 or where we are currently with that number today.

Mr. Bilsky: I'm sorry. I don't have the information about the occupancy of those two particular secure rooms and when they're not available.

Ms. White: I just highlight it as a concern — just having had conversations with folks.

Last year when the witness was here, we talked about the clinical simulation centre. A big congratulations to the Hospital Corporation for opening something that's super complicated. I don't really understand it, but I know it's very exciting.

This is the ability to have real-life simulations on very unattractive manikins, but they can show really complicated health issues. It's controlled by a technician — that is my understanding — from outside of the room. I just wanted to know how that was going, what kind of training days we're seeing in there, what our hopeful capacity is, and what that looks like so far.

Mr. Gillen: The questioner is correct. Several months ago, we opened a state-of-the-art training facility at Whitehorse General Hospital. The funds for that were raised over a two-year period by the Yukon Hospital Foundation. Approximately \$1 million was raised for that.

It will expand the skills and capacity of staff physicians and other health centre providers who work in and with our hospitals, such as paramedics, home care, continuing care, community nurses, et cetera.

The centre is outfitted with equipment and patient-like manikins that are computer-controlled and allow our health team to work as a team by practising and preparing for real-life scenarios that can happen at different stages. These manikins talk, make noises, make rude noises, scream, yell — all this stuff.

We have also been able to place two of these training manikins in each of the community hospitals so that staff there can refresh and update skills as needed. To date, we have run a number of simulations, including caring for trauma patients in the OR, extremely ill pediatric patients, and a patient requiring care after an overdose. In December, we'll be hosting a special two-day anesthesia simulation for our physicians and nurses.

I mentioned pediatric patients. In the centre in Whitehorse, we have MamaSim, who is pregnant, father sim, baby sim, and teenager sim, so we can do all stages of life. We can have a doctor practising to do an appendectomy and somebody pushes a button, something goes wrong, and the doctor has to be quick on his feet and solve that problem. It gives the doctors and our nurses a great opportunity to practice in advance to keep their skills up.

It's not just for hospital staff. As I said, community nurses, paramedics, and continuing care people are all able to benefit from this. I was reading last week that these simulation clinics are very common in Europe. In fact, the four major teaching hospitals in Ireland have centres in each of them, and they train their undergraduate doctors on these things. They actually have a thing called SimWars where there are actual competitions with trophies between medical teams to determine who can manage best to control the issues that the manikins are presenting.

We are very proud of our Clinical Simulation Centre. When it was first proposed, I wasn't a great supporter of it. I am now totally sold and committed to it. I think it will stop our nurses and our people having to sit and read books or go Outside for training. They can get real and practical training on the job in Whitehorse.

Ms. White: For a minute there, I veered off thinking about how terrifying it would be to see these simulation manikins — the photo on the Yukon hospital website is enough to cool my blood — thinking of them having crises at the same time.

Mr. Gillen: If you would like a tour, we can arrange that.

Ms. White: I am totally going to get a tour.

One of the questions that I have is — we just talked about how other community partners could also have the opportunity for training there. I just want to know how the Hospital Corporation plans to extend simulation services to community partners, understanding that there is a limited amount of space.

Mr. Bilsky: That is an excellent question. We have always planned, from the beginning, with the intent of certain principles — that what we want to do has to be multi-agency or inter-agency dependent. We know that the health system isn't just the hospital. There are so many people who are involved, as my chair has mentioned — EMS or mine rescue or other agencies are examples. It is essentially one integrated system, so one of the principles has been about it being inter-agency and also multidisciplinary, meaning multiple professions involved. Portability is another one of the principles that we wanted to ensure is upheld through this.

We have established the sim-based learning program. I would say that it is currently in its infancy stages. It is a program that we want to have a long-term plan for, meaning: How do we engage further with partners? How do we make this more portable? How do we extend it out to communities, if possible? Some of that has yet to be determined. We have just gone through a planning process internally to take a look at how we might continue to evolve that over the next couple of years. That may include evolving the space that is being used. We don't know that for sure right now, but we do know that we have begun this, and it's going to be an integral part of our education, training, and how we will keep skills and competencies for all of our professionals and supports — the partners that we do have.

Ms. White: I guess, when trying to understand how all this works out, my understanding is that — well, I guess I should ask the question. Do we have visiting radiologists who come to the territory? If they do, how often do they come, and how long are they here for?

Mr. Bilsky: Yes, there are visiting radiologists who come to the territory when necessary and they are specifically to attend to procedures that require a radiologist involved with a diagnostic medical imaging procedure that is necessary. Having said that, we also use an Outside agency that reads images and interprets tests Outside — so there is a vast amount of that which happens. Specifically, and I am sure that it varies — as much as the radiologist is here — they are usually here for a week to two weeks, intermittently, at a time, but we do not have a resident radiologist in the territory.

Ms. White: Is the sim room able to be used when there is a radiologist in town?

Mr. Bilsky: I think I understand the line of questioning a little bit better now. There is a piece of the sim room, which is actually the smaller — it is about the size of a large bathroom,

I would say — that is used for observation of the main sim room, and that is a shared space between medical imaging and the simulation area. At this point in time, it is a shared space, so it means coordination of scheduling for when potentially it is being used by medical imaging or potentially when it is being used for the simulation efforts.

Ms. White: So, does that mean that those two things can't happen at the same time?

Mr. Bilsky: It does essentially mean, Mr. Chair, that those two things cannot happen at the same time, but neither of them are 24/7 instances — meaning that the simulation centre is not running 24/7 and neither is the use of that by medical imaging, so it is a scheduling issue. I think that I have already gone to great lengths about how space is always at a premium within the hospital, and here is another example of how we are trying to make best use of the space that we do have and optimize that.

How it moves forward in the future is yet to be determined, and we will continue to monitor. If it gets to a point where either is untenable, we will have to continue to re-address that and to deal with it.

Ms. White: I thank the witness for the answer.

We had WCB appear earlier this week and one of things we had asked about was whether or not the referral system had increased from the WCB side for the MRI usage, and they said that it had.

I was wondering if the Hospital Corporation could give us an idea of what those numbers were in the calendar year. I know we talked about how, looking into the future, we may need to look at a second technician. If they could also let us know how often the MRI is running — so whether it's 9:00 to 5:00, Monday through Friday — or what that kind of scheduling looks like.

Mr. Bilsky: Sorry, I missed the very last piece of the question, as I was looking for some information.

Ms. White: Scheduling of MRI.

Mr. Bilsky: Yeah, I mean, the Yukon Hospital Corporation continues to work with WCB to maximize the use of local services for WCB clients where possible. It was a concerted effort that we made probably more than a year ago. Today, I am pleased to say that most WCB scans that are required are performed in-territory. There still may be instances where WCB patients are required to have those scans outside of the territory, but it's usually because they're in conjunction with other specialized services that they need outside the territory, not just a specific scan or other service that can't be provided here.

Just to give you some statistics: in 2018-19, we probably doubled the number that we were performing for WCB patients here to probably 60. We're estimating probably 70 here in the territory this year for WCB patients. Again, they're expedited and triaged accordingly.

As far as we know, we believe that there are probably in the neighbourhood of about 10 that go outside of the territory and again those are for reasons that we can't provide all the services that we need here. Probably, the estimate is 80 percent of all WCB MRIs are now performed in-territory whereas,

before, maybe 40 or 30 percent were being performed in-territory.

Ms. White: Just to get an idea, so Outside, for example, it would be a fee for service — so what's the cost recovery? Is there a fee that is charged to WCB or is there a percentage or how does that work out between the two organizations?

Mr. Bilsky: It is a fee for service that's being charged for WCB. I don't know the exact rate and I'm sure that it varies per the different type of test that is being performed. But I do believe, if I were to estimate here, that it would be between \$1,000 and \$1,500 per test that's being performed. That's my estimate.

Ms. White: That's a great relationship to have then between the two entities in the Yukon.

We know within Yukon government that there are bonus schemes for upper management. I just wanted to know if the hospital does bonuses for year-end and how they're calculated and, for example, what levels of positions would receive those bonuses.

Mr. Bilsky: We do have a system of pay-for-performance within our hospitals that apply to non-unionized, or excluded, employees within the system not uncommon with what you would see with any hospital or any organization that works under pay-for-performance, so there is a base salary that's included which is available to each and every excluded employee. That base salary is based on market rate as well as the pay-for-performance, which is included in that market rate.

To be very specific, pay-for-performance works in a system in which your performance appraisal, your expectations, are set, your performance appraisals are met or not met, and from that perspective, you're going to be allowed a higher or lower pay based on your performance, and that can range anywhere from one to six percent of your base salary depending on performance.

Obviously, somebody who vastly exceeds expectations and outperforms is going to be higher on that scale, and somebody who doesn't perform is going to be much lower on that scale. Again, all within the context — if it's a market-based compensation system that includes a component of base salary as well as pay-for-performance — and also part of that market-based compensation package would include all other benefits such as health and dental and pension and everything like that.

Ms. White: I was wondering if the witnesses could speak to the staffing model that is currently used by the Yukon Hospital Corporation compared to previous staffing models, and then how did strategies evolve since the 2000s? Again, how does Yukon Hospital Corporation hope to review and assess staffing needs and staffing strategies in the upcoming years?

Mr. Bilsky: Just to clarify that question — I am going to assume that we may be talking about nursing staffing models versus all general staffing models?

Ms. White: Correct; I did mean nursing staffing.

Mr. Bilsky: Mr. Chair, if it's okay, I will try to keep this as brief as I can, although I think the answer to this question is quite long.

We continue to review and revise nursing and clinical staff models to optimize the level of care and maximize the scope

and skill mix of various nurses, nursing, and related professions within hospitals. Our goal here is to ensure that we have the right person who is providing the right care and having each and every professional within our organization feeling safe and confidently doing the work at the highest skill possible within their profession.

Our models have been predominantly to use RNs and LPNs. Having said that, through some reassessments, we've really been working toward diversifying the skill mix and, as I said, moving that skill mix to the highest level that they possibly can be within the scope they have, which means that we have added health care aids that have been employed and are being employed in Yukon Hospital Corporation as well as advanced care paramedics who are recently being employed in Watson Lake to help solve some challenges that exist there.

If you would like me to speak specifically about nursing models, it really does differ per unit. The nursing/patient ratios that we try to maintain — the percentage of RNs and LPNs that we have — it can range anywhere from one-on-one nursing care for the sickest patients to probably generally — and that is where you might be looking at one nurse to five patients in more of the general units who are not in intensive care. It really differs. As I said, we continuously review the nursing model.

I might speak just a little bit — if I could, quickly — about where we see nursing going in the future and how that's being shaped possibly nationally and even locally with some of the shortages. In particular, human health care resource constraints are among many pressures that we face within our hospital systems, and we're no different from the rest of Canada in this. One-third of our staff resources are nurses and our operations require many specially trained nurses. There's a national shortage that's currently underway and is increasing as we speak. The Canadian Nurses Association projects that there will be a shortage of over 60,000 nurses in Canada by 2022, which is right around the corner.

As nursing becomes more specialized and standards of care change and models of care change, this shortage will continue to impact us. Aside from general nursing staff, we require specially trained nurses in areas such as the intensive care unit, surgical, OR, pediatrics, et cetera. Despite these challenges, and while these vacancies still exist in YHC, we have been very successful in adding nursing resources and other clinical supports across the organization.

Maybe to address some of the specifics of the question, we have a model currently that is RN-based. It includes over 250 staffing nurses, but as I said, we are looking to really expand that. We have added 12.5 nursing positions over the last year. That includes areas such as permanent surgical recovery nurses, maternity nurses, float-pool nurses, and a clinical nurse educator. As I have already mentioned, we are continuing to add within our skill mix and those examples include increasing the number of LPNs who are currently being engaged, as well as advanced care paramedics. To be more specific on those two, advanced care paramedics have expanded scope and they can be used in emergency settings, such as in Watson Lake and Dawson City, to help relieve nursing shortages that we see there.

An added benefit of LPNs and HCAs is that it creates more opportunities for locally trained skilled health professionals here in the territory — that means people from communities who are educated — I was going to say Yukon College, but maybe now I can say Yukon University — locally here and from the communities, so there is an appetite here for retention, recruitment, and building skills and capabilities.

In short — and I know it's not a very short answer — we are continually reviewing the skill mix and the nursing models that we have in the territory. I am proud to say that we have never had a curtailment of service even though we have had some significant challenges. Those challenges are both in-territory and influenced out-of-territory nationally. We are very proud to say that we have been able to maintain services to date and we continue to forecast that into the future.

Mr. Gillen: We mentioned earlier that the space in Whitehorse General is at a premium. We are constantly challenged to find space to do certain things. We are also constantly challenged about nurses. As Mr. Bilsky mentioned, the pressures with the national shortage coming down the way — we are not immune to that; it is going to hit us. We are trying to be very creative in finding nurses to deal with those situations. We have started working with the Department of Health and Social Services on a joint strategy to attract nurses to the territory. We have written to various hospitals in Alberta where there is a lot of discontent among the nursing confraternity about the possibility of their relief staff coming up to Yukon to work for short periods of time.

We are doing what we can; we are trying very hard to make sure we have enough nurses available. Mr. Bilsky mentioned that we haven't had to curtail services yet. That is true, but you just have to do an Internet search or read the paper, and you would find out that Williams Lake maternity had to close their doors for three or four months. Fort Nelson had to close their maternity wards. I believe it was Chilliwack or Abbotsford that had to close because of a shortage of maternity nurses.

Those places have other hospitals within a couple of hundred kilometres — we don't. It's just that the pressures on our nursing resources are constant and nationwide, and we're not immune to them, but we are trying our best to solve them.

Ms. White: What's the turnover rate for nurses currently?

Mr. Gillen: I'm sorry?

Ms. White: I know that one of the challenges that we speak about with all these things — and I thank both the witnesses for their many examples — but one of the concerns is that in a high-stress, high-pressure situation, people go on sick leave or they change professions. What is the turnover rate for nurses in the territory?

Mr. Bilsky: The turnover rate for nursing over the last two years was approximately 15 percent. To our knowledge, this is about four percent below the national average. But still, we believe this obviously disproportionately has a negative effect on an operation as small as ours in the territory.

Ms. White: The nursing aides — are they permanent staff or are they contract employees?

Mr. Bilsky: Aides — nursing aides?

Ms. White: Sorry, Mr. Chair. I wrote down NA, and I thought that was right. We talked about how there were nurses on the floor and they are being supported by — I thought it was nursing aides — the wrong word, but if they could help me figure out what I'm looking for.

Mr. Bilsky: Sorry, Mr. Chair. I believe — I could be wrong; I'm going to take a stab at this one, but you may be referring to health care attendants or health care aides — HCAs.

At this point, we're introducing HCAs into our organization. We have hired casual aides at this point in time, but the intent is to integrate full-time HCAs into our organization as we move forward, even as casuals; yes, they are employees of our organization.

Ms. White: Thanks for the help with that. How many nurse practitioners are currently employed by the Hospital Corporation?

Mr. Bilsky: Definitely, the answer — I could agree on the short answer. The exact answer is that currently we employ — we don't employ nurse practitioners within our facilities under the Yukon Hospital Corporation. Having said that, definitely, the Minister of Health and Social Services has prioritized the advancement of collaborative care models as a priority. Options do exist for NPs working within YHC facilities as privileged practitioners within the system — that is either working in a primary care clinic or working as an employee of another organization. Current NPs engaged in primary care models may attend patients in hospital and provisions for NPs have been made through the medical staff bylaws that we have within our organization.

Specifically, within hospitals though — as I mentioned, we don't have any current employees, but we could have employees and have had MPs work within our system. It really depends on the requirements of the role that we're looking to fill. As employees in certain positions, nurse practitioner qualifications may be the best to fulfill leadership or project positions with YHC. As I said, we will continue to employ and have employed them in the past depending on the qualifications of the position.

I will continue to seek the inclusion of NPs in our workforce and we will continue to develop care models according with their skills and competencies as they're required.

Ms. White: So, currently none, but there is the possibility — which is a relief.

One of the things that had happened between last year when the witnesses were here to now is that microbiology labs have all been sent south to St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver. I wanted to know how specimens are being picked up from both Dawson City and Watson Lake and how they are being transported to Whitehorse and then shipped Outside.

I also want to add a question there about laundry pressure. It's my understanding that the hospital in Whitehorse no longer uses mattress covers and part of the reason is that there is a lot of pressure on the laundry. So, I would like to know about microbiology and I would like to know about laundry pressures.

Mr. Bilsky: I'll first address microbiology, hopefully in a holistic fashion. Yes, there were changes made that occurred

in October 2018. More than a year has passed now of consolidation of some of the microbiology sampling that has occurred and that consolidation that happened with St. Paul's in Vancouver — a larger and much more sophisticated lab than what we have here. This was to address ongoing and unresolved quality concerns that we had in meeting increasing and evolving standards.

Again — not to digress, but to go back — based on lengthy analysis and consultation, it was determined that we lacked critical mass in sustaining some of the specialized competencies in the Yukon at that time and that we probably could not reach that. What I can say is that, based on several periods of post-implementation reviews, the consolidation of microbiology under St. Paul's Providence Health Care has improved the quality of microbiology services and maintained an acceptable turnaround time with an extremely low sample rejection rate.

To speak specifically about some of the transport mechanisms that are being used — it really depends. We use commercial transport mechanisms with both the community hospitals. It could be by air; it could be by ground. Obviously, air has been a challenge with Watson Lake over periods of time — less so with Dawson City.

One important initiative that we undertook through this whole process was that, through some technology that we were able to use, we were able to stabilize the samples that are being transferred from the community hospitals — which means that when a sample is taken, we can actually institute certain mechanisms and chemistry so that the samples are much more stabilized and they can make it through transport. Then, when it really comes down to the transport time, it may seem like the transport time has increased, but in reality, because the processing time and the reporting time have been decreased, that ensures that the overall turnaround time has either been approved or acceptable in all cases. That is also on top of the fact that the quality and the rejections are less — the quality is improved and the rejection of samples has been less than it was before.

The second part of the question, I believe, was about laundry. I am not aware of laundry pressures that we might have and not being able to service the laundry needs that we do have. We operate an excellent facility and have a fantastic group of employees in our environmental services who have a certain clinical standard that we need to meet. As far as I am aware, we continue to meet that standard both in terms of the quality of the laundry that we have and in terms of the turnaround time or the need for laundry to be able to be in the right place at the right time — again, I think that's through an excellent team who we have working there.

Ms. White: Just really quickly before we say goodbye to the witnesses — it wasn't a criticism of staff; it never is a criticism of staff. I'm sure that they are phenomenal. It was mostly why we stopped using mattress pads.

But, with that, the time is the time. It is the end, so I just want to thank the witnesses for coming in and for, of course, the conversation.

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

Chair: Are there any further questions for the witnesses?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I just wanted to take a moment to acknowledge the two senior executives from the Hospital Corporation — Brian and Jason — and for them coming today and taking the time out to respond to the questions. I appreciate your presence. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I hope that the witnesses join us at the BAH Humbug Festival of Trees cocktail party in the main administration building right after we get out of here.

Chair: The witnesses are now excused.

Witnesses excused

Chair: The time is now 5:30 p.m. The time designated for the appearance of witnesses pursuant to Committee of the Whole Motion No. 3 has now expired. The Chair shall therefore thank Brian Gillen, chair of Yukon Hospital Corporation Board of Trustees, and Jason Bilsky, chief executive officer of the Yukon Hospital Corporation, for appearing as witnesses today.

The Chair shall now rise and report to the House.

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Hutton: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and directed me to report progress.

Also, pursuant to Committee of the Whole Motion No. 3, witnesses appeared before Committee of the Whole today to answer questions related to the Yukon Hospital Corporation.

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.

The time being 5:32 p.m., this House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. on Monday.

The House adjourned at 5:32 p.m.

The following document was filed November 21, 2019:

34-3-25

Changes to Canadian Broadcasting Corporation services and Central Stores and Queen's Printer Agency, letter re (dated November 20, 2019) from Stacey Hassard, Leader of the Official Opposition, to Sandy Silver, Premier (Hassard)



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 28

3rd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Monday, November 25, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
Don Hutton	Mayo-Tatchun

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King
Liz Hanson	Whitehorse Centre

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Dan Cable
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Monday, November 25, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed with the Order Paper.
Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Can we please all welcome several guests who are here today for a tribute: Aja Mason from the Yukon's Status of Women Council; Emily Dory, executive director of Les EssentiElles; Jess Stone and Emily Kozknowsky from the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre; Chris Dixon from Engineers Yukon; Barb McInerney, executive director from the Yukon Women's Transition Home Society; and Ketsia Houde McLennan from the Yukon Women's Transition Home Society.

Applause

Mr. Cathers: I would like to ask members to join me in welcoming to the House Brooke McKenzie and Jenn Bugg, who I believe are here for the Child Development Centre tribute.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors?
Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Child Development Centre 40th anniversary

Hon. Ms. Frost: I rise in the House today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Child Development Centre on a very significant milestone — its 40th anniversary. Since 1979, when it hosted a telethon to raise funds to support its efforts and it operated out of a portable at Selkirk Street Elementary School, the centre has been providing therapeutic services and supporting the developmental needs of Yukon children from birth to kindergarten. The staff is highly qualified and caring, and the board members are there for all the right reasons — to support children and families in achieving their aspirations. Their motto is “Together we can reach the stars.” They have been doing just that for four decades.

The Child Development Centre not only makes miracles happen for the children whom it serves, but it also offers parents support — providing them with a safe place for themselves and their children. The Child Development Centre is a place where children are valued for who they are and their abilities are celebrated. In this space, mentorship is embraced. Children who do not have special needs work and play together with their peers in the classroom. By bringing children together, the

Child Development Centre is creating an environment of acceptance and understanding for all Yukon children and their parents that carried on into the future.

Expansion to rural Yukon communities and regular visits will ensure that children who need their services receive them, no matter where they live. This work will be supported even more by the territory's paediatricians, who will be visiting all Yukon communities on a regular basis.

The Child Development Centre had a very successful 40th celebration on November 23 at the Canada Games Centre. It was a free event with lots of fun activities and delicious cake for the young children and families to enjoy. Friends old and new were on hand to celebrate.

In closing, we are indeed very fortunate to have the Child Development Centre here to support Yukon families and children. Through stories from parents, we know that the services outside Yukon tell us how fortunate we are to have the Child Development Centre and how lucky our children are to have those who support them. We wish them another 40 successful years.

Applause

Ms. Van Bibber: I'm pleased to rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to the Child Development Centre, or CDC, as they celebrate their 40th year.

The number of children and families who have been supported by the CDC since its establishment in 1979 is remarkable. It is amazing to think that the CDC has gone from providing service to 10 children in the early days to over 1,080 last year. Those children who first received services are now likely adults in their early 40s — some with children of their own, which means the CDC could officially be supporting its second generation of Yukoners.

The CDC provides support and therapeutic services for children from birth to kindergarten. As noted in their annual report, the number of children who are referred for services continues to grow. The organization knows that each family is unique, and it works on their strengths and supports them in making informed decisions for their children. From speech language services to cross-cultural awareness, the programs offered are wide-ranging and inclusive. They allow the children to play, discover, and question.

Wait-lists range from one day to eight months. Staff mitigate the impacts of wait-lists by checking in with parents to see how things are going. The centre operates on a school year schedule, opening in late August and closing in late June. Facilitators also travel extensively throughout Yukon. One can check their outreach schedule online to see when they will be in your community.

One unique initiative that I want to mention is “adopt a room”. CDC is always looking for sponsors. This is a commitment of three years and a \$400 annual donation which will provide for toys and equipment for one of their playrooms. Your company's name or your name could be on a playroom for a small annual donation, so perhaps check this out. The 40th birthday party at the Canada Games Centre this past weekend

was a success — face painting, cakes, games, and fun. What child doesn't like birthday parties?

Congratulations to the board of directors of the CDC and to all the incredible staff. As a non-profit organization, I know that the work of fundraising initiatives and new projects are always at the forefront. The work you do is immeasurable and the community thanks you.

I leave you with a quote — no author: “Children are great imitators. So give them something great to imitate.”

Applause

Ms. Hanson: The Yukon New Democratic Party is pleased to join in paying tribute to the 40th anniversary of the Child Development Centre. When you reflect on the amazing array of services that have evolved in Yukon over the past 40 or so years, the Child Development Centre is a good example of what happens when you have a small group of people who — often because they or a loved one face a serious need, one unmet by any government agency or other organization — decide to do something about it.

Forty years ago, a small group of people realized that, for families with children who had complex challenges, medical challenges, and medical needs, there were few resources available to assist with both identifying the issues at play and — equally important — how to provide the range of therapeutic services to provide the best outcomes possible for each child.

The focus on the needs of each child is a vital element of the Child Development Centre's approach because the key to optimal outcomes is early intervention, including their multi-disciplinary approach which can include physiotherapy, speech pathology, occupational therapy, and others — all benefiting the child in both the short and long term.

Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of serving on a CDC board quite a few years ago. It wasn't as small then as it was in 1979, but the full range of services and communities being served had not yet been developed. The centre's services were largely confined to Whitehorse, given the constraints of funding and staff. What was clear then and what has obviously driven the continued evolution of the Child Development Centre is the commitment of all those involved with the CDC to developing consistent, coordinated, and community-based services to children and their families. The number of partners that the CDC now works with is really quite phenomenal.

Mr. Speaker, although the Child Development Centre has grown significantly in 40 years, their values remain the same, with a focus on family, early intervention, culturally safe service, and inclusion. Providing the range of services necessary to assist Yukon children to realize their full potential is resource-intensive. As a not-for-profit society, the Child Development Centre has had to and continues to seek funding from any and all sources.

Forty years on and with the evidence before us of the benefits of early, sustained therapeutic intervention, perhaps it is time for us in this Assembly to look at the funding model for these essential services. If, as the CDC annual report indicates, certain therapeutic services were unable to be provided in a consistent manner or had to be delayed, should the consequence

be that some children will have to wait almost a year before receiving ongoing services with a therapist? Clearly, this is not ideal, given what we have learned over the last 40 years about early intervention.

As we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Child Development Centre, let us also face the fact that, through the efforts of the many professionals and volunteers who have worked to make the Child Development Centre what it is today — an integral part of the lives of so many Yukon children and their families — the reality is that it is 2019, and government does have a serious obligation and a role to play in working with the Child Development Centre to fund the essential services provided by the Child Development Centre to decrease the wait-list for therapy services that cannot and should not be delayed.

In closing, I want to paraphrase a quote from the parents of one child who received services from the Child Development Centre — parents whose involvement with the Child Development Centre was not something that they had in mind when they anticipated the birth of their child, a child born prematurely with a number of serious complications. They said — and I quote: We have been so fortunate to be able to access the remarkable and reputable resources through the CDC. The CDC has connected us with programs designed for children and parents to encourage language development. Our relationship with the CDC is invaluable, and we accredit our child's progress to the services and resources they provide.

The mom said — and I quote: I have often shared that our son is with us today because of love and science, and the CDC therapists who work with him have ample of both. We look forward to the continued work and success of the Child Development Centre.

Applause

In recognition of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I rise to pay tribute today to all people who strive to end gender-based violence. Every year, the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence launches on November 25, which is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and concludes on December 10, Human Rights Day. These 16 days are an opportunity to raise awareness and educate ourselves on the violence that women, girls, and LGBTQ2S+ folk experience everyday.

We are no strangers to violence in the Yukon, Mr. Speaker. Many Yukoners have been intimately involved with the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. We know that there are now 42 confirmed cases of indigenous women who have gone missing or been murdered in the Yukon. We know the impacts on our homes, our families, and our communities.

The Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate has worked closely with colleagues on the Yukon advisory committee during the inquiry to support families and to discuss priorities after the release of the final report. The Yukon advisory committee includes representatives from families,

indigenous women's organizations, and First Nation governments. The women on this committee are leaders and experts in their field. They are supporting their communities in times of crisis, leading conversations around ending violence and advocating publicly about the need for change. The national inquiry was created as a result of the advocacy of these women and many others across the country.

From the report of the national inquiry, Yukoners are becoming more actively aware of the violence happening day to day to indigenous women. We need to continue to provide opportunities for all Yukoners to learn the truth about what has happened and what continues to happen to indigenous women in this country. We commit to working with partners, stakeholders, all levels of government, and in communities to develop a whole-of-Yukon strategy on MMIWG2S+. Together, we can and must change the story for indigenous women and girls. We need to do this work in collaboration with men, women, and non-binary and trans people in the Yukon on the front line who are organizing marches, setting up websites, and holding community events. This year's theme for the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence is about moving from awareness to accountability.

In the Yukon, the campaign will aim to start conversations at the individual and community level about how to apply the calls for justice in Yukon communities. The campaign will also be recognizing the organizations that are champions of this work already: Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre, Les EssentiElles, the Yukon Status of Women Council, Yukon College, Skookum Jim Friendship Centre, Women of Wisdom drummers, the Yukon Human Rights Commission, the Boys and Girls Club of Yukon, Yukon Women's Transition Home Society, and Engineers Yukon. These organizations have been leading the work to support victims for years and to work to end violence.

We must remember that ending gender-based violence is not a women's issue. The role of men in ending violence is critically important. Campaigns such as White Ribbon and the Moosehide campaign call on men to address gender-based violence. I would like to invite all my male colleagues and all Yukon men to take a stand on gender-based violence. Get involved. Support an organization leading this work. I would also like to invite all Yukoners to attend the upcoming events that are part of this year's campaign.

On December 6, community organizations will hold a vigil for the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. here at the Legislative Assembly.

I would like to conclude by raising my hands up to all those who are leading this work — those who are standing up in support of the people who they know who are experiencing gender-based violence and those who are helping to build a future without gender-based violence.

Applause

Ms. McLeod: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign, which calls for the

elimination of all forms of gender-based violence. This year's campaign takes place between November 25 and December 10. This is the reason we wear the White Ribbon today in a pledge of commitment to stand together against gender-based violence and to position ourselves against all forms of discrimination, harassment, and violence. This is an opportunity to raise awareness of gender-based violence at the local, regional, and global levels, as it is a widespread and worldwide problem.

The 16 days of activism serve as a global platform for individuals to share real stories in the effort to inspire change, solidarity, action, and a commitment to act on it. #OurActionsMatter has been the theme for the 16 days of activism since 2017 and calls on all individuals to think about what they would do if they were to witness or be in a situation of gender-based violence.

There are a number of significant dates that fall within the 16 days of activism campaign. It begins on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and ends on World Human Rights Day. In between those two important dates, we acknowledge, among others, World Aids Day and the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women in Canada, which marks the anniversary of the Montréal massacre.

The end to gender-based violence starts with all of us on an individual and local level. As a society, we have seen violence, harassment, and discrimination for generations. When we consider the lives we want for our children and our grandchildren, it only makes sense to start making things right ourselves and, next, to ensure we pass on a healthy set of beliefs and non-discriminatory teachings to our children. They deserve to live in a world free of violence and free of fear.

Applause

Ms. White: I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP caucus in recognition of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign. We honour and amplify the voices of survivors and the grassroots organizations that support them.

This campaign has always been a time to bring to the forefront the disproportionate levels of sexualized violence faced by women and girls as well as our diverse populations, including indigenous peoples, people of colour, LGBTQ2S+ community members, gender-non-binary individuals, those living in northern, rural, and remote communities, people with disabilities, newcomers, children, youth, and seniors.

The roots of gender-based violence continue to be all around us, in sexist jokes that degrade women and the language that we use to other or isolate, in the media messaging that objectifies women, and in the rigid gender norms that we impose on young children. In these tributes, we often talk about the number of women who have been harassed, assaulted, or raped, but we don't seem to talk about how many men harassed, assaulted, or raped women. We talk about the gender-based violence faced by young women but don't talk about the young men whose actions are to blame.

Violence against women doesn't happen in isolation of others; this violence happens at the hands of intimate partners, acquaintances, and strangers. By not addressing both sides of

every story, we absolve men of all responsibility for their actions. After the #MeToo movement, issues of sexism, misogyny, and gender-based violence have been dragged out into the open and are being discussed very publicly. These conversations are incredibly important. Canadians led by the courageous voices of survivors and their families have continually been challenged to reflect on their own actions and determine how they could best support ending gender-based violence.

Mr. Speaker, we've heard about this year's campaign, and it continues to build on the momentum brought forward by the #MeToo movement. Our actions do matter, and it's a call to action that again asks everyone to take real steps to question, call out, and speak up against acts of gender-based violence — to listen to the experience of others, to believe survivors, to speak out against violence, to intervene safely when you see gender-based violence, and to act by volunteering your time to an organization that supports those who have faced gender-based violence.

Mr. Speaker, we all have a role to play in ending gender-based violence.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to hire an educational ASL interpreter to provide interpretive supports to Yukon students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to release the plan for the youth panel on climate change as announced in the throne speech of the 2019 Fall Sitting, including information about:

(1) the age group included in the definition of “youth” for the purpose of a youth panel on climate change;

(2) the budget to be spent on the creation and continuation of the youth panel on climate change;

(3) the criteria for selection on the youth panel on climate change as it concerns proportionate representation of the youth across Yukon;

(4) the application process for the youth panel on climate change, including when Yukon youth can expect a call for application;

(5) the timeline for the creation of the youth panel on climate change; and

(6) the terms of reference on the purpose of the youth panel on climate change, specifying how the goings-on of the Youth Panel on Climate Change will be incorporated into government decision-making.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to release the plan for the group home at 22 Wann Road as mentioned again in the 2019 fall throne speech, including information about:

(1) the process by which those in need of the services offered by Yukon group homes will be selected to reside at 22 Wann Road;

(2) the timeline to a full-time operational plan being in place at the 22 Wann Road group home;

(3) terms of reference on the services to be offered at the 22 Wann Road group home;

(4) the cumulative cost of purchase, renovation, and program development for 22 Wann Road; and

(5) the forecasted costs of 22 Wann Road becoming operational.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Community nursing shortage

Mr. Hassard: We have discussed many times how the Minister of Health and Social Services' lack of leadership has contributed to the nursing shortages in our communities.

On August 29, the minister wrote to the Official Opposition, indicating that four of the nine positions at the community hospitals were vacant, but that the government had undertaken — and I quote: “Aggressive staffing efforts...” and that all nursing shifts would be filled starting in September. Well, today is November 25 — three months since the minister told us that those positions would be filled — and according to the Yukon Hospital Corporation's website, those four positions are still vacant.

Can the minister tell us one action that she has taken since August to end this nursing shortage?

Hon. Ms. Frost: The Hospital Corporation was here just on Thursday in fact and they spoke about the capacity at the hospital — their responsibility, which is separate from that of Health and Social Services. We in fact work in collaboration with them and support them where necessary. The responsibilities for the nursing workforce and recruitment of health care professionals very much speak to the pressures across the north, but also very much speak to the responsibilities of the Hospital Corporation to fill the vacancies.

So, we do our part, and that is to ensure that we look at the challenges. What we have done most recently — in the last couple of years — is to start with the hospital to look at nursing pressures across the north, across the government, with our health care sectors like the hospitals to ensure that we take a collaborative approach when we have recruitment and retention strategies across the country. That means that we look at challenges, but we don't try to solve them alone and in silos.

We work together, and we address the level of continuity of services across the Yukon.

Mr. Hassard: The minister's letter from August 29 about the Watson Lake hospital stated — I quote again: "Aggressive staffing efforts were undertaken and have been successful in filling the vacant shifts for the remainder of August and September." That is from August 29. However, the Official Opposition has obtained internal correspondence from senior Hospital Corporation officials indicating that the minister's statement was not true.

An August 28 e-mail shows that the corporation was still unable to fill shifts at the hospital for the following week. In fact, an e-mail from the afternoon of August 29 — the very same day that the minister sent her letter claiming that all vacant shifts at the Watson Lake hospital had been filled for August and September — shows that they were still trying to fill shifts at the hospital for early September.

So, Mr. Speaker, why did the minister not tell the truth in her August 29 letter?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would say that the government is, within its means, providing the supports necessary to the Hospital Corporation.

Now the Watson Lake hospital, on November 5, utilizes 8.9 full-time employees to fulfill the nursing schedule in order to maintain a full staffing complement. Staffing meets the clinical needs at the hospital. The current state of staffing at the Watson Lake hospital is stable until January 25, 2020, with no immediate need to trigger a contingency plan. That is the relationship with the Hospital Corporation. Nursing schedules are done three months in advance and the Hospital Corporation books necessary agency nurses and makes additional arrangements as necessary to fill the shifts.

Just a few days ago, the Hospital Corporation chief executive officer spoke and indicated that Yukon hospitals use a number of strategies to maintain operations and appropriate staffing levels, including the use of fly-in nurses or agency nurses. They have also looked at utilizing our resources on a limited basis where we see difficulties in specialized areas, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated, the department is working with the Hospital Corporation to ensure that we have consistent recruitment and retention strategies across the government.

Mr. Hassard: Mr. Speaker, this speaks to the lack of credibility and leadership from this minister. An August 30 e-mail — one day after the minister claimed all August and September shifts at the Watson Lake hospital had been filled — shows that the corporation was still scrambling to fill those shifts. A September 6 e-mail suggests the same, yet the minister claimed on August 29 that all shifts at the end of August had been filled for the end of August and September.

The entire correspondence we have received shows the story of hard-working officials at the Hospital Corporation trying to do their best with the resources that the Liberals are giving them. This shouldn't be the way. The minister should be stepping up to give the hospital the resources it needs so that it isn't scrambling at the last minute to fill shifts. The e-mail states that the hospital requires nine full-time nurses to run properly. We know that four are still vacant.

What is the minister's plan to fill these positions?

Hon. Ms. Frost: The Yukon Hospital Corporation hired two advanced care paramedics and we are working on a joint recruitment strategy with the Hospital Corporation and Health and Social Services. The Hospital Corporation, as indicated a few days ago, are booking agency staff. They are providing supports if there are shortfalls.

Recognizing that the process in terms of structure goes out three months to ensure consistency — that's not just at the Watson Lake hospital, Mr. Speaker. We have health care centres as well in these communities.

We collaborate together to ensure efficiency of services. We are not responsible for staffing at the Watson Lake hospital, but we do rely on the information provided by the Hospital Corporation and we will endeavour to support them as much as we possibly can — more so than the previous government; we have given them more resources in the last few years than they have seen historically. We've worked with them; we have a better relationship with them in terms of resolving and finding solutions for specialist care, collaborative care, bringing health and social supports, and ensuring that we provide support for healthy Yukoners in our rural Yukon communities, which we have not seen historically. I'm very proud of that.

Question re: Health care specialist wait times

Ms. McLeod: The Official Opposition has obtained documents showing that the government is significantly missing its own benchmarks for wait times for specialists in our health care system.

The documents show that the government's benchmark for neurology wait times is six months; however, according to the documentation, in the first quarter of this year, there were 435 Yukoners who had been waiting 28 months.

On Thursday, in response to questions about these wait times, the Hospital Corporation said that they were bursting at the seams when it comes to visiting specialists.

Are the Liberals going to provide the Hospital Corporation with more resources to reduce these wait times so that the government can actually hit its own benchmarks?

Hon. Ms. Frost: With respect to benchmarks, I would say that we've exceeded the benchmark; we provided orthopaedic surgeons. We've now provided to Yukoners further supports for paediatricians. We have reduced the wait times at the hospital for orthopaedic surgeries. We've reduced the wait-lists in fact on quite a lot of services and the wait times for specialist services. We've seen significant improvements in cataract assessments, for an example, and surgeries.

We will continue to hit the target. We will exceed that target. I'm very proud of the collaborative work with the Hospital Corporation, the Yukon Medical Association, and Health and Social Services.

Ms. McLeod: The Hospital Corporation confirmed on November 21 that there is an outstanding financial decision to be made by the Liberal government and it's about giving increases to their core funding and to support orthopaedic surgery. They stated that this decision is required in order for

the corporation to have a balanced budget. Meanwhile, we see the hospital unable to meet its benchmarks for wait times.

Looking at cardiology, Mr. Speaker, the benchmark is a wait time of two months. Sixty Yukoners have been waiting for 16 months, which raises the question: Why are the Liberals sitting on this financial decision about the Hospital Corporation's core funding, and how long have they been sitting on that decision?

Hon. Ms. Frost: That is a very interesting question. The budget for the Hospital Corporation — the work that we are doing right now with the Hospital Corporation — I would say that it is still pending. We are continuing to work with the Hospital Corporation to ensure that we meet its demands and its pressures, recognizing that we have all of Health and Social Services and we have specialized services. We have done significant work, and that means that we have reduced wait times for specialist services. Of course, we will work with the Hospital Corporation, and we will continue the good work with them to identify some recent trends that we are seeing there and that they would clearly have an insight on — those are the pressures at the Whitehorse emergency unit and where we are seeing pressures. As well, we are looking at reductions in cataract surgery wait times. We have a target of, by December 2020, a four-month wait time reduced down from what the previous government was seeing — almost two years. We are doing good work and we will continue to do that. We will ensure that the Hospital Corporation has the resources that it needs to meet its target, recognizing that we have to put in some contingencies to ensure that we meet all of the demands and all of the pressures that are put on Health and Social Services.

Ms. McLeod: Officials from the corporation were here only four days ago to tell us that there is a pending decision from government about core funding. In the document that the Official Opposition obtained showing how the hospital is not able to meet its wait-time benchmarks, we see that they are tracking 15 specialities and that they are missing the benchmarks on 14 of them.

Will the minister commit to provide the hospital with the resources necessary to reduce these wait times?

Hon. Mr. Silver: The member opposite is saying that there are some budgetary conversations that are somehow slowing down a process here. That is absolutely not the case, Mr. Speaker. The conversations that we are having now in November are conversations that the previous government would have waited to have in January. We have set our dates for the Legislative Assembly in the fall earlier than normal so that we can make sure that the budgeting process takes in more consideration and more dialogue, whether it be from the departments themselves or from the corporations on which we serve.

The member opposite can say that they have obtained some secretive documents saying otherwise, but basically, Mr. Speaker, what you see here is a government that has decided that the budgetary process is so important that it needs to be done sooner, not later. We've totally revamped the way in which we have done these considerations compared to the way that the Yukon Party used to do it.

Question re: Government of Yukon auxiliary-on-call employees

Ms. Hanson: On October 28, 2019, a motion for the production of papers was put forward to find out how many auxiliary-on-call staff are currently working for the Yukon government. Because of the nature of auxiliary-on-call work, it is important to know how many of the Yukon government's workers are currently working without employee benefits, such as dental care, long-term disability insurance, and a public service pension plan. As of today, almost a full month later, the minister has still not provided the information requested.

Can the Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission tell this House how many auxiliary-on-call staff are currently employed by the Yukon government?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I'm happy to talk about auxiliary-on-call employees this afternoon on the floor of the House. I thank the Member for Whitehorse Centre for her question this afternoon.

Auxiliary-on-call employees are an important and valued segment of our Yukon government workforce. They help us fulfill our public service obligations when departments determine that there isn't operational justification for regular hire. They are called into work as and when required to replace other employees who are sick or on other leave and to provide coverage for peak periods and special projects.

Auxiliary-on-call employees are members of the Yukon Employees' Union, and their terms and conditions of employment are covered in that collective agreement. We jointly monitor or use these employees with the union.

Ms. Hanson: We can appreciate that providing a written answer to questions can sometimes be complicated for this minister. However, it is astounding that this government and the Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission cannot give us a timely answer to the simple question of the number of staff currently working in an auxiliary-on-call capacity. Without solid numbers, we cannot be sure of the number of positions designated as AOC, casual, or term. However, anecdotally, it appears that the Yukon government's reliance on these positions is on the rise, and while some Yukoners may enjoy the flexibility of these positions, most accept them because they have no other choice. Stories of Yukoners being in AOC positions for several years are not uncommon, and that precarious employment makes life difficult.

Does the minister realize that, by relying on auxiliary-on-call, casual, and term employees, his government is contributing to an increasingly precariously employed Yukon workforce?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I did give some context for the auxiliary-on-call employees in my last answer. I will note for the member opposite, the Member for Whitehorse Centre, that since coming to office, we have actually delivered on about 231 legislative returns to this House. I do have the notice for presentation of papers. We are looking at and compiling those numbers, Mr. Speaker. When we have those numbers, we will do as we have done — as this government — and provide a succinct answer to the House.

Ms. Hanson: We look forward to succinct answers. However, in abstract terms, precarious employment means that you fill a permanent job but you are denied permanent employee rights. However, this type of employment has other real-world impacts. Being an AOC, term, or casual employee can make it more difficult to get a mortgage or take out a loan. It means that you don't get the same benefits as your co-workers, who may be doing the same job as you are.

There is one benefit, and that is to the employer — in this case, the Government of Yukon. Staffing positions in this manner is cheaper and provides employer flexibility. However, for a government that says that they respect all public servants, there are an awful lot of precariously employed Yukoners on their payroll.

What steps is this government taking to limit the number of Yukoners who it is putting in precarious work positions, and what are they doing to ensure that AOC, casual, and term position classifications are the last and not the first option when it comes to hiring in the public service?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I will note for the member opposite that staffing within the Yukon government — especially these days — is very tricky, Mr. Speaker. I won't make any excuses, but the fact is that hiring for the Yukon government in these times when we have so many changes in demographics, so many changes in the workforce in terms of a lot of retirees, and a lot of changes in the way we do business — it is complicated. We will use whatever tools we have as best we can to make sure that we have the staff required to run the government and provide the services that the Yukon public deserves and needs.

I have said already that auxiliary-on-call employees are part of that matrix of hiring options. We work with the union. They are unionized employees, and we will continue to work with our public sector unions to make sure that we have the staff we need in the Yukon government to run the services that Yukon citizens depend on.

Question re: Sexualized assault response team

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, in December of 2017, virtually two years ago, this government announced that resources were being put in place to establish a sexualized assault response team, or SART. The stated purpose was to provide coordinated, victim-centred, low-barrier services to victims of sexualized assault. All of this was to happen by the spring of 2018.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the Yukon has one of the highest rates of sexualized violence in the country. We also know that the majority of sexual assaults are not reported. My question is a simple one: Has the sexualized assault response team been established?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: The sexualized assault response team, also known as SART, has key components that are absolutely necessary for a team approach. We have structured that team between the Department of Justice, the Department of Health and Social Services, and the Women's Directorate. While we, too, are concerned about the length of time that it has taken to negotiate the details of the response team, I can indicate that this work is ongoing and has been ongoing since 2017. It was one of the very first items in the mandate letters of

a number of ministers, but also, more importantly, it was one that we brought to the table because we recognized the seriousness of these types of offences — that a cohesive and compassionate response was needed for victims of sexual assault no matter where they enter the process. That is the design of SART and is the work that is continuing to date so that we might be better able to have all aspects of government services police, hospital, medical, and services for victims be coordinated in response to these types of offences.

Ms. White: The commitment was made in December 2017 for the spring of 2018, and here we are, nearing the end of 2019. It's not as if creating a response team is uncharted waters. Models exist and there are many capable organizations and individuals in Yukon and elsewhere that could provide support and insight. The sexualized assault response team was to improve the coordinated services for individuals, providing support to people when and where they needed it. The team would be able to provide support to the individuals even if they did not want to report their assaults to the RCMP.

The news release on this initiative talked about a coordinator who would work to create a victim-centred delivery model. Included would be an after-hours response line offering 24/7 support to victims. SART would enhance the delivery of all services to ensure wraparound support for victims — lots of talk, Mr. Speaker, but nothing to show. The sexualized assault response team does not exist.

One wonders how many Yukoners have gone without the comprehensive support the team was to provide.

Mr. Speaker, what is delaying the establishment of the sexualized assault response team?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I appreciate the question. It's an important one. The development and implementation of the SART team is a high-priority initiative and we're taking the time that's needed to ensure that it will be successful. The implementation of SART involves working with several government departments and external partners. Our goal is to create a gold standard of holistic care — as I've noted earlier — on a reasonable timeline. We agree that it has taken longer than initially anticipated to do so. We are keen to not compromise client or team health and safety as we proceed and build the structure necessary for this service to be successful.

Victims can access services that will assist them whether they are in a time of crisis or even responding to a historic trauma or something that is a problem for them. We can indicate that, during the implementation phase, we have continued to offer core support for victims through Victim Services, through the project links, hospitals and health services, Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services, the RCMP, the Crown witness coordinators, as well as other services and supports within the territory. It is not the case that victims of sexual assaults have been left without services. We are working to achieve the SART team.

Ms. White: It was such an important issue that, in December of 2017, we heard an announcement in here, and here we are in 2019 — still waiting.

Today marks the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign and one of this

year's themes is "Our actions matter." Mr. Speaker, government inaction matters too.

When this announcement was made two years ago, there were quotes in the news release from the Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate, the Minister of Health and Social Services, and the Minister of Justice highlighting the importance of this initiative — wraparound support, a 24/7 crisis line with improved service, and ensuring that victims' needs and choices would come first — important support to victims of sexualized violence, regardless of their gender identity or expression.

Mr. Speaker, the SART team was to start in Whitehorse and then to expand to the communities — big hopes and expectations for something that has yet to materialize. Mr. Speaker, either this is a service that needs to happen or it isn't.

When can the community access this very service that was announced by this government two years ago?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: The engagement with the Council of Yukon First Nations health commission on the SART and development opportunities to collaborate occurred in November 2018 initially and then continued. The sexual assault examination training with physicians and nurse practitioners began in January 2019. The victim support coordinator was hired by the Department of Justice in February 2019. The clinical coordinator for the Department of Health and Social Services was hired in June 2019. There have been many discussions with respect to the operation of the telephone line that has been considered. The implementation committee, including the Yukon Hospital Corporation, the RCMP, and Yukon government officials, meets every two weeks. The work to develop, implement, and go live with the phone line is ongoing. This is a very important initiative. The impression being given by the question, unfortunately, is that no work has been done, and that is simply not true. We need to make sure that this is a structure that will be maintained going forward and will provide the services needed for victims of sexual assault.

Question re: Diesel energy generation costs

Mr. Istchenko: Earlier this Sitting, the minister indicated that this government had rented four diesel generator units in 2017 for backup power. In 2018, they rented six units. In 2019, they are renting nine units. This year, the price tag for the rentals is \$2.2 million. I am hoping that, with the minister having his briefing binder in front of him, I can get a bit more information today.

Is the \$2.2 million the final cost associated with these rentals? What are the additional shipping and O&M costs of those rentals? Also, is the minister able to provide us with the total price tags associated with the 2017 and 2018 rentals of diesel generators?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: There are a number of questions there. It might take supplementary questions 2 and 3 to get through them. Happy, yes — my briefing binder is in front of me. I know that you were excited there to jump up and get that question out finally, so we will go through it.

The recommended response here on these particular items — the government is working with Yukon Energy as its parent — which we have talked about — and with the Yukon Development Corporation to pursue a mix of new energy products. That is straight from the briefing note here for the Member for Kluane.

In the short term, Yukon Energy continues to rent portable diesel generators each winter as its insurance policy to protect Yukoners. I think that is a good thing, Mr. Speaker. Previously, that wasn't done. An N-1 scenario basically means that, if your biggest asset goes down, you may not be able to keep the lights and heat on. We think that is a good cost. We want to look after Yukoners — something that wasn't taken into consideration in the past. Of course, renting these diesel generators is still a significant cost, but it is something that we feel is appropriate.

During the winter of 2017, Yukon Energy rented four two-megawatt portable diesel generators for four months to ensure that the corporation had enough capacity to meet Yukoners' electricity needs under emergency conditions. During the winter of 2018, Yukon Energy rented six two-megawatt portable diesel generators. This year, the corporation is looking to rent — as we did, of course — nine two-megawatt portables. I will go through the costing and the rest of this for questions two and three.

Question re: Whistle Bend school

Mr. Kent: A confidential briefing note to the Minister of Highways and Public Works says that there are risks to the timelines of Whistle Bend elementary school as a result of the Liberals forgetting to consult prior to initially issuing the tender in July.

The section of the briefing note specifically says — and I quote: "Delays to the project timeline due to increased and unexpected consultations activities." A senior official in the department is on record in the e-mail saying — and I quote again: "Year one deadlines were already challenging to begin with, especially considering past experience with the French School where the..." — statement of requirements — "... took long to complete. With this delay, it may be unfeasible to get the..." — statement of requirements — "... completed by March 2020."

Last week, we asked the minister to confirm in this House if the school was still on schedule to meet its timelines for construction to start in June 2021 and he refused to answer, so I will try again.

Is the school on schedule to meet its construction start date of June 2021?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I can confirm for the member opposite that the timelines are still in play, Mr. Speaker. They are still on schedule and we plan to have the school ready for occupancy in the fall of 2023.

Mr. Kent: The confidential briefing note that the Official Opposition has obtained states — and I quote: "The school was originally planned in project meetings to be 250 students in size as per the program area, recently the school size has changed to 425, this will likely have an impact on the project site, cost and timeline."

Last week, we asked the minister to tell us what impact the decision to increase the size of the school by 175 students would have on the project's costs and timelines. He said that we were making assumptions, but this is directly quoting from his own confidential briefing note from the department. Again, the briefing note says that the change to the size of the school — and I quote: "... will likely have an impact on the project site, cost and timeline."

Can the minister tell us what those impacts will be?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am really glad the member opposite has access to a briefing note. The reason why it's confidential, Mr. Speaker, is because the members opposite made it confidential.

That is not the position of this government. We have taken strides in our new *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* to make our briefing notes public and accessible to the public.

So, when those regulations are finished on time next year, we will be able to make these public without having them confidential, Mr. Speaker. But confidential they are — the member opposite has the confidential document — ooh. All right, so here it is, Mr. Speaker: the school is on time and it's on budget. The projected budget for the school is up to \$32 million at this stage. That is the pre-planning budget, as the members opposite know. That will be determined once we get the bids when the project is actually tendered, but we are estimating about \$32 million. The school is for up to 425 students. That is based on Education estimates of enrolment for that area, and the project is on time. So, we anticipate having the school ready for occupancy in the fall of 2023.

Mr. Kent: So, according to this August 6 confidential briefing note, somewhere along the line, a decision was made by government to increase the size of the Whistle Bend elementary school by 175 students. Last week, in response to questions from the media, the Minister of Highways and Public Works said that the decision to increase the size of the school was done as a result of the review of school attendance areas. However, in a letter dated October 7, 2019, to the Official Opposition, the Minister of Education said that the attendance area review was still ongoing.

So, it looks like the Minister of Highways and Public Works shared incorrect information with the media last week, which is becoming a bit of a theme with this Liberal government. So, can the minister tell us what the decision to increase the size of the school by 175 students was based on? Why did he give false information to the media last week?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The school attendance — the school size figures are done in tiers, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite knows that. The school to be built will be for up to 425 students. This school will accommodate, in the tier, between 275 and 425 students. The member opposite fully knows that this is how these things are done.

This is the first elementary school that this government will have built in almost a quarter of a century, and we are very proud of that fact. We have changed the way in which procurement is done to make sure that local companies have every opportunity to bid on this contract. We are getting away

from, you know, some of the errors of the past. We saw schools started, then stopped, and then started again at the cost of \$6 million — \$6 million for the F.H. Collins contract that was just wasted away.

The school project was launched. There were pictures of ministers with shovels long before they had the permits to actually have the shovels in the ground, and \$6 million was wasted. We also had the Teslin Tlingit bridge project — we talked about that last week, Mr. Speaker — where a \$14.5-million bridge upgrade project was supposed to go to tender on April 2, 2014. In that event it was cancelled because they didn't do the proper consultation, and \$6.7 million was lapsed. We're not doing that anymore, Mr. Speaker.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 121

Clerk: Motion No. 121, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Streicker.

Speaker: It is moved by the Minister of Community Services:

THAT, during the 2020 Spring Sitting of the Legislative Assembly, this House shall stand adjourned from its rising on Thursday, March 12, 2020, until 1:00 p.m. on Monday, March 23, 2020, due to the Arctic Winter Games.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I'm very happy to rise today to speak to this motion, and I'm hopeful that there is support across the House. I'll just say a few words about the motion.

First of all, we've had the Arctic Winter Games folk in here a couple times for tributes, but I have just a few comments. We're collaborating with the City of Whitehorse to co-host the 2020 Arctic Winter Games. We know that working in partnership is the key to success of multi-sport and cultural events like the Arctic Winter Games.

If you recall, Mr. Speaker, originally the games were scheduled to be hosted in Iqaluit, Nunavut, but in 2016, Nunavut indicated that they were no longer able to host the games and so we began looking at possibly hosting the games by being in conversation with our sports communities and with the City of Whitehorse. This is the first time for us signing a hosting contract with the City of Whitehorse and the Arctic Winter Games International Committee. We, as a government, are providing a total of \$2 million over three fiscal years to support the implementation of the 2020 games.

The 2020 Arctic Winter Games Host Society was established a couple years ago and has developed into several divisions — 11 divisions, as a matter of fact. It is tasked with creating and delivering the vision of the games.

To date, over 220 planning volunteers are assisting with the preparation. The goal is for 1,800 volunteers who will be needed when the games commence. I said last week, I believe, that we've now hit the 1,100 target. Thank you so much to all Yukoners who have put their names forward.

I'm hoping that all of us here in this Legislature can all be volunteers as well. Just not wanting to have the work of the Legislature go on at the same time as the games — I asked the host society to develop a bunch of opportunities for all MLAs from all sides of this House. They sent me a list of opportunities. I'll just put those on the record for this motion.

First of all, there's orientation sessions for volunteers. We can be volunteering to help orient other volunteers ahead of the games. There's work around setting up of all the accommodations. There's some great work during the games with zero waste — so, at food services and cafeterias to guide patrons on bins and help them to make sure that, working with all participants of the games, we keep the games at zero waste. Working with youth ambassadors coming from the three northern territories, volunteering in the dining hall coat checks, and probably the one that I think everyone here would love to do is Ulu presentations. It's where we get to interact with the athletes and the cultural performers.

After the games, there's lots of work to do too in helping out. I know that some of the members here are involved with sports, and they may be working with a specific sport. I'm happy if there are others here who want to get involved with specific sports to try to work with them.

Overall, I'm hopeful that what we can do is begin the work of our spring session, go out and help out with the games, cheer on all the teams and all the athletes who are coming from across the north, take part in the 50th anniversary year of the Arctic Winter Games, and then come back refreshed to work again.

I look forward to further debate on the motion.

Mr. Kent: The Official Opposition Yukon Party will be supporting this motion that was brought forward by the Minister of Community Services in his capacity as minister responsible for sport here in the territory.

That said, Mr. Speaker, we did send a note to the government about the potential to start a week earlier: rather than going in the first week of March as we normally do, going in that last week of February.

The Premier mentioned today, of course, this new and improved and much better budgeting system that he has in place which, we would assume, would mean that the budget documents would be ready by that last week in February. Unfortunately, the government has not taken us up on our offer, but that is all right. Obviously, that is their decision. It was something that we felt was a reasonable suggestion.

But, that said, we will also, of course — given what has happened in this most recent Spring Sitting and the Spring Sitting before where we have had difficulty getting full and fair consideration of the budget mains, and then we get to the fall supplementary budget and general debate where we are to ask questions on departments that don't have requests in the budget — and then the ministers aren't provided to answer the questions. The Premier does the best that he can, but often the statements that he makes are incorrect, and it is difficult to get information that Yukoners need. So, we will again be requesting a longer Spring Sitting so that we can give those budget mains full and fair consideration. Again, I thank the

minister for bringing this motion forward. We will support it, and when it comes time to request or to set the time for the Spring Sitting, we will again be looking for a longer Spring Sitting.

Ms. Hanson: On behalf of the Yukon New Democratic Party, I thank the Minister for Community Services for bringing this motion forward. The Yukon NDP — like all members and many, many Yukoners — enjoys the opportunities of participating and volunteering in the Arctic Winter Games. As the minister was speaking, I was thinking, "oh my gosh" — back in the day in 1980, a friend of mine was managing the Arctic Winter Games and — being a somewhat younger individual at the time — a significant amount of fun was had volunteering at those games and at subsequent games. Arctic Winter Games as a parent is a whole different experience — as a young adult — and as an older adult through the Canada Winter Games. So, all of us have had experiences, and that will contribute, no doubt, to the success of the Arctic Winter Games in 2020.

I echo to a certain extent the concerns expressed by the Official Opposition. We do want to ensure that we have adequate opportunities and real time for exchange. We have been talking over the last three years about improving the ways — and the Minister of Finance has also committed to improving the ways — that we both debate and cover all matters in the appropriations for expenditure for the fiscal year. If there is an opportunity for us to look at opportunities to extend the hours for debate or the timelines, we welcome that discussion in this House. But as to the subject matter of the motion at hand, we are fully in support of it.

Mr. Gallina: I don't have much to contribute on this, but this is a debate and discussion that I am connected to personally in my past experience prior to being an MLA, and I wanted to say a few things on the Arctic Winter Games and the importance of games like this here in our territory and throughout the north.

I am happy to rise today to speak to this motion. I was happy to learn that Whitehorse would be hosting the 2020 Arctic Winter Games.

Mr. Speaker, as someone who has volunteered and worked to organize several Arctic Winter Games and multi-sport events, the Arctic Winter Games means many things to me. As some members have shared today, they had experiences with these games. I would say that the experiences that I have had with the Arctic Winter Games have prepared me to be the person that I am today and in this role as MLA for Porter Creek Centre.

Mr. Speaker, the Arctic Winter Games are a celebration of sport and culture that brings people together from across the circumpolar north. They are about many lifelong friendships that have been created and forged during the games. They are about community, about coming together to host a once-in-a-lifetime experience for many in the north, whether through competing, volunteering, sponsoring, or working with the event. They are about personal bests — athletes, coaches, and

managers driving toward their goals and accomplishments — about learning, being a leader, and self-discovery. Games are about sharing — cheering on your mates when they need that extra push or a warm hug from a friend who may have had a particularly challenging day or who struggled in a competition. They are about being open to discovering new cultures and traditions and seeing how the north is captured and celebrated in other territories, provinces, states, and even countries. They are about experiences and stepping-stones to greater challenges and experiences that lie ahead.

Simply put, to me, the Arctic Winter Games are about family. They are about family, because what I just described — I could say — are the foundations of what I envision healthy families to be.

Yukon will welcome and host approximately 2,000 athletes, coaches, mission staff, officials, and cultural performers, who will arrive with nine contingents. To host these contingents properly and deliver these games effectively, the Arctic Winter Games Host Society will need upwards of 1,800 volunteers, as mentioned earlier.

As the Minister of Community Services stated, volunteers with the Arctic Winter Games will fill a variety of roles both before and during the games, assisting in areas such as accommodations, food service, box office, spectator services, logistics, and marketing. Tasks can be anything from taking tickets or serving special guests to fitting out venues or construction of bunkbeds and participant accommodations. There are also sport-specific roles including results and major technical officials.

One of the largest contributing factors to volunteer recruitment and retention is major employer leave policies which allow paid time off for employees to volunteer and participate. These policies are currently in place with Yukon government, as well as the City of Whitehorse, the Yukon Hospital Corporation, Yukon College, private sector businesses like Northwestel, and First Nation governments such as the Kwanlin Dün First Nation.

The Yukon government's policy was developed initially for the 2007 Canada Winter Games; it was revised in 2012 during the Arctic Winter Games hosted here in Whitehorse and has remained the same ever since. The Yukon government policy applies to two groups: participants such as athletes, coaches, officials, and members of the cultural contingent; and those involved in planning and organizing when Yukon hosts major games. Employees may be granted leave without loss of pay, in some cases, covering up to three weeks leave to allow them to attend planning meetings as well as requirements during game time.

Both the City of Whitehorse and Northwestel also allow for non-planning — also known as game time — volunteers to be covered under their policies. Northwestel employees may receive approval to volunteer up to four hours per day during the months preceding the games, during the entire period of the games, and the week immediately following.

Mr. Speaker, without these types of policies, the Yukon would be in a very tough spot when it comes to recruiting the required number of volunteers. According to Canada's Sport

Information Resource Centre, of the Arctic Winter Games planning volunteers alone, nearly half of them are covered under major employee leave policies. I'm encouraged by the number of businesses and organizations that have employee leave policies here in effect here in the territory. These policies contribute to the family fabric that I referred to earlier in that so many more people are able to volunteer and create lasting memories.

I would encourage anyone who is considering volunteering for the Arctic Winter Games in Whitehorse to sign up and to secure your spot as soon as possible. As I understand, the volunteer count right now is at 1,100, which leaves 700 more people for the host committee in reaching their target.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I'm supportive of the Legislature taking a break during the Arctic Winter Games here in Whitehorse. The Arctic Winter Games create once-in-a-lifetime memories for youth participating and the community supporting and celebrating. I would encourage anyone who is considering volunteering to register today and to secure their volunteer spot. With the break here in the Legislative Assembly and Yukon government employees being supported in the volunteer roles, I would like to believe that this motion will help the Arctic Winter Games host committee reach their goal of 1,800 volunteers.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on Motion No. 121? If the member now speaks, he will close debate.

Does any other member wish to be heard on Motion No. 121?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all members for their comments. I will try to keep my closing comments very brief. First of all, this is about trying to plan so that everyone has a notion about what is happening. When I thought about how we went with regular starting times for the Legislature in early March and early October, that notion wasn't so much for us as legislators; it was really more for public servants so that they had a good sense of it.

I think as well that, if we do pass this motion today — again, thanks to everyone for their supportive words — it will help the public servants who support the Legislature to know, going on, that there is a break at this time. I hope that, after today, we will have 1,119 volunteers with all of us volunteering, although I suspect that many of the MLAs here will have already put their names forward to help out.

I think that the ongoing process by House Leaders to decide on the length of this session is a fine process. I look forward to that process unfolding.

I think that the focus for today is on how we, as Yukoners, can support the games. One thing — and I think I have mentioned it in the House before, but just in case I haven't — is that the intention is that we will be hosting the federal-provincial-territorial ministers of sport meetings just ahead of the games. The opportunity is for us to share the difference of the Arctic Winter Games with all of those ministers of sport from across the country. There is something quite unique about the Arctic Winter Games with Arctic sports and Dene sports.

The notion of competition is so very different around those types of sports, and there is a real opportunity — and the engagement of culture.

I will do my best to find opportunities to invite all colleagues of this House to receptions around that time as well, which will be just ahead of the games. I thank all members for their support today.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

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

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion No. 121 agreed to

Hon. Ms. McPhee: 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

Deputy Chair (Mr. Adel): The matter now before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 200: *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — continued

Deputy Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

We are resuming general debate.

Hon. Mr. Silver: It seems that we are concluding here in general debate, so I just want to thank everybody across the way for their questions and look forward to getting into Community Services.

Deputy Chair: Is there any further general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*?

Seeing none, we will now proceed to clause 1.

The bill's schedules form part of clause 1. One of the schedules is Schedule A, containing the departmental Votes.

Would members give the appropriate amount of time for the officials to —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Deputy Chair: Do members wish to recess for five minutes?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Recess

Deputy Chair: The matter before the Committee is Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Department of Community Services

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Deputy Chair, I will just give a few introductory remarks. I would just like to welcome the officials here today in support of the questions that we are going to get from the members of the opposition. There are basically three things that have led us to be here today. The first is that we had a large fire season. The costs were much higher than we originally estimated. Every year, this is a challenge around wildland fire. I would like to thank all those folks, both from the department and from our First Nation fire crews, who work to fight those fires and keep all Yukoners safe.

Second of all, we have been going much further and much faster around infrastructure. This is infrastructure that is community-led by going out and talking with municipalities and First Nations and getting their priorities. We have been able to move further and faster on that infrastructure investment.

Finally, approximately \$10 million is going to enhance lot development across the territory.

I look forward to the conversation today and where the questions may lead on Community Services.

Ms. Van Bibber: I too would like to welcome the officials to the House. I am going to start with a few questions on the budget. This government increased the budget for Community Services by \$35 million in increased infrastructure spending.

It looks like there are a lot of projects connected to rough federal spending announcements. We asked the minister to provide a breakdown of project spending, but the breakdown provided only told us the spending increase per fund and didn't provide amounts for each project.

Can the minister provide us with a more detailed breakdown now?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Let me run down through the list, and I am also happy to sit down with the member opposite. Carmacks phase 3 waste-water upgrades, \$5.5 million — sorry. Hold on one second, Mr. Deputy Chair — okay. Thanks — I started reading from the recoveries column, not the total cost column — so apologies.

The other thing I want to say is that, when I give these numbers, more or less, our total will add up more than the dollars that we have allocated for the budget today because we still risk-manage under the envelope approach. I'm happy to get into a conversation about that.

My apologies to Hansard — I will do my best to share with them as well.

Carmacks phase 3 water upgrades, \$1.4 million; York Street lift station, \$3.4 million; Klondike Valley lift stations, about \$1 million; 5th Avenue King sewer upgrades, \$1.3 million; Front and Turner waterline, \$4.4 million; buried infrastructure, \$4.8 million; pumphouse repair, \$6.3 million; infrastructure upgrades, \$4.3 million; lagoon upgrades, \$3.2 million; water treatment plant replacement, just under \$2 million; lift station, \$1.5 million; buried infrastructure, \$5 million; Ross River sewage lagoon, \$2 million; pipe fire hall to water treatment plant in Tagish, \$420,000; Watson Lake wet well and lift stations, \$2.8 million; Watson Lake reservoir, \$2.9 million; Watson Lake lagoon and sludge drying bed, \$2.2 million; Dawson-Moosehide energy project, \$350,000; Mayo reservoir, \$3 million; we have a whole bunch of SCADA projects — it's an acronym for how this infrastructure talks to the operators — at just under \$50,000; Turner Street upgrades, \$2.3 million; Deep Creek water treatment plant bulk fill station, \$60,000; Destruction Bay dredging, \$60,000; and Keno water fill station, \$75,000.

I will keep going down the list, Mr. Deputy Chair: Dawson water and waste-water upgrades, \$850,000; Craig Street tower, about \$1 million; Old Crow lagoon upgrades, \$4.2 million; downtown Whitehorse upgrades, \$8.1 million; Burwash water plant, \$5.3 million; Carmacks arena replacement, between \$15 million and \$16 million; Dawson downtown upgrades at 5th and 3rd and Craig Street, \$10.2 million; Dawson water treatment and pumphouse, \$15.6 million; Haines Junction infrastructure upgrades — these are the in-ground upgrades — \$5.2 million; and Teslin connector road, \$2.4 million.

There are a series of projects across the territory to upgrade our solid-waste sites in the range of \$300,000; working on the Whitehorse aquifer, about \$500,000; downtown Whitehorse reconstruction of 6th Avenue, \$3.8 million; the F.H. Collins track and field, \$7.5 million, or just a little over; the Rock Creek water treatment plant assessment, \$600,000; across the territory, there are balers and compactors for our recycling depots, about \$150,000; across the territory again,

improvements to the solid-waste facilities, around \$2 million; Carmacks water system, \$500,000; Whitehorse compost facility upgrades, \$4.4 million; septic field replacement in Tagish, about \$400,000; Carmacks sewage pit upgrades, around \$200,000; and Teslin green retrofits to public buildings, about \$1.3 million.

There are other projects — for the member opposite — that are not yet tendered. I don't want to talk about those prices yet because they are in the system, but generally that is the breakdown of the numbers that we supplied.

Ms. Van Bibber: If the member could provide us with that list, that would be really great. As you know, this is ultimately public money, and we think that the public has a right to know where the money is being spent and why. If it is more or less and changes are being made per project or money is being moved around, people should know why this is happening as well. The previous governments used to provide a community-by-community breakdown of projects and how much was being spent.

So, now with the new budgeting process, we seem to get lump sum amounts. We really don't know where the money is going.

There is also \$182,000 out of the gas tax line item. We are wondering what those dollars were used for and where these adjustments are shown.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: This year, the federal government doubled the amount of money that it was giving to the gas tax fund. In that fund, we allocate money to each municipality and to each First Nation. It acts sort of like a bank, and it depends on whether the community wishes to spend money on projects — there is a committee that looks to make sure that those projects will be approved, but basically, they are self-directed funds for the municipality and/or the First Nation.

In unincorporated Yukon, the territorial government does do projects, so our range of projects in Deep Creek — I already listed the water treatment plant and the bulk fill, Destruction Bay dredging, Keno water fill station, and Rock Creek water treatment plant assessment. I mentioned the balers happening across the territory, upgrades to our solid-waste facilities, the septic field in Tagish, the sewage pit upgrades in Carmacks, the Carcross water treatment plant upgrades, and updating recycling bins across the territory. We use the gas tax across the territory. I guess I could try to get a deeper breakdown, but that money is divided out.

We also do work to try to track how much money is going into communities to see that there is a reasonable and fair distribution across the territory.

Again, the infrastructure priorities — what we've done — the Infrastructure Development branch has gone and met with each municipality, each First Nation, and any unincorporated communities to talk to maybe the local advisory council or the recreation community to try to identify what their priorities are and then to fulfill them if we're able.

What we're doing with the envelope approach is not adding in projects that are our priorities. What we're doing is — if there is a way to continue investing and if one project has slowed down for some reason, we back-fill it with the next

project on the list. That dynamic type of work, which is challenging — I appreciate from the members opposite that they want the ability to track it all. I totally think that we always have to share all the spending on all the projects ultimately for Public Accounts. But the notion is that, if there is a slowdown, we can actually move faster. That's why, and it's difficult. What we may be able to do is to share across — this is how we see the breakdown across communities, but it will change over time based on whether there are delays — maybe regulatory delays, maybe public consultation delays or engineering delays or whatever they are. It allows us to keep the infrastructure dollars continuing to invest.

But the main point I want to make, Mr. Deputy Chair, is that the projects are prioritized by our communities.

Ms. Van Bibber: Under the heading Small Communities Fund, there was an additional \$19,267; Clean Water Wastewater Fund, \$7,959; Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program, \$8,456, which totals \$35,500. These funds are reallocated to replace outdated and failing infrastructure.

Can the minister tell us what is being replaced, the cost per project, and when it will all be completed?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The first thing I want to just be very careful to do is to clarify that those are not thousands of dollars; that's millions of dollars. These are significant investments.

Every one of these projects has a time scale. They are typically multiple years, but it depends on — some projects are small and they will just be one season. In my first response to the Member for Porter Creek North's questions, I listed the whole set. I didn't start by saying that this one is ICIP — Investing in Canada infrastructure plan, Mr. Deputy Chair — or that this one is small communities fund or this one is clean water and waste-water fund.

What I can say is that we do breakdowns based on which fund it is coming from, although that is not always as interesting to the public. The clean water and waste-water funds — what I want to say is that we adopted the projects identified by the previous government and just kept moving with those. We didn't want a hiccup or a delay. We wanted to keep going. That fund more or less will finish spending out, except for a little bit of leftover money this year. It totals, I believe, \$68.5 million for the clean water and waste-water fund. The small communities fund, which is underway right now, is a much larger fund, but again, it is typically — not exclusively, but typically — for meat-and-potatoes infrastructure — infrastructure in the ground, roads, and that type of stuff.

The Investing in Canada infrastructure plan is \$594 million over about a decade. We are just starting those projects right now. Each one of those projects that I listed off — the first half of the list of projects that I listed off are completing or are complete. The small communities fund is about \$350 million, meaning that our contribution to it is about one-quarter of that or \$85 million.

The other half of the projects that I listed in my first response are projects that are now under construction and will run over several years. If the member opposite wants

information on a specific one, I am really happy — but the answer is just so variable.

Ms. Van Bibber: One line item for the Town of Faro says that it is going to receive \$83,810. I am not sure what this is for and I wonder if the minister could elaborate on this amount.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am not exactly certain on the — most of the work that we are doing in Faro is around water and sewer — the in-ground infrastructure. I would have to work with the member opposite — and I am happy to do that — to identify where the \$83,000 number is coming from, and then we could work backwards. It could be part of pre-engineering work which is leading to a bigger project around the water and pipes — I am just not exactly certain.

But overall, the work that is going on in Faro is around that in-ground infrastructure. There is work to replace their fire hall and, as part of the whole regionalization agreement across the territory, I know that there is also investment that is going into their solid-waste facility.

Ms. Van Bibber: I have a few questions on Wildland Fire Management. We saw a \$19-million increase to wildland fire fighting, and we understand that it was a high fire season and that there was of course a need to increase funding. But what I would like to see is an accountability of what those additional costs add to.

Could the minister provide a breakdown, including how much was spent on helicopter contracts, how much was spent on air tanker contracts, increased staffing costs for wildland fire, and increased costs for First Nation crews and other fire crews?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I have a breakdown to some of the ways that the member opposite has asked, although I don't have a split in front of me on rotary wing versus fixed wing, so I don't have helicopter versus our air tankers. I just have aviation or aircraft broadly — which will include aviation fuel, fire retardant, and all the costs that are in there. The numbers that I give today are for that supplementary budget, but I also want to note that — which is based on our — when we bring forward the supplementary budget, it's before the fire season has completed and this year we had one late fire, so there are still more costs which will come to this Legislature. I suppose the way that will work is through a second supplementary in the spring. So, I want to be careful to not say that our costs are done today because the Ethel Lake fire was expensive as well.

Currently, here is the breakdown that I have for the member opposite: our aircraft were around \$14 million for the season; our heavy equipment contracts were just over \$1 million; for meals, accommodations, and goods — like catering; all of that — was just under \$2 million; for personnel — and again, I don't have the breakdown in front of me between the First Nation crews and ours, so it's blended, but I can work — if that's important for the member opposite — to try to get a further detailed breakdown. That's about \$7.5 million for personnel.

When we put in this budget — we have a forecast on future costs. That was a little over \$2 million at the time, but again,

those numbers are now going to be refined and we will be coming back later on. The total, then, is about \$26.7 million.

I have a breakdown as well by fires and can talk about those if the member opposite wishes. That's the information that I have in front of me today.

Ms. Van Bibber: If you could provide that list for us, that would be great — by fire.

The government has acknowledged that climate change is likely to continue with longer fire seasons, but the concern is whether the government is actually changing our practices to adapt. This year, we understand that the government ended its contract with the First Nation fire crews in August, and they were no longer on standby. The fire near Ethel Lake and Stewart Crossing — when it flared up, the government was kind of left stranded, and then they took the highly unusual step of sending volunteer fire departments from the Whitehorse area up to Stewart Crossing to provide fire suppression.

We have a concern and a question. The concern is that these volunteer fire departments are often strained in their resources because of the limited number of people available to respond in their area — and recognizing they are volunteers.

Sending half of the fire trucks from some of the fire departments in the Whitehorse periphery reduces the ability of those departments to respond to fires in the communities that they serve.

The question is: Can the minister tell us which volunteer fire departments were required to send crews, and what was the additional cost of sending those crews up to Stewart Crossing and Ethel Lake?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I wasn't clear on whether the member wanted me to list the breakdown by fire right now or whether I could share it later on. I appreciate how many numbers I am rattling off for Hansard.

First of all, I will end my response by talking about what we are doing differently in light of the fact that we believe that the risk of wildfire is increasing. Let me talk about how things work normally here and then move to that response. It is highly unusual for us to have a fire in September — this was a first — specifically a fire of that type and nature. I do believe that we have had some discussion about that here in this Legislature, and my colleague, the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, was there. He has a lot of experience in this very field.

Whenever we have an interface fire or the threat of an interface fire — meaning a wildland fire that is coming in to hit human structures or built areas — we always work with our volunteer fire departments around that time. Their job at that moment is not to fight the fire. Their job is to help with protecting structures and just getting ready. It is things like putting up sprinklers on top of cabins and making sure that we are soaking that cabin to try to keep it safe. Whenever we do that — and we do it now and then — we always work to have in place mutual aid agreements with neighbouring volunteer fire departments, and everyone is informed that this crew is heading up and that the neighbouring crew is there to back up. I have seen that work in my own community. When crews respond, there is a quick call to the next-door crew.

It is always an issue whenever a fire happens after the season. This was a large fire. I do want to say that our crews and First Nation crews responded to that fire. The Wildland Fire Management branch put out a call for the First Nation crews. There was a response, and they were part of the response team.

What are we doing differently now that we understand that there is a higher risk? First of all, we are looking toward prevention. I will talk about it in three ways here today. The first one is to use the prevention techniques that we have and to enhance them. That is firesmarting. We are working to increase education and to increase our work within each community to just make sure that our communities are more resilient to those fires. We have been doing this for over 20 years now, but we are working to reinvigorate FireSmart. One of the reasons why that is happening is because there is a lot of interest from the public. They want to know what each person can do. This is a great program. It can be on a home-by-home basis, or it can be on a street-by-street or neighbourhood-by-neighbourhood basis.

The next thing that we are doing is working to review all of our policies around fire response — for example, our zonation policy and our zonation maps. We have introduced that conversation at the Yukon Forum with our First Nation partners. We are talking about the ways in which we want to keep our communities safe under the increased risk.

Finally, on sort of a broad program, we are working to reduce fuel loading broadly. This is much more than FireSmart. FireSmart — think of it as around your home and around your street. This is more about around our communities. It is a resiliency strategy for each and every community.

We will be starting that work with a pilot this winter, and we will be working with the federal government under the disaster mitigation adaptation fund to extend it out across the whole of the territory. The idea is that, if your wildland fire folks say or if traditional knowledge says — however the information comes in from the people in the know — and they say, "Here are where the biggest risks are to where that fire can come...", then we look to create strategic breaks by reducing fuel load. But we're not just stopping there, because we understand that, if we're going to be reducing fuel load, we want it to be ongoing. So, we're working with the Forestry branch to think about succession planning, but we're also working with the private sector and the Yukon Wood Products Association to think of it as a fuel — biomass, for example — and then, finally, we are working with the Department of Highways and Public Works to create a demand for that supply chain where we seek to heat some of our larger buildings with wood chips. This is an attempt to be very proactive and to reduce risk overall. That's how we're treating it. I'm happy to answer further questions.

Ms. Van Bibber: I understand from your answer that there are mutual aid agreements. The concern is for the ability of local volunteer fire departments to serve their communities if there are serious problems in the immediate area. Luckily, that didn't happen this year.

Sometimes, if there has been an incident and there are, say, two fire trucks and one is in, say, Stewart Crossing, and then there is another call and there is no one left to respond and no truck if there is a fire or a major incident on the highway close to town, what is the plan to ensure that, next year, you are not dipping into these volunteer fire departments as much and you are keeping the First Nation wildland crews on for a little longer?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I need to really separate these two questions. Our great local volunteer firefighters work on structural fires — fires around cars, buildings, and in our towns. It is a completely different skillset than our great wildland firefighters — be they First Nation crews or be they from the territorial government Wildland Fire Management branch. They don't do the same thing, so it's not one or the other; they are separate.

The way that it has been explained to me is that our Fire Marshal's Office has a group of volunteers as well from all of our volunteer fire crews, and they are called a "special heavy operation team". They are folks who want some additional training to deal with these interface types of fires.

What happens is that, when there is a fire — whether it is at the end of the season, the middle of the season, or the beginning of the season; it doesn't matter — that has a call for dealing with this interface, then the fire marshal will put out a call to these volunteers, and they come from across — I understand that there were folks who came from Golden Horn, Mount Lorne, Ibex, and others to cover this off. Whenever that team goes, all of those crews — Golden Horn, Mount Lorne, Ibex, et cetera — work right away to cover off the drop-in volunteers. So, there is a conversation that is happening. Okay, these volunteers have gone — okay. What we are doing is mutually supporting each other. So, again, a shout-out to Ibex, Mount Lorne, and Golden Horn in this instance to cover off those bases while the event took place. I think that our volunteers see this as an opportunity to learn, to grow, and to experience.

It is a coordinated effort to try to make sure that, in that time when there is a slightly elevated risk and if there were another fire — as the member opposite is talking about — then we would be able to cover it off.

Whenever we have a fire in one community, we often deploy neighbouring communities as well, and then we call on mutual aid besides. There is already a system in place. It is not just related to wildland fires.

Finally, with the question about keeping on the First Nation fire crews, it is always a balance. You need to pay money to keep crews on call. It costs all of us, and so there's a time. We have, for example, a meteorologist who is in the department and will talk about where the levels of risk are and how they're working. The climate is changing and risks are changing at the same time, but there's always this attempt to make sure that we have an eye on where the risks lie and that we have resources lined up. We will always be working to negotiate with our First Nation crews to provide them work and opportunities and to keep everyone safe. We're also always

trying to do our best to keep costs within reason. It's always a tension that's out there.

This time around, I asked the questions after that fire happened. What I heard — even from my colleague, the Member for Mayo-Tatchun — is that this has not been seen before. It wasn't that we could anticipate that this should or would happen. I think that this time we have to really acknowledge that it was quite a unique circumstance. Is it going to continue? That's a difficult question for me to stand up in the Legislature and answer. I think, though, that we have to make sure to prepare ourselves.

Ms. Van Bibber: Have individuals from Community Services been to Haines Junction to meet with the Village of Haines Junction, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Parks Canada, EMO, and local fire departments to discuss their community's safety in case of a threat of wildfire there? If so, when did this meeting take place and who was present?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I got a little note from the Fire Marshal's Office. I will just add for everyone that the special operations team is typically for large-vehicle accidents, materials incidents, urban interface fire — for example, what happened around Stewart on the highway — a building collapse, and search and rescue, so that is that group.

The question was around Haines Junction specifically. Let me just say that we are going to need and want these meetings with every community, because, even though there was the fire last year and it was at the beginning of the season just north of the community of Haines Junction — thanks, by the way, to Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, to the Village of Haines Junction, and to the folks in Haines Junction, because there was a lot of concern. I thought that, as a community, they did a great job.

We are going to have those meetings everywhere.

I said in one of my earlier responses that we had been talking about starting some work in Whitehorse. There are four other communities that we are actively working in right now. I will do my best to get these correct.

The four communities that we are working with initially in these types of meetings — where we are sitting down in sort of a planning and fuller discussion with them — are Watson Lake, Haines Junction, Mayo, and Teslin. I understand that those meetings have been planned. I am not sure if they have taken place. I will work to try to get some dates for the members opposite. As soon as I have them, I will share them either through a letter or a legislative return.

Also, after the Bear Creek fire, Mr. Deputy Chair, an operational after-action review took place on June 20 earlier this year. They did some meetings — key incident participants and stakeholders were invited to provide feedback on the operation. That included folks from Wildland Fire Management, the Emergency Measures Organization, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, and the Village of Haines Junction. Parks Canada was invited, but they weren't able to attend. From the meeting, we did get quite a bit of feedback. That's not necessarily planning forward; it was a review of that fire and how the response had taken place, but it

will be very informative for that work that needs to happen across each community.

Ms. Van Bibber: Just recently, there was a request for bids listed on the tender forecast system for the Carmacks new fire hall and public works building. This was interesting, especially as the estimated tender is listed for February 2020 and the start date listed is one short month later — March 2020.

Can the minister confirm whether these dates are correct? If so, how can the department expect contractors to be ready to go on a project of this magnitude in one short month after they are tendered?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I'm not sure in this instance why there's only one month of time. I'm happy to check back with the department to get the story behind this particular project.

This is a forecast system. It's there to try to give an indication to contractors about what is coming up. I know that we work closely with the Contractors Association and with the procurement centre and others to try to get the information out as early as possible while maintaining the need for it to be a competitive process. I'm happy to try to look further at it.

What I want to say is that it's a forecast right now. I don't think that this is necessarily where it's landing. I'm happy to check in further.

Ms. Van Bibber: There was another forecast for the Whitehorse skate park upgrades as a tender for anywhere from \$1 million to \$5 million and also with the same estimated tender dates — February 2020 and a start of March 2020.

With respect to skate park upgrades, I think \$1 million to \$5 million is quite a spread for any project. Can the minister tell us what is budgeted for this project?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: This is one of those times where my response for the Member for Porter Creek North — I don't want to give our estimate of the project — and so we use ranges because we want to allow for it to be a competitive process. I have shied away, in this Legislature in responses, from trying to say that this is the exact dollar figure against a project. In my experience, it can at times inflate the prices, and so I don't want to do that and I don't expect that work to take place in March — you will need snow off the ground for that work to take place.

What I do want to say is that we are happy — for example, I know that this project in particular has been a bit of a challenge over the years. I was on the city council at one point in time when — I think it would have been the Minister of Education who appeared in front of us and said, "Okay, let's please move that skateboard park." We were kind of shocked by that. I am glad that we have been able to find a solution for the French first language school, for F.H. Collins, and for the skateboard park. The thing I want to say is that the City of Whitehorse has really stepped up for us as a territorial government, because right now, it is our responsibility — and maybe it is under my department, or maybe it is under the Department of Education — of keeping up a skateboard park. That is not something that is our bailiwick typically. So, the City of Whitehorse said to us, "Hey, if you do the improvements to that skateboard park and get it up to a good

standard, then we will take it over." So, I just want to give them a shout-out for that offer. It is a much better fit, in my mind.

I have sat down with a couple of design charrettes with some of the local skateboarders. They have been very enthusiastic and excited about it. I am happy that it is on the forecast system. What I am just understanding is that what the TMS — the tender management system — says for the forecast is February 2020, with an estimated start date of May 2020. So, that sounds more reasonable to me. That is several months after.

Ms. Van Bibber: Can the minister tell us if he has met with all the local advisory councils in the Yukon — which ones and when?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I have met with all the local advisory councils. I meet once a year with all of them at a local advisory council forum which is hosted by Community Affairs and the department. We run over a whole range of issues. I think I have attended three of those — I think, once a year.

I have made a point of also trying to get to every local advisory council for one of their meetings. My recollection is that I have only been to one for Ibex Valley and was there at that time with the Member for Lake Laberge. I'm only hazarding a guess at the number of local advisory council meetings that I have been to in Southern Lakes. There are four there. They are Mount Lorne, Marsh Lake, Tagish, and the south Klondike, which is Carcross. They have monthly meetings and I try to attend those as an MLA, but often get asked questions as a minister. I think I make it — my guess is — to about four, five, or maybe six for each of those communities per year. That is my estimate. I do keep track of all of those meetings, so I'm happy to try to get them across, although it's difficult for me to differentiate between my role as minister and as MLA.

Ms. Van Bibber: The Dawson City sewer project has been going on for several years now and there seem to be constant problems with installation — if not with trees and property lines, then with the weather. It has also caused a block to many businesses due to the road closing during the height of tourist season. Can the minister tell us when this sewer project will be complete? Is it on budget?

I also understand some of the streets have to be redone come spring. Can the minister enlighten us on his knowledge of any redos?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: It is true that Dawson's infrastructure is old and it has been in need of some significant investment for some time. It is also true that it is on a permafrost flood plain. As I'm sure the several house-moving companies in Dawson will attest to, it is a pretty dynamic area. I think it is also true that, whenever we dig up a road in front of a home or a business, it is disruptive — there is no doubt.

I have had some conversations with the Member for Kluane about concerns that his constituents have had and with the Premier as well about concerns that his constituents have had. I would like to start by saying that the crew at the Infrastructure Development branch has really been doing a fantastic job. That doesn't mean that there aren't moments of conflict and tension, but when you look at how much infrastructure we are doing across the territory, it's really quite

staggering. Overall, my impression is that the work has been going very well.

With the in-ground infrastructure for Dawson, not only has it been needed because the infrastructure is old, but Dawson is growing. There is a lot of pressure on it. We now know that the waste-water treatment plant — well, I call it the “waste-water treatment facility” — a little facetiously because it makes a much better acronym.

That facility is already not doing what we needed it to do all along. We are now in planning phases with Dawson for a lagoon. As Dawson grows, you also have to plan how you are going to get that sewage over to a lagoon. Even though the current round of work for in-ground water and sewer infrastructure in Dawson — the bulk of it — should be done next year in 2020, there still is going to continue to be more work needed to be done.

The last challenge that I’ll talk about with respect to Dawson is that, whenever we’ve been there — whether it’s under lot development or this work doing in-ground servicing — the cadastre of the community is quite complex. Where the lot lines are and where people think they are is a different thing. It can be very challenging. I appreciate that there are issues at all times, but it has been my experience that the branch and, for the most part, the contractors whom I have had the pleasure of working with have done a really outstanding job at trying to navigate through those challenges.

Ms. Van Bibber: It leads right into my next question, then.

Along with property lines and tree issues that happened — of course, it was very well-publicized in the papers. How long was the primary contractor down while they were waiting for this issue to be resolved? How much extra did that cost the government?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The delay for that project was in the neighbourhood of 10 days, and there were some costs.

I should note that this is a municipal infrastructure project. We are there partly as funders. We are partly there also as project managers, but I want to be careful in that it is not our infrastructure, ultimately; it is the City of Dawson’s infrastructure. We are there working with them. When there are challenges that arise like this, we are on the phone with the mayor and council to talk it through. I’m sure that the folks at the Infrastructure Development branch are in conversation with the city manager, and I am sure that the project managers from the Infrastructure Development branch are there in conversation with the contractors and with the neighbours.

The last estimate that I had was that the costs were around \$300,000 for that delay. Part of that was — as everyone started to understand where the property lines were and people were concerned, there was some dialogue with the neighbours to try to do our best to save as many trees as possible, because it is the entryway into the community and people felt strongly that, if we could try to save the trees, we should do our best. You are hopeful that some of those trees overwinter and there still might be some challenges around it, but when we look at that cost — potentially \$300,000 — the overall project was estimated in the \$10-million range, so that is still within the contingency. We

are still hopeful that the project overall is on budget and on track, so we’re not believing that it has changed the overall budget for the project. It is just one of the many things that we do — I will say with hundreds of projects that we have ongoing all the time — where we hit challenges.

Ms. Van Bibber: I understand from a little note slipped to me that there have been conversations that you have had with the MLA for Pelly-Nisutlin regarding the phone service being restored across the bridge in Ross River. I was wondering if there has been any talk of reinstalling the conduit back across the bridge and if you have any updates for us.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: This has to do with the Ross River footbridge, which was one of the first infrastructure projects that I was involved with in taking on this role. At the time when the bridge was put in, there were no customers identified on the far side of the bridge. There is one customer on the other side of the bridge and they do have a cellphone, but there is an interest to have a land line. What we are doing at the moment is that we have worked with Northwestel to identify — I think it’s our responsibility to put in a conduit on the side of the bridge. It will be Northwestel’s responsibility to run a line over to the other side of the bridge. After that was worked out, we sent a contractor up to take a look at putting up the conduit. The challenge was that the conditions were not favourable. By then, the weather was not working with us, so it now has to wait until the spring.

I appreciate that we will get there, although it will end up being a pretty pricey phone line, but there you go.

Ms. Van Bibber: Is it possible to do the work from the ice bridge and continue working this fall so that it is available to people across the river sooner?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: This is a really technical question. I’m not sure — whether the notion is that they work from underneath the bridge or on the side of the bridge. I’m just really happy to try to get a response for my colleague, the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin. If there is the ability to do it off of the ice — well, great. I think we just need a technical response to this specific issue.

Ms. Van Bibber: Are there any plans for newer upgrades to recreational infrastructure in rural Yukon communities?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: There are a range of issues. First of all, we have been looking at all of the boat launches across the territory and trying to take a more holistic view at working to upgrade those.

We have done work, as the Member for Kluane will know, in Destruction Bay on dredging out the marina there. We had a bit of a window of opportunity to do it — and thanks to the folks who got the work done — but we still don’t know, really. We did a bunch of studies on the lake to try to understand what’s happening with the lake, but we’re uncertain. But we took the opportunity to dredge because we had one.

We know that our pools are getting old across all of our communities, so we’re looking at those to try to see about upgrades there. We have made investments in the Carmacks rink and that work is ongoing. We have work that’s ongoing up in Old Crow for their rec centre. We have scoping work on a

couple of others — that is happening. The way I will finish this off is that — when I started talking about infrastructure, Mr. Deputy Chair, what I talked about is that we go to the community, we sit down with the First Nation and/or the municipality and ask them what their priorities are. We are very happy — if they identify their priorities as sport or recreation, we will work with them. So, we are trying to take the communities' lead on where they have identified that. That is true across the territory.

Ms. Van Bibber: You said that many of the community pools are being looked at to see if they need upgrading or restructuring. Can the minister tell us if there is going to be a swimming pool in Ross River next summer?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The issue in Ross River was not a structural issue. It was a concern that had been raised with environmental health. Unfortunately, we got there late in that discussion. It is my hope that we will work to resolve those concerns, although I don't have an answer as of yet if that has been completed. If memory serves, there was something about filtration and some technical fix there. There were a couple of small, minor points that are very easy to solve, but that filtration piece is one that we need to work on. We absolutely want our kids in Ross River to have access to a pool. They get a short window of time. We know from being in the community and talking to chief and council that they have expressed a priority around this.

What I want to say is that, once we figured out that there was a problem, we worked as well to get bus service there so that we could get the youth over to Faro to use that pool there, so we were working to try to backstop it this past year.

But I would like to say to the community of Ross River that I am sorry that we weren't able to get the pool up and running. We are working hard to make sure that we don't end up in the same boat next year.

Deputy Chair: Would members like to take a short recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Ms. Van Bibber: With respect to the mention of the First Nation administration buildings being built with federal and territorial resources, I'm wondering if this is part of one of the infrastructure funds and, if so, which ones.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: There are a few possibilities. I know that when I first landed, there were dollars that were flowing under the small communities fund down to the Carcross learning centre, but most of it, though, is coming from the Investing in Canada infrastructure plan. There are several communities where we are in conversation about the energy efficiency of existing buildings and improving those — so, sort of retrofits or making those buildings greener.

If it's a new build, the new ones are also Investing in Canada infrastructure plan — that I know of — and there are several substreams under the Investing in Canada infrastructure plan. It could come from — depending on the project — any of three of those substreams.

My recollection is that they are community, culture, and recreation infrastructure and finally the green infrastructure fund — especially if it has to do with the retrofit side.

Ms. Van Bibber: I'm going to go to the minister's favourite topic: solid waste. The cost of waste is something we're all aware of. Can the minister tell us if increasing the cost of items at the point of sale has made an impact on the local waste facilities?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: We brought in fees on tires, electronics — on what would become e-waste — and electrical appliances. We also increased the refund and fees on more drink containers. We're still working to collect the evidence on this so that we have actual numbers.

What I can say is, through volunteering in the solid-waste facilities in and around our communities and visiting them over the past couple of years, I have noticed a change in e-waste. I've noticed a change in refundables — milk jugs, et cetera — the things that didn't used to be refundable which are now. There are more of those being collected. But I don't have any hard data yet to share with the Legislature. My evidence to date is just empirical, but we will be working to do that analysis or that analysis is taking place in order to get us the numbers.

What I want to say is that the Solid Waste Advisory Committee — in almost every community I go to, it is pretty clear that waste costs money, first of all. It costs more than we think, so the more we can reduce in the first place is our best goal. A good goal after that is stewardship. Stewardship is where the — our best one under that is when the industry is paying for that up front — they're paying for the recycling or reuse up front. We do try to achieve that by working in partnership, for example, with British Columbia and/or Alberta. If we are not able to achieve that, then our next goal is designated material regulations, which is where the tires, electronics, and electrical appliances have come under. It looks like it is working well, but we still have to take the time to do our work.

Ms. Van Bibber: Can you give us a timeline of when all the municipalities will have their waste areas staffed and tipping fees for dumping working across the whole territory? Are these fees going to be comparable with those in Whitehorse?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will try to paint a bit of a picture — then maybe there will be a few more questions.

We are generally on track with the approach of the Solid Waste Advisory Committee to do a territory-wide regional system. Part of the design of that system is that we need to get rid of prices that change from one neighbouring place to another so that you don't drive from one place to — for example, let's just say that we don't have people from Whitehorse driving to Deep Creek to throw out their garbage because it's cheaper in Deep Creek.

The prices will be on a par, but they may vary from one region to another. I don't know that Dawson City will be the same as Watson Lake; I don't know that Whitehorse will be the same as Watson Lake, but they will be in and around the same, and neighbouring facilities will definitely try to use the same price.

We have been working on getting those agreements in place across all of our municipalities, and I think that work is on track with what we had anticipated for timing. That work is ongoing right now. We will work to introduce tipping fees in the periphery of Whitehorse this spring and then, I think, the rest of the territory roughly in the next year.

What I also want to say is that it doesn't mean that we are doing cost recovery in every location. What we are doing is setting a level price so that all Yukoners pay roughly the same tipping fee wherever they go. It has been important to help some of the people in the periphery understand that Whitehorse residents do pay a tipping fee — not everyone understands that. It has also been important to help Yukoners so that they know that waste does cost. I think that once they figure that out, most people are willing to do their part. We get into lots of conversations about how to make this work, about how to deal with illegal dumping, and we are working on that front to increase the fines and to try to crack down there.

The one thing I wanted to say is that, in most of our municipalities, our solid-waste facilities are already staffed, so that isn't necessarily new. In many of them, they already charge a tipping fee or have a way of charging something.

With these regional agreements, it's not us who will be charging the tipping fees in the municipalities; it is the municipalities themselves. We are working with them, but I will note that it was the municipalities that came to us and said they wanted to get this territory-wide system in place, because they know that we need to revamp our solid-waste system across the territory. I thank them, because it is heavy lifting to ask for these changes, and it's not always popular. It's not always easy, but when we get out there and talk with Yukoners, they understand that waste costs, and we need to have a system that will allow us to make it level across the whole of the territory.

Ms. Van Bibber: I would like to thank the staff for helping the minister and the minister for his answers. I am now going to hand it over to the Member for Takhini-Kopper King.

Ms. White: Hello to the officials who are in the House, and I thank the minister for the conversation.

Early in this Sitting, there had been a question in Question Period where we talked about the development or the sale price of lots. Hansard, I think, is a beautiful thing.

It is interesting, because on Monday, April 21, 1997, there was a conversation in this Assembly about the cost of lots. It actually lays out how it works. At the time, it was Premier McDonald, and what he was talking about was the way in which lots are priced. He said — I'm just trying to get the right quote. At the time, the principle of the matter around lots was that it was either development cost or market cost, and they were sold for whichever was cheaper. So, sometimes they talked about the development cost, and it might be higher if it

had five inches of concrete and curved curbs and things like that, but what was being talked about was the principle of the matter about the cost of lots and how that should be viewed.

One of the reasons why I want to ask this question is that, initially, the policy that the Yukon government had with regard to lot development was to develop lots and sell them at development cost or market price — whichever was lower. This tended to keep the lot prices reasonable and constrained government bureaucrats — government people — from spending a lot of money on lot development and then just passing it to the buyer.

We saw examples of that. For example, the previous government with a loan to a golf course, and then it got incorporated into the lot cost in Whistle Bend for some of them. Then the policy changed to development cost or market price — whichever was higher. The reason why that's a big change is that, when we talk about affordability — so affordability, I think, is a big issue right now for everyone in the Assembly and the people in Yukon.

I just wanted to ask the minister if he's able to pinpoint more where it went from — whether it was development cost or market price — whichever was lower, and now it has switched to development cost or market cost and whichever is higher. I would like him to talk about the cost of lots, to start.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: In Question Period earlier this year, I have listened to questions from the members of the Third Party, and I think both have made comments about it. I don't have the same policy that they have. I'm not sure when it changed, because I don't have it before me.

Here is how I understand the policy right now — and I will just reach out to the Member for Takhini-Kopper King and try to get a hold of the material that she has so that I can try to look back in time.

Here is how I understand the policy right now. There is a technical classification of the land. I leave that because we are allowed to classify it however we want — whether it is a residential lot or special — but once it hits that different designation, you then have this ability. The ability says something like this: You can go with market prices, or you can go with the development costs charges. You can actually go for a blend of those two if you want, but you would have to turn back to Cabinet to get special permission. That's how I understand the technical rule. There is nothing that I see in the policy that says that you will charge the higher or the lower of the two, so there is some discretion.

When I have been looking at it around Whitehorse — and I thank the Member for Takhini-Kopper King — the two are actually coming pretty close to each other. The implication, as I understand it, is that if we go for a price that is lower than the development cost charge — and that can happen. If, for example, the market prices were lower and we went with those lower market prices, then we have the responsibility to do cost recovery at some point. It can be later on.

The two pressures, as I see them — from where the policies and practices come in front of me — are: cost recovery, and trying to keep the prices as low as possible. We work, for example, with the Land Development branch to do everything

that we can to keep those prices down as low as we can, because we want to get that price as low as possible for Yukoners.

Let me just stop right there, Mr. Deputy Chair, and then I'm happy to answer further questions.

Ms. White: Sorry, "policy" was maybe the wrong language, but that was the prior practice, and then it changed. Did it actually change during the Duncan era? That gives a time frame.

In reading these excerpts from Hansard in 1997 — it is really interesting, because we are talking about mobile homes and security of tenure, and one way that the security of tenure could be increased was by making affordable lots available within the City of Whitehorse. There was a discussion on how lot pricing went.

Just to follow up on what the minister said, recently we heard — I believe that the number was \$23,000 more — so, I believe that, similar to a lottery, it went to the highest bidder, and the highest bidder was \$23,000 over what the lot had been released for. I am sure that other people in the Assembly — and definitely other people in the world — look through the real estate guide and can see the steady increase of costs. For example, if a house on my street sells for \$450,000, then the next house listed will be much closer to \$450,000 than it may have been without that. One of the concerns that I want to highlight is that, if the government is prepared to sell lots at \$23,000 more than what they were asking, what does that do for the general market?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I want to say is that the example that the Member for Takhini-Kopper King is citing is a very atypical example for us.

Let me describe that we have a high demand for lots across the territory. We have been working — and even in this budget that we are debating here today, we are spending, if the money is approved, \$30 million more or less on lot development. As I have noted previously here in this Legislature, for the four years prior to us coming into this position — the four years added up to \$24 million, over all four in total, in lot development. So, this one year, we will eclipse those four years combined.

We have said that we need to get the branch reinvesting, doing much more lot development, and we said — or I was tasked by the Premier and colleagues — to find other ways to explore lot development.

It's not usual that the government is the lot developer in most jurisdictions. So, we said, "Okay, we're going to start to explore some private sector lot development." This was one of those examples. It didn't work. So, that lot which went out for sale didn't have services in the ground — or those lots — they were undeveloped lots. So, the thinking was that the private sector would come in and they would take those lots. They would develop them, then they would build a house on them, and they would put it up on the market. That was an attempt of ours.

What we got, through conversations with the private developers, is that they needed bigger parcels. They needed to actually do a little bit of subdivision and do some work. So, we will try again on that front.

The other front that we are going to work on is working with First Nations in support of them because, as we saw, Kwanlin Dün First Nation has now registered title in the Land Titles Office and that's a bit of a game-changer. So, there is an opportunity there as well.

That lot that we were discussing didn't have an option to sell it at the development price because there was no developed cost. It was a different scenario altogether. That's not what we're doing generally. We will continue to work as the developer until such time as we see that it's working better with another system. The \$30 million that we're talking about right now is about historic development in the way that we have developed lots through the branch, and it is to get more lots out there.

I'll just stop there, Mr. Deputy Chair.

Ms. White: So, just to ask in a much shorter way: Does the minister believe that selling a lot for the \$23,000 over the asking price will affect current prices and future prices for others in the City of Whitehorse?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Yeah, of course. When you sell any lot anywhere, it affects the neighbours, just as the Member for Takhini-Kopper King noted in her earlier example. It always has an impact.

As I said, this was a trial. It didn't work out from our perspective. We're not continuing with that methodology. If we get single lots in the future, we will develop them. We will put them out for sale as per our current policies and practices. But we will continue to look for ways in which to try to engage the private sector.

What I'm trying to say here is that it is our hope that this will get lots on the market — number one — at a better price than if it were us. I don't know that will happen, but that is our goal. Also, the other thing that could be different is the speed at which those lots come to market. It takes a lot of time for us to get them to market currently, because there's a lot of prep and planning work that has to take place. Our goal is to try to expand how we do this work to see if we can improve it.

If we can't improve it, we're not going down that path.

Ms. White: One of my favourite topics — it's not going to change until security of tenure is achieved — has to do with mobile homes and mobile home parks. I'm not sure if the minister is aware or not, but there were a number of increases this summer. Some are now paying — in some parks, there is the calculation that, if you pay by a certain date, you can save yourself \$100, so it's not a penalty; it's phrased in a different way. But if it were phrased in any other way, it would be a \$100 penalty, which wouldn't be allowed.

I want to know — we have talked a lot of different times about security of tenure in mobile home parks. I want to know if the department is doing anything to look into the mobile home issue. Also, I brought it forward last year, when the residential tenancies office had made a recommendation or had made a decision during arbitration, that they follow through. It turned out that they hadn't followed through until we brought it forward. The minister told me that the residential tenancies office didn't follow up on whether their recommendations had been completed.

I would like to know where we are on the issue of mobile homes and if the residential tenancies office has changed their business practice and follows, especially when there are multiple people who will be affected by the recommendations.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am going to have to reach out to the branch directly and talk about the specific situation that happened. It is well over a year ago now — it might be two years ago now — when it was first brought to my attention by the Member for Takhini-Kopper King. I am sorry that I don't know today whether that changed. It was about whether the branch could — or how they would be able to follow up to make sure that their rules were being followed and whether they could be proactive or not. I am sorry that I don't have an answer today.

I know that we have been doing more outreach and public education, so I just have that general answer for the member today, and I will look to try to get some more specific information.

I know that the residential tenancies office is also working to work through all of its internal procedures so that they can ensure that they have got clear and consistent decision documents, and that hopefully will also help. When they have decision documents, they are also working to get peer review on those before they go out as a decision so that they can get some — so that it's not purely subjective all the time and that there is another group of eyes that are looking at them to try to see whether they are being consistent.

Ms. White: I guess that, in part, answers the question. The reason why I highlighted that issue specifically is that it was with 280 homes, and a decision had been made by the residential tenancies office to re-write leases. Almost a year later, it hadn't been done, which was way past the timeline. So, the reason why I am highlighting it is that it is different — and we have acknowledged here that it is different if it is one landlord and one tenant, and then we both agreed that, if it's one landlord and many tenants, it's a different situation, so I just wanted to know if the practice has been changed, but I will leave it.

The other concern that I've always had about mobile home parks is the sheer number of people who live there and, again, there is not that security of tenure. I wanted to know if the department or the minister has reached out to mobile-homeowners to have conversations about the challenges that they face or things that they would like to see.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I have not reached out in what I will call a more formalized and proactive form. I certainly have had conversations with mobile-homeowners — not mobile home park owners, but mobile-homeowners — and have had correspondence from them and dialogue with them over time.

Let me also say that if the member opposite would like to have me come and speak with them, I would be happy to. I bet she could organize such a meeting, and I would be more than happy to come in and talk with them — or, for example, maybe folks from the residential tenancies office, if that is preferable. I could also work to make that happen.

I agree that there was a real concern that we are discussing here. There was a situation where there was a lease that was not

appropriate in its language. How we could be proactive around addressing that — again, I make the commitment to follow up with the residential tenancies office and get back to the member opposite.

The other thing that I wanted to say is that I agree that there are differences between mobile-homeownership because you are renting a space in a park. You both have some ownership of property, but you also are renting, and that makes for a very different set of relationships. I have always appreciated that this difference exists. I have had conversations with, for example, the City of Whitehorse about that situation and the security — or lack of security — around that. I don't have a silver bullet around this issue. I know that we have some disagreement about the correct approach to address this issue, but I am more than happy to have the conversation — and, in particular, to have it with the mobile-homeowners.

Ms. White: One could say that a petition being tabled with hundreds of signatures was the attempt at having a conversation with government. What I really want to know is if the government, through the Minister of Community Services, who is responsible for the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act*, will actually engage in a more — what's the word I'm looking for —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Ms. White: — not so much “collective” — I appreciate the suggestion — in a more formal way with mobile-homeowners. So, in the 33rd Legislative Assembly after many years of conversation, the then-government sent out a survey to mobile-homeowners asking a selection of questions. It came back. The number that I can use is that about 89 percent of people in mobile home parks say that their homes are not mobile any longer, et cetera, et cetera.

What I wanted to know is if the minister plans on reaching out in a more formal way to those who live in mobile home parks?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: It's a fair point — the petition that came last year expressing concerns. Again, all I can say today is that I'm happy to sit down with mobile-homeowners, hear their concerns, and talk with them directly. I'm happy to do that through —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Well, I think the Member for Porter Creek North has a mobile home park in her riding; I think the Member for Copperbelt North has a mobile home park in his, and there are a couple outside of the city.

All that is to say — I appreciate that there are concerns, and I'm very willing to sit down with mobile-homeowners if they would like to sit down.

Ms. White: The Member for Porter Creek North has two parks, the Deputy Chair has one park, and I have the other three within the City of Whitehorse — which is the only one that's covered. The one in Faro is owned by the municipality. It was a campground with longer leases. As far as I know, the six within the municipal boundaries are the ones that are affected, but the minister can correct me; I stand to be corrected.

There was a Wood Products Association meeting a number of years ago talking about biomass. It was fascinating, and I

don't have all those numbers here. At the time, they were talking about how, if the Yukon pushed toward biomass for home heating, we had a number of generations of heating fuel — so standing dead trees within the territory that could be used as home heating fuel. The reason why I'm asking about this is: Through the FireSmart program and the piles of wood that are left behind, is that wood able to be sold? Or is that just — someone picks up a permit and then they are allowed to go collect it?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: So, earlier when I was talking about this difference between FireSmart — which is sort of like the local scale around our homes and streets — and the broader scale landscape management — that is how it was first described to me, and we will call it “community resiliency”. The wood that is there on the scale of FireSmart is sort of small-end neighbourhoods, and because it's typically on Crown land — or it might be an individual who is doing their property, and they will keep the wood or give it to a neighbour as they wish. The wood that's there on the Crown land piece is typically stacked and left for anyone coming by, usually the neighbours, to use. It's not at the scale that we're talking about. We still want to see it used as biomass because it has that opportunity.

At the scale that we're talking about with the Wood Products Association — no, this is that bigger piece where, around communities, we're going to reduce fuel load. It won't be just a one-off sort of thing. The idea is that we should work with Forestry to decide: Are we going to replant with, say, aspen, poplar, or willow — some deciduous sort of plant? But we'll think of it as going through, and then — maybe within 10 year's time — we're right back on the cycle, and we just keep cycling through to keep those risks in check.

Wherever that fuel reduction is near, say, a roadway or is accessible, then that is going to yield wood that we think will be of sufficient quantity to make up this whole biomass-type market. I should note for the member opposite that, when we talk about this, some of it might be for home heating, but most of it — because our better solutions for home heating are retrofits and insulation, and at the home scale, it is usually to get the energy loads down and then just go with a simple, small heat source — electrical baseboards, typically, so fuel switching to electrical. Again, we are back to that whole renewable question. But it is at the bigger building scale like a school, the Whitehorse Correctional Centre, or buildings the size of the Legislature and smaller where we talk about more commercial, industrial, and institutional buildings where we think that biomass will be the marketplace.

Will we work with the private sector? Yes, the Yukon Wood Products Association, for example — absolutely.

The last thing that I want to mention is that, when I first stood up in the Legislature this fall and talked about retrofits, I said that our plan was to try to get the legislation and the regulations here for us in the spring. I was mistaken. The time that we need in order to engage with the public will push us past the spring. I just want to correct the record and say that the department is targeting next fall for coming back to the Legislature with the retrofit local improvement charge program

— or whatever form it takes. I just wanted to add that to this response.

Ms. White: I had totally forgotten about that program, but what an opportunity to go back on it.

One of my concerns that I had highlighted, again — I insulated my house with access to a loan through the Yukon Housing Corporation. My mortgage has a lien on it that is owed to the Yukon Housing Corporation. When I finish paying off that loan, it will be removed from my mortgage, and I will obviously not owe the corporation any money if I sell my house.

The reason why I was asking questions earlier in the fall about the ministerial statement — when we talked about how it would be tied to property taxes — was the concern I had that, if a person purchased a house, accessed the program to be able to do energy retrofits, which increases the value of the house, and then sells the house at the higher cost because of the increased value with the property tax money still being there essentially a new homeowner purchasing that house could pay for those improvements twice: once by the increased value of the house, and again by paying back the loan through the property taxes.

I just wanted to know if the minister had anything further to add to that.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I'm happy to get up and talk about this. The way I think we need to think about this is that — whether it is a local improvement charge or whether it is a lien or whether it is some other borrowing instrument, the important principle is that borrowing instrument is held against the property itself. Okay. Why? Because then the improvement is to the property, and the money owing is associated with the property so that, if that property is put up for sale, then it moves with it. The improvement moves with, and so does — I understand that the member opposite doesn't think that's right, but that's how the logic works with me — not just me; I think we're talking about — let me use the example of a well, because right now, someone can go and ask to borrow money to put in a well. When they borrow that money, it comes as a local improvement charge on their property. They have invested the money in the well, and that's an improvement to that property now. When they sell the property, that improvement is there. But there's also money outstanding on that just like there would be with a lien. That outstanding money is known to the seller, to the purchaser — to everybody. So, it's the difference between those two — the improvement and the money outstanding or owing — that is the overall net gain for the value of that property. Everyone is going to negotiate however they negotiate. That's their business. But it should all be transparent to the buyer and the seller.

That will work just as well for an energy retrofit. I don't know that we're going to end up agreeing here, and that's fine. I'm happy to have that debate and to carry it further. I will just simply trust in the professionalism of the department to do its diligence around this to make sure that there is no double-dipping, that it is all going to be transparent, and that we are working with municipalities to make sure that we are not

adding a burden to them — because local improvement charges can be a burden to them — and that everyone is on board.

Today, anyone is able to go and, if they wish, not turn to the government. If they want to make an investment in their property, they are very welcome to do so. They can borrow money against their property on a mortgage if they wish to do so — or a line of credit which is held against their property. A local improvement charge, in the same way, has to be disclosed in a sale.

I think that these are all just various versions of debt instruments that will allow us to get at the retrofits. It is so important to do this because not every Yukoner has the ability to have the cash on hand to do it, but if they can get the improvement — in other words, by reducing their energy costs — and if that is how they are able to pay back the LIC over time, then everyone can win.

Ms. White: The minister is right — we will disagree. I say this in terms of how I bought a house in Takhini north. There is a local improvement charge that I think I'm nearly done paying in 2020. It might be 2024. Houses in Takhini north were all on the same plumbing. If the person at the bottom of the street had their shower or dishwasher going and flushed their toilet, the person at the top of the street had no water. That was tied to the property, but it didn't increase the value of the house. The house wasn't worth more because I could flush my toilet and so could my neighbour at the same time. It wasn't viewed as more.

My concerns — and I think that I have expressed them — are that there are people who purchase and then flip houses here. They do some improvements and you can sell it for more, so I have those concerns. I will highlight them and hope that the department speaks to the realtors association and others because I think they might have some feedback. I have put it on record, so if it turns out to be a problem later on, I know that I have said my piece — so that's okay for me.

We have talked a lot about the exceptional wildfire season — climate change and how it's affecting us. Last Monday, it was plus 12. We were the hottest place in Canada and all the snow we had melted. It's now an ice rink and it's terrifying. I have heard friends talk about driving to a dry spot of ground to get out and walk the dog back and forth numerous times before they get in the car and drive away. The dog was not impressed, by the way.

The one reason why I want to talk about the exceptional fire season is also an acknowledgement of the work that was done, because it was incredible. It went much longer; it was a much longer season than has been typical in the past. I wanted to know if there has been discussion within the department about extending the wildland fire management season to better respond to late-season fires like the one we saw this year.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: By the way, I really appreciate the question. I'm just going to run back for a second — not to be pedantic or to stretch it out. I think that if someone were buying a house at the top of the street where the plumbing wasn't working, and if they were able to ask — that brings down the price of that house, whereas the local improvement charge, when it goes through, is to redo the plumbing for everybody.

So, you know, when you get it on a street level, everybody pays the same. It's probably true that it benefits those people at one end of the street more than the other, depending on the situation, but everybody will benefit from the fact that there's new plumbing that's out there.

I will take the suggestion from the member opposite and make sure that the department is looking to try to make sure — we want the system to capture the improvement and reflect it — and that there is a way to pay it back over time. That's the whole point.

Onto wildfire management — I'll break the question down in a couple of ways. The first one — and the most important way — is that we can't just keep going on with what we have been doing. We can't just wait for the fires to come and then respond. We need to be more proactive.

We've always had a piece of that proactiveness there, which is the preparedness piece, if you like. But now we need to work more on prevention. That is a whole phase.

Do we know, for example, from one year to the next that prevention is going to pay off? No. You can't know these things. What you have to do is trust that it is a better investment to put into prevention so that, over time, your situation improves.

But the challenge is that it's not easy to measure those things and you don't know, and — knock on wood — I hope we never have to know. I hope we never have the type of situation where we are threatened, but we need to do the work around it ahead of time. So, prevention has to happen and preparedness has to happen.

How are we doing the budgeting? Yeah, we recognize that our current budgeting, where we put in \$6.5 million — not quite \$7 million — to wildfire fighting — the average over the past five years has been much more than that. From a budgeting perspective, we need to adjust how we're doing — although we'll never be able to anticipate when it will be a large or a small fire year with certitude ahead of time. So, we still will have some uncertainty in wildland fire, but I think what climate change says to us is that we have to do more work to prepare and to prevent.

Ms. White: We had asked during the appearance of the witnesses from the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board as to whether or not wildland firefighters were going to be considered in presumptive legislation. I just wanted to know if the Minister of Community Services has been having that conversation with his colleague.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I understand that there is a conversation which is underway. I don't have a definitive response. I know that, on principle, when we were talking about first responders, it was more about the notion of the trauma that they encounter — whereas you certainly can't take away from the hard work that wildland fire folk do, but they are often not on the front lines of trauma.

I don't have an answer today, just that I understand that there is a conversation underway between the department and the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board.

Ms. White: I would suggest that the front lines of high stress situations — life or death — could be traumatic, so I will

just leave that there. I mean, it is a valuable conversation to have in the future.

With the announcement of glass jars — non-beverage glass, non-deposit glass — no longer being collected from Raven Recycling, for example; Whitehorse Blue Bin Recycling is not picking it up either — I just wanted to know if the department has any plans on maybe alternative uses to glass jars, or what kind of pocket industry might pop up in Yukon to deal with Yukon's glass issue now.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: We have had several conversations around glass. So, when our recyclers came to us and said that they were no longer going there with glass, it was, of course — how can I frame it? It is not what we were hoping for, but we understand why it is. I have had several conversations in the community since then, and I do want to say that — not just around glass, but overall — recycling is still a very large challenge for us as a territory. I wish there were simple solutions; there are not. I know that the recyclers and also the Solid Waste Advisory Committee are working hard to try to come up with some solutions.

Here is what the smart folks at Environment and the recyclers and Community Services have tried: as an aggregate for cement, as a material for asphalt, and as sand for our roads. They have gone, for example, to Lumel Studios to try to talk to them about whether they could use it. The problem is that there are so many different types of glass, and once they are just all mixed together, you can't separate them, and whenever you work with that type of glass and you fire it and then you anneal it, it just shatters because they cool differently or something like that. They have been trying a bunch of solutions.

My next step — and I have talked with both the Department of Environment and the Department of Community Services Operations branch — is to try to move over to a group like NorthLight, the Cold Climate Innovation centre, or some folks who are outside of our normal sphere to work on a bunch of brainstorming around materials. I have to say that, even though I was really disappointed about glass, our bigger problems today are with plastic and cardboard. Although it is unfortunate about glass, if I could get a solution, I wish I could get it on plastic or cardboard. So, when I do turn to these innovators to try to task them to come up with solutions, I am not going to constrain it to just glass. I will look to solutions on any of these fronts.

What we are looking for is a local, scalable solution for us. We have done well. With glass, for example, I am thankful that we still have glass bottles being reused — not all of them, but some of them — and that is a good thing. So, the refund system still stays in place and still happens. On the compost front, we have had more local solutions, which are great, because that has been a real problem for our landfills. We need to scale it out to the communities, though.

There are a few other small wins, but generally this is a real challenge overall.

Ms. White: I do appreciate that. It's one of those things where — and again, I've said it before — we did a really good job telling people that recycling was free and it was never free. People had this misunderstanding that glass was actually being

shipped south. It wasn't. It was being crushed and being used as weight at the transfer facility. It costs money to crush the glass and it costs money to transport it. It costs for all those things. So, I do understand why, for example, the recyclers were forced to make that decision.

It is super fascinating that in Vancouver, effective January 1, 2020, businesses are required to comply with a city-wide ban that restricts licence-holders from serving prepared food and beverages in foam cups and foam take-out containers. The City of Vancouver is upping their game, I would say, in removing those single-use things.

I know that the minister and I both share a passion for waste reduction and recycling. I just thought I would highlight that I saw that online today and thought, "Well, this is exciting." We are lucky in the Yukon that a lot of businesses have already moved away from single-use foam, but in Vancouver, where they have a lot more food and beverage businesses, they still haven't. I'm excited to see that.

One of the things that we often talk about here is our diversion. One of the things that we had discussed previously — but then was committed to in the throne speech — was the banning of single-use bags. I wanted to know if the minister could tell us where we're at and the expected time when we might arrive at the day when we don't get those plastic bags at the grocery store any longer.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thank the member opposite for her comments. It is true that waste costs, and recycling costs, too. Although, one of the places — and there are some great champions out there — reduction doesn't always cost — right? If you can find ways to reduce, I think that's great.

Kudos to the City of Vancouver, by the way. We have been in conversation with environmental health on how we can make this work. There are some competing forces there, and I'm hopeful that we get there.

With respect to single-use bags, we did sit down — the Minister of Environment and I were briefed recently by the folks working on it. I will note for all of us here that it will, at some point, move out of my — because typically, when we were thinking about a designated material regulation and there was going to be a price on bags well, then it would be the Department of Community Services putting that price on the bags. Now that we're talking about a ban outright, it's a little bit different. It will be done mostly through the Department of Environment. We were trying for a timeline of this spring for the plastic bags. We had a conversation with the business community about timing that would work for them. It looks, though, that, because we have gone with the option of a ban, it will require more engagement.

I recall, when we had the ministerial statement, that there were lots of questions posed by members opposite about whether — a range of bags on the periphery, for example, like dry-cleaning bags, or bags within bags, and so all these questions. From sitting down with the department recently, it looks like working with the business community to understand it all will likely take us to the fall of 2020. That looks like our current timeline.

I think there is still a question that we've had with the business community about whether we start with plastics and then move to paper bags. I note that there aren't as many places, or there is no place — no jurisdiction across the country that I know of — that has put in place a ban on paper yet. But again, the more we can reduce, the better we are.

Ms. White: I was doing multiple things at the same time, and I'm not sure if I heard necessarily a timeline, so maybe the minister can add that next.

Does the department work with any private businesses — for example, Blue Bin Recycling — to collect numbers on the number of folks who are accessing that service just to have an idea of what the diversion rates might be at this point?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I did say that the timeline that we were looking at was the fall of 2020 for the start of the single-use bags — probably starting with plastics and then probably phasing in with paper, but that's part of the engagement that has to happen.

All of the folks involved in the solid-waste and diversion community all work in and around each other. Sometimes it's the municipality that works more closely with Blue Bin Recycling because they are within this municipality. I'm not exactly sure where we go to get all of our data. I think we do it more at the sorting stations at the end. Once it all comes in, then I think it all gets collected up and you do sampling or waste audits. I know the member opposite has been a part of some of those audits. I've done some of them with her.

I don't know how closely we work with Blue Bin Recycling, but we do need to work with our recyclers in order to understand all of the processes — for example, how the markets are working, et cetera, and in collecting data.

Ms. White: The reason why I say that is that, when the City of Whitehorse tried to encourage or push toward Blue Bin collection so that the recyclers would have a more guaranteed source of funding — the reason why I was wondering if the Department of Community Services works with that private business at all is to find out, for example, what the uptake has been — it is just about trying to do things better. I can say for myself that, in my household of many people, it was me who would go to the recycling depot and it was me who would sort everything, so when I was assured by Raven Recycling that Blue Bin Recycling was making enough to make it viable, I switched, because my time was worth substantially more than the money I spend a month on the recycling pickup. So, I appreciate the service, for example.

I wanted to know if the Yukon government is doing anything to encourage social enterprise or any other entrepreneurship when it comes to waste management.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I just got a note. My understanding is that Blue Bin Recycling is approaching 900 to 1,000 customers, and I thank the member for her comments about Blue Bin Recycling and about it being a service that people can pick up.

My understanding is that, overall, recycling rates are around 30 percent in the City of Whitehorse. In rural Yukon, it is around 25 percent, which is great but not as high as it needs to be ultimately, and there are some real challenges.

The question was around social enterprises. Yes, we are working at it on two fronts. The first one is just broadly with social enterprises and how they work as societies or as businesses, because they have to fall under a piece of legislation, so we work with them through Corporate Policy and Consumer Affairs. Also, we work with them. By the way, I will say that Raven Recycling has said to me that they believe themselves to be a social enterprise, which I appreciate.

We are happy to work with groups because, however we get there, we are going to need to have all hands on deck. As the member opposite has said before, "Waste costs money." The phrase I like to use is "There is some heavy lifting to do, and we all need to do our part".

Mr. Deputy Chair, noting the time, I move that you report progress.

Deputy Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Streicker that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Deputy Chair: It has been moved by Ms. McPhee that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

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

Chair's report

Mr. Adel: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

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

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Written notice was given of the following motion November 25, 2019:

Motion No. 127

Re: Establishing the Select Committee on Electoral Reform (Silver)



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 29

3rd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Tuesday, November 26, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
Don Hutton	Mayo-Tatchun

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King
Liz Hanson	Whitehorse Centre

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Dan Cable
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Tuesday, November 26, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

Withdrawal of motions

Speaker: The Chair wishes to inform the House that Motion No. 127, notice of which was given in writing yesterday by the Premier, was not placed on today's Notice Paper at the request of the member.

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed with the Order Paper.
Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Van Bibber: I would like the House to help me welcome the president of the Yukon Hospital Foundation, Karen Forward, and her husband, Arjay Hill.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any tributes?

TRIBUTES

In recognition of World AIDS Day 2019

Mr. Adel: Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of our Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to World AIDS Day 2019.

Across the country, the last week of November marks Canadian HIV/AIDS Awareness Week. This week culminates in a global observance of World AIDS Day on December 1, a day dedicated to raising awareness of the AIDS epidemic, to remember and commemorate those who have died of the disease. The theme of this year's World AIDS Day is "Communities make the difference." As we strive to end the HIV epidemic in Canada, we must all use our voices to advocate for more inclusive and accessible services in our communities.

Mr. Speaker, we have a collective responsibility to challenge the HIV stigma and discrimination, which we know still persists in our communities. By showing respect and compassion for those living with HIV and by fostering meaningful conversations, we can improve outcomes and reduce the number of new infections.

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize one of our community partners that is leading that effort, Blood Ties Four Directions. This organization is a great example of communities making a difference. Its membership, board of directors, and volunteers are drawn from members of the HIV, AIDS, and hepatitis C communities, as well as members of the general public who are committed to improving the lives of Yukoners. On a personal note, my wife was the executive director of AIDS Yukon Alliance, the predecessor to Blood

Ties Four Directions, and we have seen the difference that these types of conversations with these organizations can make and move forward with this disease.

This is an important organization that has been providing HIV education and support since its founding in 1993. Its mission is very similar to the mandate of the Minister of Health and Social Services. It strives to eliminate barriers and create opportunities for people to have equal access to health and wellness and to live in our community with dignity.

On behalf of my Liberal colleagues and me, I would like to say thank you to all current and past Blood Ties Four Directions members, staff, directors, and volunteers for their hard work and dedication.

December 1 also marks the start of Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week, which runs until December 6. Mr. Speaker, the goal of this week is to raise the awareness of the critical role that communities can play to ensure that HIV testing, care, and treatment are holistic and culturally safe. Understanding the unique social, spiritual, economic, and political needs of each of our communities is crucial if their citizens are to receive the best possible care. This is an important and much-needed initiative.

Mr. Speaker, as of the 2016 census, indigenous people accounted for about five percent of Canada's population; however, indigenous people accounted for more than 11 percent of the new HIV cases in the same year. Another way of putting that is that indigenous people are 2.7 times more likely to get HIV than non-indigenous Canadians.

By continuing our work together, the Yukon government and its community partners can and will end this disparity, reduce the number of new HIV cases, and improve the lives of people who are living with the disease.

Applause

Ms. McLeod: I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to recognize December 1 as World AIDS Day, which was established globally in 1988 with the aim of raising awareness of HIV and AIDS and continuing our efforts to educate around prevention and treatment.

In 1991, the Canadian AIDS Society launched the first annual AIDS Awareness Week to help fight the stigma and discrimination around AIDS. Treatment has progressed. Education awareness has reached more people and so much has been done in mitigating the epidemic. However, the stigma around HIV and AIDS remains and often prevents people from seeking information, treatment, or support or from acknowledging their HIV status.

There is still confusion around the difference between HIV and AIDS. HIV is a virus that can be transmitted from one person to another through the exchange of bodily fluids. Most commonly, HIV is transmitted through sex without condoms, shared needles, and blood-to-blood contact. HIV can lead to a condition called AIDS, which is also known as stage 3 HIV. While there are treatments available, there is still no cure.

According to 2016 national HIV estimates, there were an estimated 63,110 Canadians with HIV at the end of 2016. It is estimated that just under 10,000 people may be infected but are

undiagnosed. Here in the Yukon, a total of 57 HIV-positive tests were reported between 1985 and 2013. Mr. Speaker, that number may be higher today and it doesn't reflect those who have not yet been diagnosed.

Thanks to continued research around the world, people with HIV at any stage who adhere to regular anti-viral treatment can expect to live long and productive lives. In fact, evidence shows that HIV-positive people who are on treatment, engaged in care, and have an ongoing, undetectable viral load also have a significantly lower chance of transmitting the virus.

We would like to thank Blood Ties Four Directions for the work they do for Yukoners in areas of education, support, outreach, and a lot more.

I encourage Yukoners to get involved in their awareness and fundraising campaigns, to volunteer, to educate, and donate.

Applause

Ms. White: I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP in honour of World AIDS Day. December 1 is the international day dedicated to raising awareness of the AIDS pandemic caused by the spread of HIV infection.

It allows us to take time to mourn those who have died of the disease and to reflect on those who were left behind and who feel that absence daily.

As of 2017, AIDS has killed between 28.9 million and 41.5 million people worldwide. Internationally, an estimated 36.7 million are living with HIV, making it one of the most important global health issues in recorded history. To give us a sense of the enormity of those numbers, Mr. Speaker, in 2019, 37.6 million people called Canada home. Canada's first diagnosed AIDS case was 40 years ago. In 2004 — 25 years after that first diagnosis — 55,180 Canadians had contracted HIV and 21,226 had been diagnosed with AIDS.

Thanks to recent improved access to anti-retroviral treatment in many regions of the world, the death rate from the AIDS epidemic has decreased since its peak in 2005 and, for that, we're grateful.

We thank those organizations and individuals close to home that see people as individuals and not problems to solve in their efforts to support harm reduction. We thank those organizations and individuals close to home that support those living with HIV or AIDS in caring and compassionate ways.

On April 10, 2019, right here in the Chamber, the NDP brought forward a motion that aimed to ensure that the HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis medication be made available for free to qualified individuals in Yukon. As often happens, the motion was amended by the government to review if barriers exist to accessing this HIV-blocking drug. I'm hopeful that, once the review is completed, PrEP will be available free to any Yukoner who qualifies for it and that Yukon will join others on the front lines of the war on HIV.

Mr. Speaker, World AIDS Day reminds us that we as elected officials have a role to play in tackling the AIDS epidemic and that those actions start right here in this Chamber.

Thank you.

Applause

In recognition of Northwestel Festival of Trees

Hon. Ms. Frost: I rise today to ask the Members of the Legislative Assembly to join me in recognizing the 17th annual Northwestel Festival of Trees.

The festival launched last week with a cocktail party here in the main administration building, an indication of how successful the organization is by the attendance there. Each year, trees, wreaths, and other silent auction items are on offer to raise money for the Yukon Hospital Foundation and a variety of events will allow all members of our community to get involved. Through this great festival, we get to see our community come together and see the true generosity of Yukoners.

Since 2002 when the Festival of Trees first started, this annual event has raised close to \$5.5 million. This impressive sum has been invested back into our community through medical equipment and other initiatives that improve Yukoners' quality of care. Past contributions have allowed the purchase of a fluoroscopy machine, heart stress-testing equipment, a CT scanner, ultrasound machines, a clinical simulation centre, and the first MRI scanner north of 60. A large portion of the proceeds from this year's festival will help to purchase a 3D mammography unit for Whitehorse General Hospital in partnership with Run for Mom. This will help improve the chances of early detection for breast cancer. It is just another way that our community organizations are making lives better for us living in the north.

These highly anticipated events could not be possible without Northwestel, the Yukon Hospital Foundation, local businesses that sponsor the events, and the many volunteers who offer their time and dedication to each event. This year, a number of stunning trees will go up for auction. Each tree has been donated by a local company or organization. I would like to express a heartfelt thank you to the local businesses that have contributed to this worthy cause. I would like to also specifically recognize the dozens of Yukoners who volunteer their time and creativity to decorate these trees on behalf of the many Yukoners who will view and enjoy their work. I say mahsi' cho.

I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Yukon Hospital Foundation. Year after year, they do an outstanding job organizing. It is wonderful to see our community members offer their time to support such a worthy cause. The dedication that president Karen Forward shows is certainly noteworthy.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to urge members of this House and all Yukoners to head out to one of the festival's events. Skookum Asphalt is hosting a breakfast with Santa — actually, that happened already. On November 26 you can join Air North for cookies with Santa. Although some of these events have already taken place, I just want to acknowledge all those who came out and participated — absolutely amazing. The sold-out event — the Seniors Soiree, every year, sells out. So, that's obviously a very popular event among our older adults. Finally, the festival ends on November 30 with the prestigious Alkan Air Grand Ball.

So, thank you to the hospital foundation and all of its sponsors and partners in making a real and important difference in the lives of Yukoners.

Applause

Ms. Van Bibber: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition and the Third Party, the NDP, to pay tribute to the 2019 Northwestel Festival of Trees.

For 10 days, the Festival of Trees is magical. As a small community, we are blessed with an outpouring of support to raise much-needed money to assist our hospitals to retain the quality of service needed for Yukoners.

It began on Thursday, November 21 with the Newmont Goldcorp BAH Humbug cocktail party. The lobby of the main government building was packed with guests enjoying a drink, appies, music by Roxx Hunter, and a first view of the festive, colourfully themed trees.

The Skookum Asphalt Santa Breakfast on Saturday, November 23 was well-attended and successful. Today, upstairs in the lobby, there are Air North cookies along with photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus. This has proven to be a winner. All three events have a suggested donation of \$5, so it is reasonable for everyone to attend.

After today, the decorated trees are moved to the Yukon Convention Centre. The large hall is transformed into a thing of beauty. It is breathtaking and set up for two major evenings remaining — Save-On Foods' Seniors Soiree on Friday with Hank Karr and the Canucks and, the finale, the Alkan Air Grand Ball on Saturday with Soul Migration with Lianne Cranfield as the opening act for both evenings.

The major event is the Alkan Air ball, when the 16 trees on offer this year are auctioned, with each tree displaying gifts, goodies, and surprises. The money raised purchases major equipment needed to keep our hospital facilities modern and up to date, such as the MRI machine and the newly opened simulation room with lifelike robots that allow medical staff to keep up their skills as they react to emergencies and various medical situations.

The Yukon Hospital Foundation is to be commended for all they do throughout the year, culminating with the Festival of Trees. The foundation could not do this without the sponsors and supporters who give so much each year. I think many take for granted the generosity of large and small businesses, and we should not. They too have bottom lines, but they continue to step up and give to the community that they love. The businesses have shown that they want the best for all Yukoners. Thanks is not enough, so please support them throughout the year and pay it forward by supporting local.

We give a special shout-out this year to Manitoulin Transport. This is the 17th year of Northwestel's Festival of Trees, and of the last 10, Manitoulin has moved the boxed trees, the risers, and all the support needed both for the main government building display and the convention centre. Now they will gently move those decorated trees from the upstairs lobby to the convention centre. Then, when the successful bidders are known on Sunday morning, they again will gently move those trees to the homes or businesses. Even if it is cold

or windy, they always do it with a smile. Then — guess what — the Yukon Hospital Foundation's President Karen Forward might get a brief rest. Then the planning, organizing, and scheduling begins for next year's events. I cannot say enough about this kind, amazing young woman who gives so much to Yukon — a special thank you to Karen and to her husband, R.J. Hill. R.J. says he is "volun-told", but I personally know that he enjoys every minute that he gives to the foundation.

We hope that all the Christmas dreams come true for the Yukon Hospital Foundation and that the goal wished for is reached.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I have for tabling the *Crime Prevention and Victim Services Trust Fund Annual Report 2018-19*, which is tabled pursuant to section 9 of the *Crime Prevention and Victim Services Trust Act*.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I have for tabling the annual reports for the Yukon Public Service Labour Relations Board for 2018-19 and for the Yukon Teachers Labour Relations Board for 2018-19.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Ms. White: I rise to give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of the Government of Yukon's review of the barriers for qualified individuals to access pre-exposure prophylaxis as committed to in Motion No. 463 on April 10, 2019.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Minister for Community Services to follow through on Motion No. 60 put forward by the MLA for Mayo-Tatchun concerning the *Animal Protection Act* by:

(1) attending the Mae Bachur Animal Shelter public meeting happening tonight at 7:00 p.m. in the Grey Mountain Room at Mount McIntyre Recreation Centre; and

(2) providing this House with a statement on the matter on November 27.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to move forward in banning single-use plastic bags throughout Yukon based on the original timeline for the spring of 2020 by:

(1) creating a timeline on how this will be achieved by June 20, 2020; and

(2) making a commitment that this ban will come in place during the tenure of the current Government of Yukon.

I also give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of any documentation on the construction of the Yukon Energy Corporation battery energy storage system, including:

(1) the breakdown of the \$16.5 million budget to be spent on the Yukon Energy Corporation battery energy storage system;

(2) the locations and sites under consideration for the construction of the Yukon Energy Corporation battery energy storage system; and

(3) the timeline for the final selection of the location or site for the construction of the Yukon Energy battery energy storage system.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Dawson City infrastructure upgrades

Mr. Hassard: This summer, CBC reported on the fact that the planned water and sewer upgrades in Dawson City were put on hold. This was done after it was revealed that the Liberals failed to consult residents on the removal of their trees. Residents in Dawson were very upset by the lack of consultation, and of course this is in the Premier's riding. So the Liberal government had to intervene and shut down construction, delaying work by the contractor while the Liberals scrambled to figure out how they had bungled this consultation so badly.

Yesterday in Committee of the Whole, the Minister of Community Services confirmed that these delays costs Yukon taxpayers \$300,000. These delays are a direct result of poor planning by this Liberal government.

What are the Liberals doing to ensure that they don't have to do this in the future, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, I think that the Infrastructure Development branch has been doing tremendous work. We have been putting out many tens of millions of dollars in infrastructure across the territory in all our communities. The first thing we do is I ask the branch to go around and talk with each and every municipality and each and every First Nation and get their priorities. This was the City of Dawson's priority. They asked for this in-ground infrastructure. There were some challenges because there was some old infrastructure in the ground that we were trying not to disturb.

There was consultation with the neighbours about the park in front of them and about the trees. Ultimately, though, what the neighbours didn't understand was where the city's land is and where their land is. When that became clear, we just regrouped and took a little bit of time to review it. I hope that it

has now all worked out well for the folks along Craig Street and for the City of Dawson. By the way, as I said yesterday in Committee of the Whole, the overall budget for the project has remained on target.

Mr. Hassard: So, what is clear is that the Liberal government mismanaged this project and its consultations. When people in the Premier's riding got upset, the Liberal government shut down the construction for 10 days at a cost to taxpayers of \$300,000.

Yesterday, the Minister of Community Services shrugged his shoulders like this was no big deal. According to the CBC article from July 10, a big part of the issue is that the Liberal government did not accurately describe how many trees would be removed in their YESAB submission for this project. The government's YESAB submission for the project even states — and I quote: “there are no large trees that will need to be removed from the project area.”

To quote again from a YESAB official in that July 10 CBC story: “Because of that, the assessment didn't contemplate the removal of any large trees from the project area... The public didn't have the opportunity to comment on it.”

Did the Liberal Cabinet review or sign off on this misleading YESAB submission?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: We haven't quite voted on the supplementary budget, but I do look forward to it. We're talking about \$79 million in infrastructure spending around the territory which is going into each of our communities to address the priorities of each of our communities. I'm very proud of the work that the infrastructure branch has been doing in working with those municipalities and First Nation governments to identify their priorities.

This was a priority overall in Dawson. We know that the infrastructure in the ground has not been dealt with for a very long time and I'm really happy that we're getting at it. Yes, there are times when — as it was originally scoped — there wasn't the anticipation that trees would be touched. As soon as we hit the problem, the project manager and the contractor sat down and worked out with the neighbours how they could do the project in a way to save as many trees as possible, replace those that they couldn't, move them over into the park — all sorts of work in order to try to make sure that it was done well.

I would just like to say thank you to the department and to the private sector contractors who did this work. It was good work that was unanticipated to hit challenges. But do you know what? When you have \$80 million or so in projects, there are going to be times when we hit some challenges. I'm thankful —

Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Mr. Hassard: So, here are the facts: The Liberal government YESAB submission for this project specifically states that no large trees need to be removed. Then the project started removing large trees. Residents in the Premier's riding got upset that the Liberal government had misled them. The government then intervened and delayed construction for 10 days. Now, this cost taxpayers \$300 which apparently appears not to —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Hassard: — \$300,000; sorry, Mr. Speaker — which appears not to be a big deal to this minister. But we want to know: What changes to capital planning are the Liberals making as a result of this bungling by this minister?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I'm fine to take the criticism from the member opposite; that's totally fine. But do you know what? What I want to do is stand up and thank the department and the private sector and also the neighbours for working through a problem that wasn't foreseen. Once it was foreseen, we looked to see if we could move the location of the sewer pipe. It wasn't a good idea. We talked it over with the neighbours and we landed with doing our best to save the trees.

You can suggest that maybe I am not doing it well, but I would never suggest that the group of folks who are working on that project didn't do it well. I think they did an exceptional job. They did everything under the rules by YESAA. They did everything working properly with the municipality.

There are, now and then, some things that are unforeseen. I am not trying to downplay them at all. What I am trying to say is that, once we discovered that there was something unforeseen, I thought that the staff, the private sector, and the public, working through it, found good solutions for it, and I would like to thank them for that.

Question re: Yukon Hospital Corporation funding

Mr. Cathers: On Thursday, the CEO of the Hospital Corporation told this House that the hospital is still waiting for some of its core funding for this fiscal year. He told us that they would only have a balanced budget for 2019-20 if a pending decision by government on "core funding" was approved. He also said — and I quote: "We had set a budget early in the year, and we are, right now, looking at making sure that core funding has been established in its entirety."

Eight months into the fiscal year, the hospital is waiting for millions in core funding for the current year to be approved. Yesterday, the Premier contradicted the hospital, claiming his government was reviewing next year's hospital budget request. That is astounding.

The hospital is still waiting for millions of dollars in core funding that they requested over a year ago, Mr. Speaker. The Premier is the Finance minister. Did he not know, or did he deliberately mislead the House yesterday during Question Period?

Hon. Ms. Frost: We are representing Yukoners with integrity on this side of the House. We are following through with our commitments to ensure that Yukoners are provided the best possible health care with our partners, and working with the Hospital Corporation is a job that we take very seriously. That means that we need to work through all of their requests, and that is what we are doing right now.

The Hospital Corporation provided an opportunity for members of this Legislative Assembly to ask specific questions.

We know that we have done a lot there at the hospital to alleviate the pressures. They received an increase in their budget last year, and I anticipate that will happen again this year. We are working with them on their capital requests as well

as on the O&M pressures, but we are working on specialized supports and services. We have looked at capital development, operating room expansions, bringing in specialized services, and additional supports. We are working through the Yukon Medical Association and we will continue to do that in good faith.

Mr. Cathers: Well, I am not surprised that the Premier is afraid to answer that question. Yesterday, we asked the Liberals about — and I quote: "... outstanding financial decision to be made..." that the corporation told us about on Thursday.

Eight months into a fiscal year and the Liberals still haven't approved millions in core funding the hospital asked for over a year ago. The corporation told us that — and I quote: "... increased surgeries may mean more pressure on nursing, pressure on support services, bed availability, equipment, supplies, as well as our ability to provide post-operative recovery..."

The Premier found money to give himself a raise, but the hospital's budget for the current year isn't fully funded. The hospital CEO told us that they are waiting for funding for the current year for the — quote: "... orthopaedic program that we have established..."

Why have the Liberals failed to provide the hospital's core funding for the current year and failed to fund the expansion of the orthopaedic program? How many millions of dollars in current year core funding for the hospital has this government still not approved?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to maybe correct that information. What we have done with the Hospital Corporation is provide the necessary supports and resources that they have asked for, recognizing that there won't always be times when we always fulfill — it will take some time — and that means that we have brought in additional supports at the hospital to alleviate the pressures. That means eliminating external travel for Yukoners. We have the specialized supports here in the Yukon. We have now three paediatricians, psychiatrists we are bringing in, orthopaedic surgeons, and expansion of the operating room. We are working with the hospitals and we are now in discussions with them on the secure medical unit.

What we also have done in the last year is open up 10 re-enablement units and respite units at the Thomson Centre to alleviate the pressures in the hospital. We do continue to work closely with the hospital to ensure that patients receive excellent care. We will continue to do that.

Mr. Cathers: Well, Mr. Speaker, that's not what the witnesses from the Hospital Corporation said. They told this House that they are still waiting for some of their core funding. Health care is vitally important to Yukoners and this Liberal government's failure to fund the hospital properly is absolutely unacceptable.

As my colleague, our health critic, pointed out when the Hospital Corporation witnesses appeared, we were told by department officials in the spring budget briefings that \$2.8 million requested by the hospital last year wasn't provided by the government until the current fiscal year. A \$2.8 million shortfall in funding for the hospital matters, Mr. Speaker. The

hospital CEO wasn't prepared to speak about how much core funding hasn't been approved for the current year, but he confirmed that they are waiting for a — and I quote: “pending decision” on “core funding” and for the orthopaedic program. The government received this request over a year ago.

Why has the Premier and this Liberal government left the hospital waiting for its current year core funding until eight months into the fiscal year, and when will they approve the funding?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Perhaps the member opposite doesn't understand the budgetary process.

The budget that's allocated on an annual basis in collaboration with the Hospital Corporation is done in cooperation. We look at the priorities, we work through the priorities, and of course we assess and we ensure that we provide the resources. We have done that in good faith and we will continue to work together on a regular basis to address the pressures at the hospital.

Perhaps the member opposite has information that I'm not aware of. But I expect that, if the CEO of the Hospital Corporation has specific requests, he will go to the deputy minister. In that process, we will continue to have a good dialogue on looking at the key pressures that the members opposite seem to imagine exist.

We will continue to work on our funding allocation as we look at the requests from the Hospital Corporation and continue to have collaborative supports on ensuring that all Yukoners — that every Yukoner, wherever they reside in Yukon, is given the best possible care, including collaborative health care, nurse practitioners, as well as specialized supports within our two rural hospitals that we really have not provided supports to historically. We'll do that in good faith.

Question re: Affordable housing

Ms. White: The Yukon Bureau of Statistics stated that the average price of a house in Whitehorse had gone up by \$44,000 from the first quarter to the fourth quarter of 2018. The 2019 report recently tabled shows that, in 2018, Yukon Housing Corporation provided over \$1 million to three first-time homeowners.

Mr. Speaker, what about all the other Yukoners? When can they expect to receive \$340,000 to help them afford housing? Houses are getting more expensive to purchase, rent continues to go up, and this market is driving people out of Yukon.

Mr. Speaker, what immediate actions are being taken by this government to resolve the housing unaffordability issues plaguing folks in Yukon?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I'm honoured to stand today to speak about what the Yukon Housing Corporation has in fact done in Yukon to address housing pressures and the affordability.

We've worked with our partners, with the private sector, other governments, and non-governmental organizations to implement our housing action plan. We've looked at alternative options in our Yukon communities. In the last couple of years, we have supported over 400 homes. Having said that, we are just now opening up a Housing First unit and we will continue

to work with other communities as well to address some of the key pressure areas.

We have some communities that currently have some, perhaps, availability pressures that really haven't been supported historically. We know that from the trends that we have seen, and we will continue to work with our partners to provide necessary supports to the communities that have been essentially forgotten for many decades. We will continue to do that to ensure continuity and affordability across the Yukon.

Ms. White: The Yukon Bureau of Statistics stated in its April 2018 report that Whitehorse's median rent for units in buildings with three or more rental units was \$950 and that the vacancy rate was at 3.4 percent. In 2019, median rent has gone up to \$1,000 and the vacancy rate has gone down to three percent.

What this tells us, Mr. Speaker, is that housing unaffordability in Yukon is getting worse. Not only are Yukoners paying more for rent, they are also running out of alternatives if they want to remain in Yukon. The 2019 fall throne speech mentioned a commitment to more housing and more affordable housing. Yukoners want this government to follow through on this commitment.

Mr. Speaker, in light of these numbers, what is this government's commitment to non-social housing affordability, and what specific initiatives has this government taken to lower monthly rent costs for Yukoners?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to thank the member opposite for the question, because it is a great one. That is our focus. Our focus within the Yukon Housing Corporation is to look at increasing affordability and housing options across the Yukon. That means that we need to seek partnerships. We need to look at working with local developers and we need to work with our First Nation partners, recognizing that some of our communities are unincorporated and, therefore, have never been supported. We want to ensure that we look at our housing rent supplement program and as well look at ensuring that we provide in our budgets the appropriate resources available to our communities to look at mixed-use housing and mixed-market housing. We want to ensure that we look at new housing options and not focus so much on social housing but on community-based housing needs.

Ms. White: In the 2019 Yukon Housing Corporation report, four key points are highlighted concerning housing needs in Whitehorse: (1) there is a severe need for housing with services; (2) there is a critical need for rental housing; (3) home ownership is out of the reach of many; and (4) market rental housing is too expensive.

Clearly, these problems are getting worse. This is clear in both the language and the attitudes expressed by the Yukon Housing Corporation Board in their annual report.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell this House when Yukoners can expect to have access to affordable rental accommodation or affordable homes to purchase in Whitehorse?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Housing with Social Services is certainly a key element that we want to consider as we look at housing supports in the Yukon — across the Yukon, not just in

Whitehorse. We certainly have not seen this historically. We want to ensure that those individuals who require housing are provided housing with supports to ensure that they are successful.

What's problematic, Mr. Speaker, is that we have not historically provided incentives and opportunities for individuals who are in social housing units to transfer or move out of social housing units into private ownership. That's what we're working on. We are looking at accessibility. We are looking at rent geared to income and expansion of our housing programs to support housing in our communities.

That means that, as I indicated, we have provided an additional 400 units to the market. We continue to provide — in the last year alone — from the \$3.9 million in the housing initiative fund — maybe I'm off on that, but I will correct that if I should have the opportunity — through our partnership programs to allow communities to address their housing pressures. We will continue to do that in collaboration with our partners.

Question re: Porter Creek group home

Ms. Van Bibber: The Liberal government failed to properly consult residents of Porter Creek on their proposed 22 Wann Road group home project. In January 2018, the Liberal government claimed that they didn't have time to consult; the project was too urgent; they needed to get it out as soon as possible.

Then in the spring of 2018, they said that youth would be moving into the group home by December of that year. Then in March of this year, the Minister of Highways and Public Works told this House — quote: "The work is on schedule for substantial completion by April 30, 2019..."

Then after they missed that deadline, the Liberals again pushed the deadline out to the fall. Well, it's now November 26, 2019, and the group home still isn't open. The mismanagement with this project — all the way from the lack of consultation to meeting deadlines — is something else.

Why do Liberals keep missing their deadlines on this project, and when will this group home be open and operational?

Hon. Ms. Frost: It's great to see the member opposite supporting the project, as I recollect when this project came to light and we started looking at an alternative — an alternative to a group home, as it's described here — it's not a group home, Mr. Speaker; it is an opportunity to try to transition youth out of care into self-sufficiency and into independence. What we heard historically was "Not in our backyard."

We are working with our neighbours. We are happy to say that we have worked with our First Nation partners, Kwanlin Dün and Ta'an Kwäch'än. We have worked with our Safe At Home communities. We have worked with many partners to announce the 22 Wann Road project — a new project and an innovative project that addresses the needs of youth who are transitioning out of care. I am very proud of that, as are our partners, and we look forward to opening that next week.

Question re: Yukon mineral exploration program

Mr. Kent: I have some questions for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources about last week's Geoscience Forum. This House has discussed this government's cuts to the Yukon mineral exploration program, or YMEP, on a number of occasions.

Last week, when the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources was responding to a question on the Beaver River watershed, he mentioned that YMEP funding was — and I quote: "...undersubscribed for the last number of years..." However, the Yukon Geological Survey reported at the Geoscience Forum that the program was oversubscribed again in 2019.

So, here is the exact quote from the very first sentence of the YGS presentation on YMEP at the Geoscience Forum last week — and I quote: "The program was oversubscribed again this year, with 99 applicants competing for \$1.4 million in funding." This isn't the first time that this minister has given the House incorrect information that was contradicted by his own officials.

So, who are we to believe with the Liberal cuts to YMEP — the minister who says it is undersubscribed, or his own officials who say that the program is oversubscribed?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I don't want Yukoners to be misled, so let me clarify what the opposition is talking about. Previous to 2019, the Yukon mineral exploration program was not seeing full subscription. The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, sitting with Minerals branch as well as the Yukon Geological Survey and their leadership, discussed the most appropriate thing to do with those funds understanding that the previous year — 2018 — was undersubscribed. Discussions were held with the Yukon Chamber of Mines and with the Yukon Geological Survey, and we allocated \$200,000 to the Beaver River planning process.

Now, this year, we have a process where subscription is very high and so we will have to go back and take a look to see if that money should go back into the fund.

But I think it is important to note that, when the opposition were in government previously, this fund at one point was at \$575,000 and the point that it is at now is the highest that it has ever been. That is because of decisions that we have made in the last 36 months. It is also key to note that we really have to take a look at this fund because, at the grassroots level, which we are hearing a lot of discussion about, there were no applications, and that came, again, from the submission that was put forward by the Yukon Geological Survey with me and the critic in attendance.

Mr. Kent: Just for the minister, that presentation board at Geoscience from the Yukon Geological Survey said — and I quote: "The program was oversubscribed again this year..."

I am going to go on, though. The Yukon Geological Survey also had presentations at the Geoscience Forum related to placer mining. Here is a quote from that presentation: "Production from the Indian River proper shrunk by 25% (4500 ounces) in 2019, largely due to permitting delays due to wetlands." So, Mr. Speaker, that is equivalent to approximately an \$8.8-million drop in placer production. What is the minister

doing to reduce or eliminate these permitting delays that shrunk placer gold production by approximately \$8.8 million according to the Yukon Geological Survey?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: All I would say — just so Yukoners can understand how they are being misled in this question — is that what the member opposite didn't say is "best year of production ever in placer mining by value".

Question re: Carbon tax

Mr. Cathers: We have learned that the Liberal carbon tax is costing one local trucking company \$9,000 a month right now. They have been paying this since July and have no information from the government on how the rebate is supposed to work.

Their last correspondence with the Premier was on September 25, and the Premier basically shrugged his shoulders and said that details would be released sometime in the future.

To quote from their statement to us: "We have been paying Carbon tax now for 4.5 months and the business community has no idea how the rebate is going to work. I don't know if I can carry the tax credit to another year or what the deal is. They roll out a tax without knowing all the information on how to apply it and refund it. Absolutely mind-blowing."

Can the Premier tell us today when the trucking industry can expect to get information on how their carbon tax rebate will work or is this another question that he is going to dodge?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I am still reeling from the member opposite yelling off-mic that I should go back to where I came from, but we will address that later on.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to carbon pricing, we believe that we have balanced economic and environmental needs, and we want to make sure that we have smart policies that reduce emissions and steer investment into green technology.

We heard Yukoners and Canadians loud and clear with their support for carbon pricing and efforts to address climate change. We are going to continue to move forward on that.

We have established a system where businesses will get back, through the tax system, their rebates. We have also been able to maximize the amount of exemptions and northern-specific rebates. I think that we have done more than we could, possibly, to make sure that this is fair and equitable.

We have also put in place a check-in so that, after a few years of the carbon-pricing mechanism moving forward, we will have an opportunity to recheck and to make sure that this is as fair and as equitable as possible. We have heard the concerns from the transportation industry, and we are working to make sure that we identify those places where we can make a difference, but we are also listening to industry and making sure that we can prepare as we move forward and go into a check-in later on.

But again, Mr. Speaker, the ultimate goal is to reduce our emissions. It's good to see that conservative leaders across the country are changing their tune on carbon pricing. It will be interesting to see what the opposition may actually have in terms of a plan because we haven't heard anything since.

Mr. Cathers: Yukon companies are still reeling from this new Liberal tax. Last year, it was revealed that, despite

claims that aviation companies are exempt from the carbon tax, they're still required to fill out and submit all the paperwork associated with the federal *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*. This is a quote from Finance Canada's website: "Air carriers in the listed territories will continue to be subject to the GGPPA (e.g., reporting and filing requirements), as required, but ultimately the fuel charge will not be paid on any flights in the territories." So, they don't pay the tax, but they have to fill out the paperwork for no reason. The problem is that filling out the paperwork puts a large administrative burden on these companies. This is pointless red tape for the sake of red tape.

Will the government agree to write the federal government and ask that the aviation companies also be made exempt from the paperwork requirements?

Hon. Mr. Silver: As the member opposite identified — finally, clearly — this is a federal initiative. We will absolutely work, if there is an opportunity for us, to make sure that the paperwork is as succinct as possible, whether it's in carbon pricing or any other initiative that we can help the federal government on with their policies and programs.

It is interesting to note that conservatives across the country, Mr. Speaker, are changing their stance on carbon pricing because Canadians have made it clear that they support efforts to address climate change. Alberta, for example — Premier Kenney is introducing a \$30-per-tonne price on carbon on large industrial facilities to align with that federal climate legislation.

Mr. Speaker, when I spoke with the Prime Minister of Canada, I let him know my thoughts — this was after the election. Andrew Scheer said that he won the popular vote; I don't agree. I think that the environment won the popular vote. What we're seeing are premiers right across this country recognizing a need to change their opinion on carbon pricing and to work on an international goal to make sure that we can transition and be on the leading edge when it comes to transitioning off fossil fuel.

Mr. Cathers: Well, it is interesting to see the Premier trying to dodge this question while failing to recognize that they were hand-in-hand with the federal government eagerly welcoming the carbon tax.

Regarding the impacts of the carbon tax on placer mining, we know that placer miners have been paying the tax since July, but they are not currently receiving or able to apply for the rebate. This is due in part to the fact that there is not even a finalized process to follow or documents for placer miners to fill out. During the recent Geoscience conference, we heard from placer miners concerned about the lack of clarity around the process. Apparently, the government has told them that they will have to wait until sometime in the new year to get more information. Farmers are also waiting for details on how to get a rebate or exemption from the carbon tax on propane.

The carbon tax came into effect in July, and it is clear that the Liberals were not ready for the implementation, just ready for the photo op. When will the government make available the documents and process that placer miners need to follow to get their carbon tax rebates, and when will they tell farmers how

they can get a rebate from the Liberal government's tax on propane?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I do stand by the carbon-pricing mechanism. I think that most Canadians believe that we have to do what we can for the climate. Things are changing here rapidly in the Yukon — more so than in any jurisdiction in Canada. We need to do our part, Mr. Speaker. We also need to recognize that carbon pricing is the most cost-effective way of turning that page. We still have not heard a comprehensive plan from the Yukon Party about what they would do with carbon pricing. They will criticize from the bleachers, but they have no plan; they have no plan, Mr. Speaker.

In New Brunswick, Premier Blaine Higgs announced that he will look into complying with the federal government carbon-pricing plan in light of the new federal election. Mr. Higgs said — and I quote: “I can't ignore the obvious here. The country has spoken.” It's too bad, though, that we have heard little in terms of a comprehensive plan from the Yukon Party — just criticism after criticism after criticism followed today by the Member for Lake Laberge basically saying that, if you weren't born and raised here, you should go home.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

Notice of government private members' business

Hon. Ms. McPhee: In order to provide the House with more time to deal with government bills, the government private members are not identifying any motions standing in their names to be called on Wednesday, November 27, 2019.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Ms. McPhee: 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 (Mr. Hutton): The matter now before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a 15-minute recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 200: Second Appropriation Act 2019-20 — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Department of Community Services — continued

Chair: Is there any further general debate?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I just would like to welcome back department officials Deputy Minister Matt King and director of Finance, Mr. Phil MacDonald. I am looking forward to further debate on the supplementary.

Ms. Van Bibber: Welcome back to the officials. We left off yesterday on solid waste, and I just had one more question on that topic. It was around free stores, which a hot topic. The free stores at the local dump and at Raven Recycling in Whitehorse have been closed due to health reasons, but residents are anxious to know where they can recycle and share reusable items that they don't need.

Has the minister worked and thought of any other solutions that could be considered? It does seem to be working in the smaller communities, and we are wondering why not in our largest town in Yukon.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I want to say is that I love free stores, but they really struggle in all of our communities. The reason is that they get overwhelmed. That was true here in Whitehorse, that was true for the Salvation Army, and that was true generally. The solution, really — and this is just for all Yukoners — is that you need to take care of your free store rather than just dump stuff and dump more stuff.

I know that some Yukoners have gently used things and they can be reused, but all of us, when we go to our transfer stations, need to be very careful to make sure — I call it the “campsite principle” — that you leave that free store cleaner than when you got there. That just needs to be our rule. We need to all do that lifting together or they get overwhelmed. All of the free stores in our communities still end up having to put a lot of stuff into the landfill because they just get overwhelmed. It is a really tough nut to crack. The solution, in my opinion, is that we need to work with our citizens.

Mr. Kent: I just have a quick question about solid waste and the transfer stations. Some of the transfer stations, like the one at Marsh Lake, stopped accepting compost this past summer — I think it might even have been the summer before. I am just curious if the minister can explain that decision and whether or not there was any consultation done with the Department of Environment, especially given the fact that compost will often attract wildlife such as bears into people's private property. I am concerned about increased composting at home since the transfer stations have stopped accepting that. Is it just Marsh Lake, or are there other transfer stations? When was the decision made, and why was the decision made?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will have to check with the Community Operations branch to try to understand what has been happening in other communities. When it stopped in

Marsh Lake, it wasn't the Community Operations branch that said no; it was the local service providers who had tried it.

All of our landfills are attractants for bears, and we have the bear-proof fences. That is true, regardless. But we get into conversations about having compost there or not. I do think that it's one of those ones where we don't want compostable materials to go into our solid-waste stream if at all possible. We also don't want — in all of our communities — to attract bears around our homes. We do need to try to find solutions where possible.

My approach to this has been to work with the communities as they approach us. I don't have an update on where it has been in other transfer stations. I am happy to get that information and share it with the members opposite.

Mr. Istchenko: I also want to welcome the officials here today.

So, multi-year infrastructure work — the water and sewer work that has been done in Haines Junction through Building Canada or whatever the new funding is called now — I have spoken a little bit to the minister about this earlier. There were concerns from the business community that the recent contract and the way that it was tendered and managed is really affecting — adversely affecting — the business community out there.

It's difficult to manage a business with disruptions year after year and some of the businesses are going to be going on three years of disruptions. This is mainly so I can just get it back to my constituents, but what's the minister doing to ensure that this doesn't happen in the future — so I can go back to my constituents and let them know?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: In-ground work can be very disruptive. In working with the Village of Haines Junction, they were talking about having to dig up in the middle of winter because they were getting these breaks often in their in-ground infrastructure. It was very expensive. So they did identify this as a priority. We hope, once it's done, that it will last for decades. We really understand that it is disruptive and I appreciate that.

Now, on top of that, there was some back-and-forth on this very project with this contractor, and it wasn't that — it's always disruptive. This was possibly more disruptive and appreciating that — and so the answer that I have is that the best solution, as always, is to work with the municipality, the contractors, and the community to try to navigate those challenges. I don't have anything special or more to say.

I appreciated the concerns that were raised and we were working to try to deal with them and I just recognize that there are challenges. Whenever you're going to dig up a road in front of someone's house or in front of someone's business, it just is tough to navigate. When that goes on longer than anticipated, it can be frustrating. I appreciate it.

Mr. Istchenko: I appreciate the minister's answer.

I'm just looking for an update on the Beaver Creek Community Club. It was shutting down because they couldn't find volunteers, basically, to run it. I think I brought it to the minister's attention in the spring. So, I just wonder if the minister has an update for us on what Community Services has done for recruitment or toward solving that issue?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Chair, I don't have an update today. I know that the issue revolved at least partly around the library and the location of where the library was. I know that the department has been in conversation with Beaver Creek. Our hope is to — if it's possible — keep the library where it is, but it has been a back-and-forth conversation.

I'll just ask the deputy minister to — I may have a little something here.

I'm now reading here, Mr. Chair, that the Department of Highways and Public Works is currently securing a lease with the newly elected Beaver Creek Community Club. There's some uncertainty over the location for the library during the spring and summer; however, the Beaver Creek library can now continue in its current location.

If I get any more information, I'll be happy to share it across with the member opposite.

Mr. Istchenko: I understood that. The reason I asked the question was because the pool is also involved in that. So, I'm just wondering — the pool was closed last year. It's huge for the community to have that pool for the kids. If the community club was up and running again — Community Services manages the hiring of them, but they manage the financials of paying them. I'm just wondering if that means our pool will be open in Beaver Creek again.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: As the member opposite knows and I think has stated, these pieces of infrastructure — they're so vital for our communities. I know that the Sport and Recreation branch will be working with him to see if they can — our challenge in recent years has been recruitment. But if we can find someone, we are happy to try to get that pool up and running. I know they're working on it now.

Mr. Istchenko: I'm going to switch gears quickly to the Silver City transfer station.

I've written the minister a letter about — they were talking about closing that. My constituents there — the Arctic Institute, the local residents, and one local business owner — said that actually they had written a letter too.

I hate to say that this is a bit of background, because we hear that — but household garbage from Destruction Bay is loaded up from a local contractor and it goes to Whitehorse. They drive right by the Silver City transfer station. It's an electrified area. Every now and then, there is a bit of other material put there, but most of the time, it's just household garbage that is dropped there by the locals. The truck drives right by and pulls in. If it needs to be dumped, they dump it. If that dump closes, we are going to now have probably six or seven residents driving the 65 kilometres from Silver City to Haines Junction, which is going to increase global emissions, as opposed to just the truck that was going by there already. They are then going to have to start worrying about bears in the area with the household garbage, which means that they can't hold it and let it sit forever. This electrified area is a clean area where they put it now. So, I'm just wondering if the minister has had a chance to review that and maybe look at other options.

I do understand that in his response letter he was waiting to sign a regional landfill agreement with the Village of Haines Junction, I believe. It was in part of his answer. But that's just

one of those things that I think is doing our part for the environment — trucks driving by — as there's no cost to it except that the truck pulls in, which is like driving the length of our parking lot. It would sure make it a lot easier on those residents. I am just wondering if the minister can comment on that or perhaps he has something new for us.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: This is a hard conversation. I have made the offer to go out to every community, whether Keno or Johnson's Crossing. I made the offer as well to go out and talk with the MLA for Klwane and with the folks at Silver City. No matter where you are in the Yukon, you are a distance from a landfill. Some people are right next door to it; some are kilometres away. I myself am 15 kilometres away. I don't expect that someone is coming by to pick up my garbage each day. I don't drive to the landfill just to drive there.

What I do is, when I am heading into town to get groceries or something, then I am dropping off my garbage at the landfill, and then I am going to pick up groceries and then coming back so I don't add trips. I am not right next to it. I don't think that it needs to be that people do extra trips. I hope that what we do is we coordinate — and I think that all people who live in our communities love living in our communities, right? They choose it. They want to be there and they don't really want to go to town extra times; they just want to go when they have to go. There may be a business opportunity for the folks who are coming by from Destruction Bay and taking garbage in — that they could do some pickup. I know that the solid-waste folks are working with local residents to help them identify some of those opportunities.

But the thing that I want to say is that our smallest landfills — and now I am talking about Silver City, Keno, Burwash, and Johnson's Crossing — they are costing quite a bit of money per person — in the neighbourhood of \$5,000 per person per year in order to have that facility there.

So, there are real costs — they are significant. So, the notion is that what we were going to do — across the whole of the territory — was to set it up so that we have regional landfills and those regions will serve. I appreciate, as someone who lives in a home that is far away — it is in a neighbourhood, but it is quite a ways from a landfill — we all have to think through about how to deal with attractants to bears and how to deal with our solid waste. This approach, for the whole of the territory, is to close down our smallest, most expensive landfills in order to support the regional landfills. It is a territory-wide approach.

I am sure that is not welcome news for the member opposite, but I am happy to have that conversation directly with the constituents of his.

Ms. Van Bibber: There is mention of a co-lab, where a group of people would work together in an open, creative process to generate solutions for complex problems. How does the minister see this co-lab working and what complex problems is he targeting? There are experts on everything. How will this information be made available and to whom?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will just give the response based on my experience so far. We tried to run our *Liquor Act* review advisory committee with this thing called a co-lab. It's not so much different from a committee that you think of, but you

don't think of the committee as existing forever. You bring it together to deal with a very specific issue. In this case, it was to advise on the *Liquor Act* and regulations and to bring a range of perspectives together. The way in which we shared that information was with a "what we heard" document, which we provided for the public. I have also, in this Legislature — when we went through the *Liquor Act* — answered many questions and shared my learnings from that group, but the notion of a co-lab is just that you are very focused on trying to come up with solutions and that we are not thinking of a committee that lasts forever.

Ms. Van Bibber: Thank you for that answer. Can the minister tell us what the status is on the track and field complex at the FH Collins Secondary School and what the budget is for this project?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The track is nearly completed. They couldn't quite get the rubberized track on because temperatures changed too early on them this fall. We now will wait for the spring until temperatures warm up to do that last piece of the infrastructure. They still painted some lanes on there so that the students at FH Collins and neighbouring schools could get out there and have some of their track meets on the paved track. Our anticipation is that the overall project will be completed in the spring of next year or maybe the spring/early summer. It is all dependent on temperatures before they can put that rubberized surface down.

The overall project is estimated at \$8.1 million, and the Yukon government is paying for roughly 25 percent of that or a little over \$2 million.

Ms. Van Bibber: Can the minister confirm whether there are public documents that list the mill rates and tax formulas for municipalities and unincorporated municipalities? Could he commit to ensuring that something is published that can be accessed publicly?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The mill rate is the rate that's applied to the property assessments. In municipalities, it's set by bylaw by municipalities. Those bylaws are all public, as far as I understand. In unincorporated communities, it's set by regulations. Those regulations are also, I believe, all public. I think, though, that what may be happening is that they are regulations from many, many years ago, and they just haven't changed over time. So, I think that the information is public, but I'm happy to try to track down what the numbers are for members opposite if they would like, but I think that it is public information.

Ms. Van Bibber: Sorry — I'm sort of random and all over the place at the moment — to keep you on your toes.

There is a line item for Dawson north end plan and development. We're wondering where it is at this particular time. Have the plans been completed? When will details be seen?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: This project is a priority that has been set by the municipality of Dawson. It's about some lot development at the north end of the downtown. We were talking in Question Period earlier today about some of the lot lines and encroachments and things. It is complicated in that area, because it is Dawson — let's just say that.

We are working with the municipality. We have a planner from the Land Development branch who is working with the municipal planner to work through those issues. They will be requesting some in-ground infrastructure to service those lots. We will be putting in an application again, as a priority as defined by Dawson, to get at that infrastructure. I think that, right now, the timing of it is really based on our work with the municipality — just making sure that they are in conversation with the residents in the area and that we are following their lead.

Ms. Van Bibber: I am not sure if this is your department — daylight saving time is what I want to talk about.

As we know, we have brought the issue forward a number of times, but we still keep changing our clocks back and forth. I understand that, when the Premier of BC was recently visiting, it was a discussion topic. Premier Horgan said that he was waiting on the northern states, and apparently, we are waiting on what BC is doing. Has the minister got any idea of the parameters around the discussions about daylight savings?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Chair, this falls under the Executive Council Office. I do know that the Premier wrote a letter to Premier Horgan, but I think that the question is better posed to the Premier than to me. I certainly have had lots of conversations about the issue when I go to communities. I tend to pass those on to the Premier.

Ms. Van Bibber: Thank you, minister. It was just a random thought that I threw at you.

Lot development — in Whitehorse, we have future areas of development planning happening. Are these new lots strictly in Whistle Bend? If not, can the minister tell us what other areas are in discussion for future use?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The list that I'll provide is Whistle Bend plus this list. It's not "this list or..." — it's "plus".

There is some work that we've been doing with the Kwanlin Dün First Nation in and around Takhini and on land that they own. I already mentioned earlier that Kwanlin Dün has started to title or has registered to title. We're working in coordination with the city and Kwanlin Dün on that.

There has been some development on 5th and Rogers downtown, because the environmental work looks like — if there are developments that take into account venting of, say, underground parking or something like that, then we're there in terms of remediation, and so that brings 5th and Rogers on.

We ask the city, because the city has a robust planning department. They tell us where they're looking to do development, and then we work based on their lead, so it isn't us identifying the locations as much.

What we're also starting to see is that there is some interest as well from private development. These will be areas that are over and above Whistle Bend.

Ms. Van Bibber: The same thoughts with rural Yukon — I would like to know what is being done with lot development in the communities, if anything.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: We began earlier talking about Dawson. There's some work there and also on the Dome Road.

The Village of Carmacks — some residential and industrial development projects. There were some that were

downtown and some based on work possibly coming out of Gateway work and the bypass.

In Watson Lake, there are various country and urban residential and industrial projects.

The Village of Mayo is infill, and we also are in conversation with Na-Cho Nyäk Dun about up on the bench.

In Teslin, we are working to partner with the Teslin Tlingit Council.

Faro and Haines Junction are trying land development planning work under their official community plans right now.

There is some work happening in a suite of smaller communities. We also have work going on with the Kluane First Nation and Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation. There is quite a range across many of our communities.

Ms. Van Bibber: It was stated earlier that there are smaller lots in the range of \$58,000 that are being offered in the latest block of lot sales — so, smaller lots, smaller homes, and hopefully smaller prices. Are there thoughts of expanding these affordable lots? Is this going to be a consistent offering when developing other lots?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: When I rose earlier, I was talking about how here in the City of Whitehorse we tend to work with the city planning department, and they are the ones who plan things out. So, I just want to defer, because they are great partners. They do terrific planning work, and they are thinking about these questions. I am here more as a messenger than as one trying to drive the conversation necessarily. I know, though, that, for example, we had a very good conversation about 5th and Rogers and what kind of density we might be able to get there, and so I think that it is the city that is planning out the neighbourhoods of Whistle Bend. There are some denser areas in more of the town centre — the high street. There are other areas that are larger, and it is a real blend.

There are also quite a few multi-family lots. When we put those lots out for sale — they look like very expensive lots, but they can have quite a few families living on them. In some ways, it is better to look at the number of units that we think are coming rather than just the number of lots.

Mr. Hassard: I would like to thank the officials for being here to help the minister with these tough questions that we are doling out today.

I have a question for the minister regarding the Marsh Lake lagoon. I don't believe that it is currently open, so I'm just curious if we can get an update on the status of that. Maybe we will get some more questions depending on the response.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: It's very unfortunate news, Mr. Chair. Someone or some folks dumped hydrocarbons into the lagoon. They contaminated it. When we looked at it, we were hoping that it was something that we might be able to remediate quickly, but it was a lot more contamination than we were hoping. I don't have any more updates to date other than working with the community to try to look for solutions.

Mr. Hassard: I know it's not going to be anytime in the near future by the sounds of it, but when the time does come that it looks like they are going to be able to make some headway on it — if he could just update the Legislature so that we could pass it on to anyone who is asking.

I had a couple of questions about First Nation fire crews. I am curious if the minister can tell us how much money was paid to First Nation fire crews throughout the Yukon this year. Also, I am curious as to whether the minister feels that those First Nation fire crews were utilized to their full potential.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, yes; as I get information on the Marsh Lake sewage lagoon, I will be happy to update members here.

Just a reminder that period 7 is coming in, so the final fires are still in the tally sheet at the moment — but it was over \$2.8 million for First Nation wildland fire crews. In general, half of the initial firefighting was the 13 First Nation initial attack crews. They were utilized very well. The words “full potential” — of course, it always depends on the fire season itself, but they were heavily used this year. They did a great job from early to late in the season.

The support crews that were there are a different sort of level. They were used as well. We always want to be careful that we are using them to the scope of their training. Just because they were trained as support crews doesn't mean that we are going to put them on that initial attack. That is all about making sure that everyone is safe. They were well-utilized. I think, though, having said that — the department always works to have ongoing dialogue about enhancing all of that and creating as many opportunities for our First Nation contractors as well to move forward.

Mr. Hassard: I had a question for the minister regarding comprehensive municipal grants. I am curious if the minister could tell us when the next review is scheduled to be done on those.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am not sure if the question was “started” or “done”.

Mr. Hassard: I am curious as to when the next review will be on the comprehensive municipal grant.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: We have already started it. The Association of Yukon Communities wanted to have a deeper look this time. They asked us early on if we could get going on the review. That preliminary work is underway now so that we can take the time to do that deeper review.

Mr. Hassard: I guess the next question would be: When does the minister anticipate that work to be completed?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: If my recollection serves, the agreement came in on April 1, 2018, and it's a five-year agreement. I think that we would like to make sure that our municipalities have a lot of indication about where things would go. I would hope that somewhere in and around the four-year mark — a little plus there — we would have something through our side and then be able to give them that heads-up so that everybody knows where the grant will be heading.

Mr. Hassard: I had a couple of questions for the minister on landfills. I know that Community Services has been working with some communities regarding our agreements on regional landfills. I'm wondering if the minister could tell us which communities the department is currently working with and if there are any progress reports — I guess we would call it that — on how those negotiations or talks are going.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Our director of operations is in conversation with all of the municipalities around those agreements. The hope always was to have those agreements in place in early 2020 so that — 2021 was the target for our municipal partners to introduce changes within their communities. I don't have any further specific updates about them, just that, as far as I know, they are all ongoing.

Mr. Hassard: I thank the minister for that. I have a couple of questions regarding the cancelled Faro fire hall project. I guess the first question would be: Could the minister provide us with a pre-construction estimate for that project?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will work to try to get the number about what it was from our forecast perspective. I won't be giving an exact number because I still want to stick with this notion — and I will get some direction from the department — that it will be the range that we were forecasting.

That project overall, we felt, was over-scoped. Again, what we do is we talk with the communities — in this case, the municipality of Faro. The previous mayor and council and city manager asked for this larger fire hall. We took a look at it. The bids came in quite high, and we decided to have another conversation with mayor and council and the new city manager, and they all agreed that it should be a smaller fire hall — when I say “smaller”, it means a similar size to our other municipalities — so that is what it was being re-scoped as.

Mr. Hassard: I would hope that the minister could provide us with a fairly accurate pre-construction estimate. Because of the fact that this project has now been cancelled, I am assuming that the proposed project moving forward — as the minister has alluded to — is going to be substantially different. I don't think that there would be anything keeping the minister from providing us with some accurate information.

But, on the Faro fire hall, I guess I would ask the minister if he can provide the Legislature with any timelines as to when he sees this project going back out to tender and when the anticipated start date and completion date may be.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will just review with the department about that number. I am happy to share it if, as the member suggested, it has passed and doesn't have that type of impact.

Currently, we are in the design phase. There are dollars in this year's budget for that design work. I would have to look to see the development. Depending on next year's budget and all that work, the starting construction work could be next year or the year after.

Mr. Hassard: Maybe the minister, once he determines when the start date will be or when the tender date will come out, could provide the House with an update.

Also in terms of fire halls, we know that the tender forecasts talk about a new fire hall and public works building in Carmacks. The forecast says that the tender is to be released in 2020, with completion in 2021. We are curious if the minister could provide us with an update on whether or not that project is on track for that time schedule.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I just had a good conversation with officials here, but I feel like I've just dropped the question as it

was posed. If I could just ask the member to reframe it for me, I would appreciate that.

Mr. Hassard: That old age will get you.

I'm just wondering if the Carmacks fire hall is on schedule to go out to tender in February 2020.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The branch believes that the timeline is still generally correct — heading toward a completion of March 2021. As we have used this envelope approach, one of our ways of dealing with the envelope approach is to allow for some flexibility based on how — what bids we receive through that tender and allow for that float.

Mr. Hassard: I have a couple of questions on FireSmart. I will just throw all three of them into one, and then you can work through them.

First, we're curious as to the budget for FireSmart this year. How many projects fell under that budget? How does that compare to previous years as well?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The budget in the mains, as I understand it — because it has not changed under this supplementary budget — is \$850,000. The number of projects is 35. I will just check with officials about whether that's a change or difference from previous years.

Mr. Cathers: I have a number of questions today related to both my critic role for part of Community Services as well as some other issues related to my riding.

First of all, I'm going to begin with the topic of emergency medical services and the support that is provided by government for EMS both within Whitehorse and in rural Yukon. As the minister knows, outside of Whitehorse, the majority of our communities are served — based on the volunteers in communities — and we are very fortunate to have these dedicated volunteers, some of whom have been serving their communities for many years. Some of them are new. Both groups, of course, are very important to our ability to deliver that service. Without them, we would not have that service in rural Yukon in a timely manner.

To begin with, perhaps the minister could tell me: Could he provide a community-by-community breakdown across the territory of the number of emergency medical services volunteers? I'll just leave it there for the moment and not pile too many questions at a time.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would just like to echo the Member for Lake Laberge's comments to just say thank you to all of our EMS volunteers across the territory. I so appreciate the work that they do.

The numbers that I have in front of me — and noting that these numbers change from time to time, but these are the numbers that I have: Beaver Creek, five volunteers; Carmacks, nine; Carcross, seven; Dawson City, 11; Destruction Bay, seven; Eagle Plains, three; Faro, eight; Haines Junction, 10; Marsh Lake, seven; Mayo, 10; Pelly Crossing, four; Ross River, five; Tagish, nine; Teslin, eight; and Watson Lake, four.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the answer from the minister and the breakdown by community. It is noteworthy in some of those communities, including Watson Lake, that the total number of volunteers is a pretty small pool to be depending on to provide — especially around-the-clock service —

recognizing that there are, in Watson Lake and Dawson City, some paid staff, but for the bulk of the hours of any given day, it still depends on the volunteers to provide those services.

So, can the minister tell me what the government is doing in terms of recruitment of volunteers? What efforts are they making to encourage people to join? Can he describe what is occurring there, particularly within each of those communities that the minister spoke to? If they are not currently doing anything, then I would encourage the minister to turn their attention to doing more in the area of volunteer recruitment, but perhaps he could tell me a bit about what activities have taken place this fiscal year and what activities are contemplated.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I want to say is that these efforts pretty much need to be ongoing. It is always an issue for us. I will just give sort of the high level of the general things that we do, and then I will talk more specifically about Watson Lake.

We, of course, support local whenever there is a recruitment initiative. We do training for our volunteers and orientation for new recruits, so there is a recruitment and retention effort. We have and continue to indemnify our volunteers so that they are not held personally liable for their volunteerism. We supply them with their gear — their personal protection equipment.

With respect to Watson Lake — we had a direct conversation with the municipality, the Town of Watson Lake, to discuss the pressures there. We have been working to reallocate resources within the department to support Watson Lake as much as we can. There is a relationship even with the town firefighters, because they often get called out to assist, for example, with lifts and issues like that. We recognize that it is an ongoing concern in Watson Lake. We have been trying to work directly with the community to support volunteers and to recruit.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the answer from the minister. Noting that those numbers include the only four volunteers in Watson Lake, can the minister tell me how many times within the last three months Watson Lake has been without local EMS coverage? "How many hours" would perhaps be a better way to put it. I do also point to local because the government has a practice of deploying EMS staff from Whitehorse when there is no local coverage available in communities. The reality is, as the minister knows very well, that for certain types of health emergencies such as a stroke or heart attack, deploying from Whitehorse is just not going to cut it. It's going to be too little, too late for the people affected by it if there isn't local coverage. Having gaps in local coverage of ambulance services is of great concern to Yukon communities.

Specifically, could the minister indicate how many times in the last three months Watson Lake has been without local coverage and how many hours has that comprised?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I don't have that very specific and very detailed request for information in front of me. What I can say is that there are two types of periods we are concerned about. First of all, when there are planned absences — meaning that, through scheduling, we understand that there is a shortage of local volunteers to cover things off. In those instances, we

reallocate resources into the community to cover it off. Sometimes it might be just the staff themselves there, or sometimes it is borrowing folks from other areas to cover off there locally. In unplanned times — that is a time when we didn't anticipate that there was going to be a shortage. In those times, we work with, again, the Town of Watson Lake and we work with our air ambulance folk to do our best to cover off. I want to differentiate between those two types of times.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the minister differentiating, but unfortunately, one of the problems that we have — and in fact some are of the view — myself included — that what contributes to the lack of understanding by people in the community about the needs within their area is the lack of reporting about when there are gaps in coverage. If people aren't aware of the problem that exists, they are less likely to step forward to help than if they are aware of a problem that is there. Simply to say to a citizen in Watson Lake, for example, "You should join EMS" — that is not necessarily as powerful a motivation as to make them aware of how many times their community is without coverage so that they can do that.

In the past, I wrote to the minister proposing the idea of increased reporting that would be provided to municipalities, local advisory councils, First Nation communities, and as well, to Members of the Legislative Assembly. The minister at the time did not agree to the request. I had positive feedback on that from a number of rural volunteers who also agreed and felt that increased reporting would help drive community interest in volunteering.

Now that the minister has had time to consider that request, will he agree to provide increased reporting about expected gaps in coverage in rural EMS so that it provides those communities and the residents of those communities with more information both about gaps in coverage, which may affect their safety, as well as making them aware of what the need is within their community?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I'm going to go back and try to look at that response that I gave to the member opposite. I agree that it's important that we keep everybody informed about what's going on. I don't disagree with that point at all. I think that it's important that it be done in a way that is reasonable to collect. I would just ask for some indulgence to go back and look at that.

I have in front of me a situation report which is sort of a typical one prepared on a weekly basis and which goes out to our community nursing stations, municipal partners, other allied responders — that sort of information. There is nothing that I sense here that would be not — the sort of information that we don't want to share. On a community-by-community basis, it lists off what we anticipate for that coming week — what we have in terms of coverage and response times and actions taken if there is something different then sort of a full response scheduled.

For example, I will just read here for Watson Lake — this was from the spring of this year. Under this action, it states that when there is no local coverage, the spare ambulance will be parked at the airport for use by medevac crews. When there is

one responder available, the spare ambulance will be brought to the airport to meet medevac crews. So, there is an approach.

I think that the member opposite was talking more about this notion of the public and how they can be informed so that they will choose to volunteer.

I saw a similar situation this year when the Premier and I were touring communities. It is a pretty typical response that, when people see the threat of wildfire, they often start volunteering for their local fire department. I appreciate his point, and I will look back and review our correspondence with each other.

Mr. Cathers: I would just encourage the minister to consider making reports like the information that he referred to that is shared internally, but not externally — to making more of that information available publicly. I think that it is information that, for people in those communities — while the government may be sensitive to not wanting people to know where there are gaps in coverage because it is perhaps embarrassing to the minister in terms of the size of the problem — I encourage him to recognize that actually being clear to the public about what the problem is would likely result in more people volunteering. I do appreciate that the minister acknowledged that, in the case of wildfires, it had a positive impact on firefighter recruitment. It is very similar in that people who are community-minded and who don't actually understand — because government hasn't shared that information — how frequently there are gaps in locally available EMS coverage — it is fair to say that many community-involved citizens who are aware of that would either volunteer or be substantially more likely to volunteer than if they were in the situation that they are in now — where they are just not fully informed by government about how big the problem is.

The minister made mention of the contingency provision if there is no local coverage of parking the ambulance at the airport and staff dispatching from Whitehorse to provide that ambulance service. Two of the big problems with that are how long it takes and the fact that, in winter, there are some items kept in ambulances that are susceptible to freezing.

Some of the drugs and other items that are often in an ambulance should not be frozen. If the ambulance is parked for several hours at the airport at Watson Lake at minus 40 degrees, it would not appear to be a fully stocked, ready-to-roll ambulance due to the perishability of some of the contents there. I would encourage the minister to make more information available publicly about that so that people can make an informed decision.

As the minister is aware, he made a decision to take away the four-by-four ambulance from Tagish. Although, I believe, they did give that back as a search and rescue vehicle, what I have heard from people in the community is that it is now parked outside in the winter, there isn't space inside, and they can't keep freezable items in that.

Can the minister confirm if that is correct? Also, can he indicate whether the government is considering providing rural EMS units that want a four-by-four ambulance when vehicles are coming up for replacement?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: We did provide Tagish with that option. Most of the other communities that I have had the pleasure to talk with have not been requesting the four-by-fours; they have been requesting the updated ambulances. We also offered them — if my recollection serves — the choice about whether they wanted to keep the one warm or the other, and there is a differing opinion of the local volunteers in Tagish. I don't really want to get in the middle of it, but my understanding is that they have chosen to keep the newer ambulance in the bay. That is their call.

If there are other communities that are looking for some other vehicles that I haven't heard about, I am sure that we would entertain that conversation, but my understanding from most of our EMS folk is that they like the new ambulances and the equipment that is there.

Mr. Cathers: Well, I will forward the minister's response to people who are interested.

Can the minister tell me — in looking at the expenses by department, finishing off the last fiscal year, the Public Accounts has shown in schedule 4 on page 152 that the Protective Services branch lapsed \$792,287, according to the audited Public Accounts. Can the minister tell me what made up that lapse in Protective Services? Was it related to equipment such as ambulances or fire trucks not being purchased? If so, was any of that then revoted into the current fiscal year that we are talking about here in the Assembly today?

Mr. Cathers: Since it appears that the minister and officials are in the process of finding that information, in the interest of expediting time, I will just ask another couple of questions that relate to how many ambulances have been purchased this year or are planned to be purchased by the end of the fiscal year. Are all purchases on track as predicted in the spring, or has there been any change from the budget in the spring?

As well, could the minister tell me about what the government is doing in terms of making training available in rural communities specifically? Could the minister either tell me what community visits have been made to provide EMR training and other training to volunteers and prospective volunteers or commit to getting back to me with that information in either a letter or legislative return?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Sorry, Mr. Chair — we weren't anticipating getting into the Public Accounts, so we just hadn't prepared material. Can I please ask the member opposite to just let me know again what page and what dollar value he's looking at, please?

Mr. Cathers: Sure — and I appreciate that from the minister. I'm looking at page 152 in the Public Accounts on the line item for Protective Services. It's showing that there was a \$792,287 lapse in the amount there that occurred — or, pardon me, so we look at the amount — sorry, just bear with me a moment here. Looking at the line item there — if the minister will pardon me, I misread that amount. Usually bracketed figures, as he would know, indicate a reduction, whereas in this case, on this chart, amounts in brackets are overestimates, which is different from the way it's normally shown. So, under

the schedule — pardon me, again; I misread that amount — there was an increase of \$792,287 over what the revised estimates were. I don't believe that we have received an explanation for that amount.

Could the minister either provide me information now or commit to getting back in a legislative return or a letter?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Again, we are working to try to find — we will work to try to get an answer.

On to the other question that the member posed while we were trying to gather the information, we have one ambulance that is in the Community Services mains budget for this year. There is no change in the supplementary. We have two planned for next year. It's based on our asset management schedule for equipment.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate that information and look forward to receiving others later.

Another question that I asked — or, pardon me, I almost asked that question, and I was getting ahead of myself here.

The next question on my list is about the training that has been made available within rural areas. Can the minister advise which communities Community Services has provided training in to rural EMS, and when that has occurred this year — or commit to getting back to me with that information at a later date, if it is not at his fingertips?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I don't have a list in front of me of what the current training schedule is in all of our communities. I recall that when I wrote back to the member opposite last time when he wrote to me asking about training in our communities, I did pull together a list of what was going on across all of our communities at that time, and I gave a three- to four-month training plan.

The thing I want to say is that we have a dedicated training centre. We have a mobile training unit. A lot of the training is self-directed learning online, and there are often local training nights where we come out and work with the local volunteers and do certificate courses at the same time. It is a suite — I think that it is generally always ongoing — and I don't have the specific list, but I have seen some of it when I go into my own communities and attend some of the EMS, and fire nights. I have seen some of the ambulance folk coming from the government and working with the individuals.

Mr. Cathers: I would just ask a question — the minister would, I am sure, be surprised if I didn't ask about the status of uniform kits for rural EMS, which has been an issue in the past. While I won't rehash much of the debate that we have had about the issue of volunteers deploying by helicopters, the minister had indicated that they would be considering providing more training to allow rural EMS volunteers to deploy by helicopter. Can the minister tell me what, if anything, has been done in that area and if more is being planned for later this year?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: With respect to uniforms, the last time I checked, they were being supplied. I recall one of our crews asking for some specific gear that was more high-visibility gear. I think we got that for them; I think it is in hand. There were some challenges for a period of time with the suppliers. Things were falling away because suppliers had

failed a couple of times to get that equipment, but I think that things are in hand at the moment.

With respect to helicopter training, the response that I've given previously and the one I still will give is that this — whenever we work with equipment like helicopters, it requires another level of training. We are happy to get it for our volunteers, although we will direct them through our special operations medical extraction team or the heavy operations team. So we have a couple of these groups that are really dedicated to working around what can be rather dangerous situations. My recollection is that, previously, the member opposite has said that it's just a "get on and off a helicopter" kind of thing, but it's not. From our perspective, when you're dealing with an emergency situation — where people are at risk and there can be challenging scenarios — we actually need to make sure that any volunteer or staff member who we put into those situations has gone through some rather rigorous training.

That's not to say that our volunteers can't do that. We just need to put them through those programs that are specialized. That's how we want to work in order to ensure safety.

Mr. Cathers: I know the minister and I are going to agree to disagree on that, but I would appreciate it if he could — he didn't provide detail about what training might be made available. If he could get back to me with that in a legislative return or a letter, that would be appreciated.

I would also like to ask — in the area of volunteer firefighters, what is being done to support them across the territory? How many volunteers at the fire departments that are run by the government — how many of the ones under Community Services, I should say — what the volunteer numbers are at each one of those volunteer fire departments — if the minister could provide any information about what is being done in terms of recruitment for volunteer firefighters.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Municipalities are responsible for their fire halls and we're responsible for the rest. That's how the split works.

I don't have a listing of the number of volunteers on a per-community basis, so I will work to get that for the member opposite.

Similar to how I discussed the high level — the types of training that we have for our ambulance folk — we have a range of training programs for our volunteer firefighters: life safety, fire prevention, operation of equipment, vehicles, and extractions. I had the pleasure of witnessing a community competition this late summer with several of our volunteer fire crews. So, it's a range.

Similar to EMS, our job is to make sure that we are providing training, orientation, indemnification, and supplying gear and as much as possible showing appreciation for our volunteers so that we can increase retention.

Mr. Cathers: I am going to move on to other areas here this afternoon. I want to just ask about — pardon me, I did have another question on fire that I wanted to ask.

My colleague, the Member for Porter Creek North, did have some debate with the minister yesterday and asked questions regarding what occurred this summer with wildland fire and particularly with rural fire crews from — I believe the

minister indicated that it was Ibex Valley, Mount Lorne, and Golden Horn that sent volunteers, fire trucks, and equipment up the highway to assist and protect Stewart Crossing and provide assistance in that area — understanding that, at the time, Wildland Fire Management crews were not on to assist them with that.

It is of concern for me, as the MLA for one of the areas that is affected, that the minister seemed to be a little dismissive of the concern raised by my colleague about the drain on resources. That is one of the reasons why I would appreciate the minister providing the information that I just asked about — the number of volunteers per department — because people within my constituency — and I am sure that the same occurred south of town — who were aware that there was a reduction in the available fire response from their local fire hall because it was up the north Klondike Highway — hours away. I know that people were wondering about what would occur.

The minister made reference to mutual aid agreements, but as I understand it — already under mutual aid agreements — typically, if there are fires outside of Whitehorse, the Whitehorse Fire Department is often responding into the Mayo Road area or into Ibex Valley. Ibex is typically responding, along with Hootalinqua, to incidents within the Hootalinqua area and vice versa. Ibex Valley is providing service in the Mendenhall area because the Mendenhall fire hall does not have enough volunteers to operate, and when they are already being tasked to provide that service — to use an illustrative example, if a vehicle were up the highway at Stewart Crossing and Ibex Valley also responded to a call within Hootalinqua's area at, let's say, the Grizzly Valley area, and then there was an incident within the Ibex Valley, the question is: Who is left to respond? Well, there's nobody local, and the question of whether Whitehorse would be able to is a concern.

I don't expect that I am going to get a much different response from the minister than my colleague received yesterday, but I would encourage him to treat that issue more seriously in the future and recognize that there needs to be sufficient wildland fire coverage to prevent a situation where half of the crews of the volunteer fire departments in the Whitehorse area are dispatched over 100 miles away and are not able to respond to their own communities — and their equipment is not able to respond.

I am just going to move on to another area that my colleague touched on in the hope that the minister might have an answer today. My colleague asked if the minister could provide a breakdown, including how much was spent on helicopter contracts, air tanker contracts, increased staffing costs, and so on. At the time yesterday — and I'm hoping the minister has the information today — he said, "... I don't have helicopter versus our air tankers. I just have aviation or aircraft broadly..." The total amount that he provided was, he said, around \$14 million. Whether the minister has that information or not, the minister signs off on the contracts for air services unless they've changed the contracting practices. Having been a Minister of Community Services, I know that it wasn't even as simple as an amount for just helicopter services being approved by the minister. The minister actually approves the

contracts and signs the contracts. If the contract has gone over due to air coverage, the minister has to sign off on those contracts when they get over a certain threshold, which would certainly occur in a fire year of this magnitude.

What I am asking is if the minister could just provide us with those helicopter costs and the air tanker costs, again, in the interest of public disclosure of this information.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am going to try to go through a few responses here. First of all, with respect to Public Accounts, it was \$792,000 from page 152.

The department officials have let me know that this is a mix of components within Protective Services, but largely it was the public safety broadband network, which was delayed forward by one year to 2019-20 — so to this year. That is the bulk of it.

Second of all, I always try to treat all questions respectfully in this Legislature. I certainly hope that I treated the question from the Member for Porter Creek North respectfully. I disagree with the Member for Lake Laberge that I am in some way flippant or not concerned about the situation with respect to our volunteers. Maybe there is a slight misunderstanding.

The special heavy operations team is comprised from volunteers across a number of fire halls all over the territory. When a call goes out, those volunteers choose to respond. Then what we do is work to shore up their fire departments to make sure that they are safe while those volunteers choose to go and respond. I don't think that they are taking equipment away from our communities. I will check that, but my understanding is that we will be supplying that equipment.

In this instance, going up to Stewart and responding to the Ethel Lake fire, there were volunteers who came from Ibx, Golden Horn, and Mount Lorne. Just a note: two of those locations are in my riding. I would also be concerned that we have coverage, but I am relying on the Fire Marshal's Office to let me know that they have procedures in place to make sure that there is coverage at those times. Again, I have no interest in taking away information from the public to let them know; I am happy to let the public know how this all works.

Overall, they do it in a way to try to ensure that they are not depleting a community complement and that there still is coverage within that community. I just want to give a shout-out to those volunteers. They are very conscientious about protecting their community and serving. They are often very quick to step up to the plate and try to volunteer. Overall, I understand that we have 150 active volunteer firefighters across the Yukon. We also do the Ember Fire Academy each year now. I think it has been three years that it has been in place. It is a terrific program. We try to work through the Fire Marshal's Office to support our communities in their recruitment.

I do sign off on the air tanker contract, and that is my role as minister. However, helicopters are contracted through a standing offer list that is publicly tendered and that the department rotates through in how they work with those contracts. Of course, it depends on the fire activity. If there is more fire activity, then we will deploy more resources.

Our head of Wildland Fire Management — our director there — will make the judgment call about what resources to

allocate toward those fires based on the severity of the threat that they see coming.

I'll leave it there.

Mr. Cathers: Still, with the significant increases that would occur to the helicopter costs, the minister would have had to sign off on those increases even if the original contracts themselves didn't reach the level that required his approval. The increases to the budget would have required that. I guess I'm not going to get more information from the minister today, but I would appreciate it if he would provide the total cost of helicopter contracts as well as how many hours that represented at a later date.

As it relates to the volunteer fire departments being dispatched to assist with a fire, I just want to make sure that the minister understands that I'm not trying to suggest that the sky is falling in this area, but a reduction in fire response capacity in a community is a reduction in capacity. It's no different from if they just had one fire truck in that area. They don't have the same capacity, which is why we provide them with two fire trucks — typically a pumper and a pumper tanker. If one of those vehicles is away, then it's not available.

In terms of equipment being dispatched, I would point out to the minister that I was actually at Ibx Valley fire hall when they did roll, and that included taking equipment from the fire hall. At the time, considering the circumstance that the government was in without having wildland fire crews on — I'm not suggesting that it was the wrong decision at that point in time, but I am suggesting that government, especially considering that they have talked as much as they have about climate change, recognize that the fire season is likely to get longer and ensure that they adjust accordingly in terms of their planning. When I say "planning", I mean for not only the air coverage, but also the ground coverage with wildland fire crews both in Wildland Fire Management as well as First Nation fire crews and any other fire crews that are contracted. I will just leave that there for the minister.

I am going to move on to another area, and that is in terms of the government's handling of waste and solid waste. I did find it surprising that there was a commitment in the throne speech — which I don't have in front of me, but I believe that it was on page 9 of that throne speech that the government issued at the start of this Sitting. It made a commitment around expanding recycling. Just a couple or three weeks after that, the minister, along with local recyclers, announced a contraction of the recycling services being provided, that being that they are no longer providing the recycling of glass, other than the ones for which there is a refund, including beer bottles and pop bottles.

It does seem strange that they would go in the opposite direction from what the throne speech suggested, especially considering, in areas — as the minister knows, a number of my constituents are not happy with the government's plan to charge tipping fees in the Whitehorse periphery, including at the Deep Creek facility in my area. Where is the logic in government ceasing to provide glass recycling services and then charging people a tipping fee for dumping the glass that government is no longer giving the ability to recycle?

Secondly, the minister likes to compare what Whitehorse residents pay with the tipping fees that he is determined to implement in rural Yukon. There is a big difference in that the Whitehorse facility does provide composting while, so far, at many of the facilities in the periphery, composting is not available. The minister indicated at a public meeting in my riding that, effectively, they aspire to add compost at some point, but the disparity — in this case, between people in Whitehorse and people outside — is that, if you are in Whitehorse, you have the accessible option of composting and reducing a significant amount of volume. That is one of the arguments that some have used for tipping fees — to encourage more composting. But when composting isn't an option at rural facilities — run by the Minister of Community Services — and when the Department of Environment is actively encouraging people not to have things in their yard that might attract bears such as compost heaps, what does government expect people to do to reduce their volume if they haven't made composting available and, of course, they are actually reducing the number of things that they can recycle?

I will just add one more question to that string about solid-waste facilities before I sit down and turn it over to the minister. Considering the fact that, as the minister knows, some of my constituents were unhappy about the fact that the decision to implement tipping fees at the facility that is in place to serve them was made without one scrap of public consultation — and over 900 residents of the Hot Springs Road and the Mayo Road areas are not represented by the Association of Yukon Communities — can the minister explain why government decided it was appropriate to make the decision without consulting people who, in terms of population numbers, are a similar population if the minister and the government had decided not to consult with both Carmacks and Mayo?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, let me talk about the throne speech. We did talk about the importance of doing a territory-wide regional waste management system and improving recycling. We are working to improve recycling. I was saddened by the news that our recyclers — Raven, P&M, and Blue Bin — just understood that glass doesn't have a recyclability to it and that we are actually charging money to ship it out. It was their decision to change that. It's challenging when you want to get a message to Yukoners that we really need to reduce, reuse, and recycle. I just won't let go of those first ones. To reduce is our best solution.

We did a lot of talking around solid waste. I acknowledge that we didn't get to every community and we didn't discuss with every group the regionalization of the landfill system, but to suggest that it has not been around — I recall the same conversation when I was a city councillor. Sometime between 2012 and 2015, I recall having these conversations about how our solid-waste system needed to be a territory-wide system, that it needed an overhaul, that we needed to do the heavy lifting, and that recycling is a challenge. I recall that very same conversation when I got elected into this position. It is a challenging problem. I agree that not everyone will be there.

Really, what we are talking about for the folks who neighbour Whitehorse is about a buck a bag. I did have that

conversation in the Member for Lake Laberge's community. There were a couple of meetings there, and I came out to one of them. I did hear concerns, and I think that it is fair to say that Yukoners, if they haven't been paying for garbage, don't want to pay for garbage. Realistically, Mr. Chair, we are paying for garbage. It's just where, when, and how. I think that it's important that we make it even across the territory. It's important that we put a price signal. It's a polluter-pay type of system.

By the way, that buck a bag in Deep Creek, in and around Lake Laberge, or in my neck of the woods, Marsh Lake, is not going to cover the costs. All that it's going to do is level the cost so that people stop driving from town out to Deep Creek to drop off their garbage — and then having the government pay to bring it back — and, by the way, pay higher tipping fees. It's not a good system at all, and we need to change it. I am happy to sit down and talk with Yukoners. We will discuss their concerns, but I would like to work with them on how to bring this in so that it will work well — as well as it can — for all of our communities.

I am sure I will get more questions. Let me just sit back down and then get the additional questions that I think will be coming.

Mr. Cathers: Again, I don't want to be too rough on the minister here, but it is a case — when the minister talks about wanting to work with me and my constituents — of implementing it. For people who wanted input on the decision and had concerns, to tell them that government is doing after-the-fact consultation is similar to how they made the decision to shut down Central Stores and then, after the fact, started consulting with affected suppliers. Again, simply to make a decision and then follow up afterwards by consulting about a decision that you have already made is not a very good way to approach things. It leaves people upset about not having their voices heard. When they're told after the fact that government has already decided what it's doing, but is happy to talk to them about it, that certainly has not gone over very well with a number of my constituents.

I would point out to the minister again, especially when you are operating in rural Yukon in areas that are not represented by a municipality or local advisory council, that to simply forget the fact that 900 people in an area are affected by a government decision, but don't have a local advisory council at the table to provide input on the government's plan is not acceptable. The fact that, in this case, they forgot, apparently, that they were putting through a decision that would affect as many people as in a couple of small Yukon towns combined without any consultation is not acceptable.

In Whitehorse, people have the opportunity to compost, but in the Whitehorse periphery, they don't. The government is not immediately moving to implement compost at those facilities. So, Whitehorse citizens have the opportunity to take the organics out of their waste stream and put that into compost, but people outside in my constituency as well as on the south and west sides of town don't necessarily have that same opportunity to do composting, but they are being penalized by the fact that government won't let them compost as part of the

waste stream. I just would encourage the minister to think about that.

As well, with tipping fees, as I have mentioned previously to the minister and the minister knows full well, the department had done a review of options including tipping fees back several years ago. At the time, they had recommended against it for reasons including that they said that, at some of the facilities, the costs of implementing those tipping fees and managing it and the costs of capital set-up in administration would exceed the revenue that they would collect.

We still don't have a breakdown from the government of which facilities operated by the Department Community Services the government is planning on implementing tipping fees at. At which of those facilities are they actually going to be losing money by running those facilities? Will the minister provide us with a breakdown of the landfills that Community Services operates and the expected costs and the expected revenues associated with implementing tipping fees?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, I want to say that, while we didn't go out and actively try to talk with all rural residents, I did hear from quite a few. For example, I heard from the Mount Lorne solid-waste facility. They actually asked us to introduce tipping fees across the territory and in their community. I volunteered at quite a few of the neighbouring solid-waste facilities. I have been doing it every summer now, and so I did get into conversations with local folks.

As I said earlier, I think that we are asking all Yukoners to pay roughly the same price — a buck a bag.

Mr. Chair, I did table the whole Ministerial Committee on Solid Waste recommendations for actions toward a sustainable solid-waste management system for the Yukon. This came out in April 2018. I tabled it here in the Legislature. There is lots of information in there. It might not have all of the information that the member wants, and I will look forward to further questions, but that is the analysis that we have been sharing.

What I want to say is that one of the pieces that will benefit is that there are costs to administration. However, we have long since decided that we need to make sure that our solid-waste facilities are staffed, because if they are not staffed, we end up with problems. It is just an incremental difference, and that is of collecting the fee. So, we are working through right now what that will look like — probably something like a punch card, but that is still to be worked out. All of the analysis won't be able to take all of it into account.

Part of what we're looking forward to is that there will be a little bit of a hump at the beginning, but over time, there will be improvements. The improvements will come because we will not necessarily have individual Yukoners move their solid waste out to a region and then we will have to move it back. We think that, over time, there will be a cost advantage, generally. We will be investing that mostly in the regional facilities to try to support them. That is all part of that ongoing work, and it is outlined in the report that I tabled.

Chair: Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Is there any further general debate?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I just want to flesh out the last response that I gave about the overall cost. All of our rural solid-waste facilities, or transfer stations, are going to continue to cost more to operate than we will ever realize in revenue via tipping fees. What we are working to do here is to move toward a more sustainable system by controlling what comes in and to help encourage all Yukoners to reduce the waste that's coming in by putting a price on pollution and putting a price signal there and to protect against any sort of contamination. All of that is to offset the O&M.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the information that the minister provided. I had asked the minister about which of the government's solid-waste facilities they are going to be losing money on. The minister has been a bit cagey every time I have pressed him on it and has not disclosed what the total costs are. As the minister will recall, before we had the break this afternoon, I did ask him if he could provide the estimated costs on a facility-by-facility basis and the estimated revenues on a facility-by-facility basis associated with the implementation of tipping fees. Personally, I think this is information that the government actually has an obligation to provide to the public in the interest of public disclosure. I would hope that the minister would agree and would provide that information.

Although the minister has been cagey in answering me, I do remind him that he was a little less guarded in his response to my colleague, the Member for Porter Creek North, yesterday afternoon about tipping fees. The minister said, on page 850 of the Blues — and I quote: "We will work to introduce tipping fees in the periphery of Whitehorse this spring and then, I think, the rest of the territory roughly in the next year.

"What I also want to say is that it doesn't mean that we are doing cost recovery in every location."

The minister acknowledged that they are not doing cost recovery in every location. Again, the question of which facilities they are going to implement tipping fees at — that they are actually going to lose money on — is one that I do think the public has a right to know.

I would note in this case, again, recognizing that the exact costs may have changed — probably have changed — since Community Services studied this issue roughly five or six years ago, but when you add up the costs of infrastructure facilities, including phone lines, point-of-sale terminals, a facility to store cash — a float of cash for the facility — it does create some additional costs at those facilities. The government has taken an approach based on charging people and penalizing them for dumping at facilities, but they haven't really looked at the overall costs of this, including — as the minister and I have debated before — the government, the last we heard, still does not have a plan around illegal dumping. The costs associated

with that are an additional cost that will be paid perhaps by a different part of government, unless the government just plans to leave that environmental pollution and, in some cases, waste that may create risk for wildlife, people in the area, or pets. Unless the government is actually planning on just ignoring illegal dumping, there is going to be a cost and there needs to be a plan for dealing with that dumping.

Again, just to summarize for the minister, what is the estimated cost per facility of operating tipping fees and what is the anticipated revenue for a facility associated with those tipping fees? Secondly, has the government done any work on coming up with a plan for dealing with illegal dumping?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, I again direct the member opposite to the document that I tabled previously, the Ministerial Committee on Solid Waste recommendations for action. Under Appendix I, there is a breakdown by community and by facility. It doesn't have all the numbers in it, but it has quite a bit of information there. I think that is a good starting point.

What I said even just after the break when I stood up was that we don't anticipate that it is going to cover all the costs, but of course we have a lot of costs right now. What we are anticipating is that we hope that it will be an improvement to the costs.

It's not so much borne by those individual Yukoners in the community; I already have stated that costs will be quite heavily subsidized. The real improvement will come in that Yukoners will stop driving from one community to take their waste to another one. That's the problem, first and foremost.

We do have a plan around illegal dumping and enforcement. I talked about it when I was with the member opposite in his community — about increased fines and about an education campaign. I have also talked in the past and in his community about how the pattern of illegal dumping typically is that, when there is a change, we see a little bit more. But most Yukoners, over time, work to try to do the right thing.

We do want to deal with illegal dumping. It is a real problem. I said earlier today — in another answer about the large costs when we deal with — or at the sewage lagoon where someone put hydrocarbons in it — it's very expensive. We will do our best to catch those people who are doing that, to fine them, and to make it a deterrent for anybody who is considering doing that.

Mr. Cathers: Unfortunately, that's just not answering the question. It's unfortunate that the government is choosing to do this based on ideology and is not in fact looking at it based on costs.

The minister made reference to — keeps making reference to — perhaps he could correct me if I have the wrong document — but I'm looking at the Ministerial Committee on Solid Waste recommendations for action report from 2018 — the full title being *Ministerial Committee on Solid Waste — Recommendations for Action towards a Sustainable Solid Waste Management System for Yukon*. In going through the document, looking at the recommendations and the themes — there are a lot of words, but the costs associated with the individual action items aren't broken down.

Again, looking at the numbers section in the report, I see the solid waste operational cost in the fiscal year 2017-18. But the breakdown of those costs that include the population of areas, regular maintenance costs, site attendants, waste transfer costs, household hazardous waste, groundwater monitoring, maintenance beyond scope, et cetera — those costs from that fiscal year broken down — but I'm looking through this and I don't see anywhere in this solid waste document — perhaps the minister could point me to it, if I'm missing it — I don't see any budget for the future cost associated with changing the model of the system.

If the government is just making this decision purely based on ideology, without costs, then that is something that I think Yukoners should be concerned about with the government's approach. We have seen that, as well, in areas of decision by the government to take over the former Centre of Hope from the Salvation Army where they made the decision without Management Board approval and then dealt with the cleanup and the cost after the fact.

In this type of area, we should — if government is proceeding down this road with tipping fees, there should be a plan, and the plan should be more than words. It should include realistic assessments of the cost, including where implementing tipping fees at some facilities is going to actually lose money according to the most recent information we had and according to what the minister acknowledged yesterday in the House on page 850.

Can the minister tell me if I'm missing a part in this document about the prediction around cost? Can he point to where that is?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The information in the Solid Waste Advisory Committee report talks about what the existing costs are. The analysis that was done by the department does look at what the additional costs will be to introduce tipping fees, and there are some estimates that are put in there. Some of those things will be realized.

As I have said previously, the major benefit that we anticipate is a reduction in the amount of cost that goes into each of these sites because what we've had to do is invest heavily in the capital costs in each of the outlying facilities due to much larger-than-anticipated volumes — volumes that we recognize are not derived from local residents but rather are derived from Yukoners deciding to go out to our communities to avoid tipping fees.

There are all sorts of things that are in there. There's the capital cost and the improvements around the site — fencing and gating, if it's not there. There are costs around staffing, but what we'll look at in the analysis is the staffing differential. There will be analysis based on the workload to do the collection of fees and to do that — getting that money in, as I have already stated here. We're looking at using a fairly simple system, like a punch-card-type system.

We recognize that, in all, there will be some overhead to charging tipping fees. The goal, as I've stated already, was not to try to recover all costs. As I said yesterday in this House — and I'll say again today several times — the goal is to put a price on pollution and to make a levelized cost for everyone.

The overhead — as you can see from the report that the member opposite now has in front of him — talks about the costs per person in our communities. That's a starting point.

I'm happy to get the analysis that was done to show the evidence about why and how this will work. I'm happy to share it.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Chair, in going through this again, I would encourage the minister to just tell me where the numbers are. In looking through the recommendations, a number of the columns where they have the costs — there are no costs listed. There are simply asterisks. It doesn't tell us what the costs of those items are.

For example, under the theme of "Regionalization" — page 6 of the report, it says, "Recommendation: Review waste management service levels for unincorporated areas", the action — and I'm reading from the table, Mr. Chair, is "Review levels of service and costs for unincorporated solid waste facilities." The next column, Timeframe, says "Short Term (2018)". The Cost column has one asterisk. What does that mean?

The Deliverable column says "Report and Action Plan"; Outcome says "Service levels are cost-efficient through rationalization of Yukon government solid waste sites as part of regional strategy" and "Possible introduction of a user pay system at Yukon government solid waste sites". The Partners column says "YG; Municipalities; LAC's; and First Nations".

To start with, that recommendation doesn't say, "implement a user pay system". It says, "possible introduction of a user pay system..." Costs associated with it — again, what information is shown on the table on page 6 of the document — which the minister keeps referring us to — "Cost" has one asterisk. What does the asterisk mean?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Today we are debating the supplementary budget as it is. I am happy to answer these questions. On page four, the asterisks are explained. When it says "no cost", it will say "no cost". When it is one asterisk, it is \$10,000 or less — and it goes up. So, two asterisks — my understanding is — are \$100,000 or less. They are orders of magnitude costs. That's all.

What I want to say is that this committee, which has been long-standing — the work that the Association of Yukon Communities has been doing is to find a territory-wide system. The proposal from them is a regional-based system where we all — all of us, as Yukoners pay our part. We are not asking for all Yukoners to pay the cost. We are asking that we all pay roughly the same amount so that we will continue to subsidize our folks in the rural communities, but we are asking that they pay a cost. It is about a buck a bag.

I am happy to get the deeper analysis that was used to look at the costs and cost recovery over time. Again, it is not meant that — a dollar per bag will never cover the costs of waste; it is much more than that. What it will do is put a price signal out there so that Yukoners will go to their local facility.

Mr. Cathers: I will point out to the minister — I have to remind him that the only reason that I am even talking about the solid-waste report is that every time I kept asking the minister about the costs associated with the government's plan

to implement this and the work that they are doing — both in this fiscal year and planning in the next year — every time I ask about cost, the minister kept saying to go to the report of the ministerial committee on solid waste. I would go there, and the costs aren't there. We see asterisks in lieu of the cost without any clarity of what makes up those costs.

To say that looking at three asterisks is supposed to provide information to anyone on what the costs are — this is the first time in all my time in the House that I have heard any minister suggest that, instead of seeing figures for costs, asterisks can replace them. We don't know whether a two-asterisk amount or a three-asterisk amount represents \$100,000 or \$300,000 or \$500,000 or \$1 million or \$2 million, because the costs aren't shown.

Again, the only reason I'm mentioning this part of the report is due to the very simple question I asked the minister earlier about what the costs were at each of these facilities — since he has admitted that, in some cases, government is going to be losing money by operating the tipping fees — and which facilities it's going to cost more for them to implement tipping fees at than they will get in revenue.

I also ran across, as the minister pointed me to this — the issue I mentioned earlier to the minister about his failure to consult with my constituents on this — the report — on page 8, there's a specific action item in the committee's report: "Initiate consultation with Whitehorse periphery on proposed fees". Well, that public consultation didn't occur before the decision was made. Again in that column, under "Outcome", it said, "Understand public opinion of user fees at Yukon government solid waste sites in the Whitehorse periphery". But the minister didn't follow the recommendation and didn't consult with 900 people in my constituency, as well as elsewhere.

If he had consulted with them, they would have heard the concerns they're hearing now about illegal dumping that has occurred at locations in my riding, including Parent Lane, the Scout Lake Road, gravel pits, behind the Yukon Energy Corporation substation at Mile 5.1, and on several parcels of Kwanlin Dün First Nation land. As well, we have seen an increase in the abandonment of vehicles.

Again, I'm asking the minister a question about the finances, and I'm asking the minister — since he has acknowledged that, in some cases, implementing tipping fees at some facilities will cost more money than the government gets — how much more money is that going to be overall? On a facility-by-facility basis, what is the breakdown? At which facilities is it anticipated that it is going to cost the government more to collect tipping fees than they will receive in tipping fees?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Sometimes when I'm in a meeting with some folks and there seems to be some sort of misunderstanding, I offer to take that conversation to a sidebar to try to have a more detailed back and forth rather than as we stand here in the Legislature. We just make that offer.

We seem to be discussing asterisks. I don't know that it is helpful, but I will do my best to try to answer the questions from the member opposite. We spend on average about \$3.1 million per year on solid-waste facilities. The municipalities spend

approximately \$4.5 million per year on waste management. Recycling costs the Yukon government another \$4.2 million per year.

In the document that I pointed to — under the appendix near the back of the document where it talks about the costs, the waste management costs per community per facility — it also breaks it down roughly on a per capita cost. The overall goal here is to try to level that out somewhat. What I said was that I didn't anticipate that the dollars were going to recover the costs in any of our unincorporated communities — in none of them. What we would like to do, though, and what I think is a fair question from the member opposite, is to try to understand the economic analysis to see that there is an improvement by introducing these charges. The other thing is that we don't just anticipate that the improvement has to do with that facility per se, but rather that all Yukoners are paying roughly the same amount. So, it might not work out exactly.

I have also stood up here in previous answers and said that I'm happy to provide the deeper analysis, which is not included in this document, to discuss where those numbers lie. I have no problem doing that, but I'm just not sure that we are going to get it out on the floor of the Legislature today. I will also say that, as this came to me, it was one iteration of work that came in front of me. I tabled it here and, subsequent to that, the Association of Yukon Communities, including the local advisory councils, asked that, rather than just start with the periphery, we work for the whole of the territory. That was based on feedback from municipalities.

So, did we talk to everyone? No. But did we talk to a large percentage of Yukoners through that system? Yes, we did. I am working now to implement that across the territory.

Again, I say for the member opposite: go ahead and pick apart the report as you wish, but if it's information that you're looking for, I'm happy to sit down and share it with you — the member opposite — and to get to a more deeper and detailed understanding.

Mr. Cathers: I just have to point out that the minister said that we're spending time debating asterisks. I don't want to be debating asterisks, but if the minister won't tell me the numbers — and the report that he keeps pointing me to only shows asterisks — all I can do is point out that, in lieu of the actual costs, there is one asterisk, two asterisks, et cetera, and it should say the costs.

The minister provided the overall figures for recycling, as well as the overall cost for running the facilities. I do appreciate that. I think the minister said that they're actually going to be losing money at every facility and that it's costing them more to implement tipping fees than they're making at every single one. If I misheard him, perhaps he could tell me which facilities they're losing money on. Otherwise, I'm left to understand that they are actually, at all facilities run by the Yukon government, going to be spending more to implement tipping fees than they are going to collect in anticipated revenue.

I mentioned earlier to the minister the fact that the throne speech said that the government would work to expand recycling. The document that the minister pointed me to contained a recommendation to "Continue to support the

diversion credit program in the short term and assess the program for accountability and financial sustainability." It also said, "Ensure diversion credits are fully funded until such time that DMR offsets this funding system" — on page 8 of the document.

So, why, in the area of glass recycling, did the minister decide to go forward with a plan to shut down the recycling of glass rather than working out a diversion credit to support glass recycling which would see one or both recycling processors continue to recycle glass and keep this out of the landfill?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I'm trying to say through you, Mr. Chair, to the member opposite is that we seem to have a bit of a misunderstanding. I'm not trying to be facetious with any of my remarks. I'm trying to say that, when I hear the way the question is posed, I'm concerned that we're not connecting in our understanding. I'm looking for that ability to have a more direct dialogue.

I said that, currently, every facility that the Yukon government runs is running at a loss. All facilities — there is no tipping fee that's collected. There is no user fee that's collected, generally. Currently, all of them are running at a loss. Some of them are running at much more of a loss than others on a per-person basis or a per-facility basis. The way to look at that is in the report under the table where it talks about the cost per facility and the cost per person per facility.

The next thing I said is that, when we ask for this \$1 a bag — this levelized charge, more or less — what is going to happen is that it will offset some of those costs of implementing the program and overall across the territory, it will make an improvement, but it will never reach the point where all of those facilities are paying for themselves — not at \$1 a bag. It will not.

What I heard the member opposite say was that some facilities were — no, I'll just leave it at that.

Then, on glass — it's the recyclers who have stated that they will no longer accept glass because it is not worth it for them — for glass pickle jars, for example, and for glass bottles, which can be reused here, depending on the bottle. If it's going back to one of our local producers, they can be reused; that's terrific. On that side of the equation, it's different, but on the glass — kind of like the pickle jars, et cetera — no, it's the local recyclers that have said that they will no longer accept them. It doesn't matter about the diversion credit that we are providing them; they don't believe that it is viable.

What they used to do was — themselves — subsidize already the cost of glass because it's very expensive to move around — to crush, et cetera — so it wasn't paying for itself. So, the recyclers have said, "Sorry, we're not going to do it anymore."

We will continue to try to find solutions around recycling, but what I want to say is that glass is not our biggest problem. Plastics and cardboard are our bigger problems.

Mr. Cathers: Well, Mr. Chair, the minister seems to be forgetting that I have been the Minister of Community Services before, and he's trying to say, "Oh, we're having a misunderstanding." We're not having a misunderstanding. I'm asking questions about the costs, and he won't tell me. That is

a choice that — again, he keeps pointing to a document, and when you look at the document, the costs aren't shown there.

So, again, in the absence of the minister providing us the details, I'm left with the understanding that, at the facilities that the Yukon government is running, the cost of implementing tipping fees — because of the administration costs, the costs of equipment, the costs of point of sale terminals and so on and the cost of phone service — is much like it was when the department looked at it five or six years ago — a case where the government is actually going to be losing money by implementing tipping fees. If the minister believes that this is inaccurate at any one of those facilities, all he needs to do is tell me the costs.

In the case of glass recycling, the minister provided the excuse that the processor is doing it and that we couldn't do it any differently. Mr. Chair, this does not seem in any way, shape, or form different from the situation that happened back several years ago when Raven Recycling indicated that it had become uneconomical for them to recycle a number of waste streams, including cardboards and a lot of the plastics. They indicated at the time that they were going to cease operations, but what we did, under my watch as minister of the day, is we tasked department officials to work with the recycling processors and come up with a model that was workable as a diversion credit to keep that waste out of the landfill.

For the minister to try to say, "Oh, this is just their decision. There's no money in it" — well, that's the entire point of diversion credits. It is to subsidize products to keep them out of the waste streams and keep them out of the landfills in areas where there just isn't enough money for the recyclers to make money from sending that out for recycling.

Again, the question is very simple. Why did the government, especially after saying in the throne speech and in the Ministerial Committee on Solid Waste that they wanted to expand recycling — and it said in the committee report — quote: "Ensure diversion credits are fully funded until such a time that DMR offsets this funding system." Just for the public listening, DMR is short for designated material regulations. Those are the regulations that started out with tires and have now been expanded to other products where there is an upfront fee charged at the time of purchase and then no tipping fee is charged when those items are disposed.

If the minister believes that, at any of the facilities that the government is running, they will actually make money from implementing tipping fees, show us the numbers. If I may jokingly say, "Show me the money." We are looking for the evidence that is supposed to go with this decision. For a government that talks about evidence-based decision-making to refuse to provide the estimated costs and revenues associated with this move that they have made is not in keeping with the commitments that they have made. I would ask the minister to provide that information. As well, since he indicated that they didn't enter into negotiations with the recyclers, can he explain whether they gave any consideration to providing an increased diversion credit to keep glass from being disposed in the landfill?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I have offered several times today and I will offer it again: I don't have all the numbers on the analysis in front of me. I do know that I have seen the overall analysis done. Yet again — maybe for the third or fourth time saying this — I'm happy to say that I'm happy to get the information across to the member. I am sorry that I don't have it in front of me today. I am very happy to get it for them.

With respect to diversion credits, I have never forgotten that this member was Minister of Community Services — never — just saying.

What I want to say is that, back when the member opposite was the minister, the diversion credits for glass did not cover the cost of non-refundable glass and they still don't cover it. The lucky thing about glass is that it is a very inert material. It is not one of those that is dangerous to have in our landfill. In fact, it's a good cover material. It is very unfortunate. We were saddened when the recyclers chose to say that they would no longer accept it. We have had lots of conversations. Yesterday in this Legislature, I talked about the range of attempts that we made to explore reuses for glass or local recycling opportunities. We weren't able to come up with any of those. Unfortunately, we have accepted the decision and direction of the recyclers.

One of the truths is that, when these commodity markets change drastically Outside, what you might be doing is spending a lot of money to divert it to ship it to another location where it's also ending up in a landfill. How is this reasonable? If that's the situation, then I think we, as Yukoners, need to take the responsibility and put it in our landfills. Again, it's not a risk to our landfills. It is something that I wish we could divert. I wish we could divert everything from our landfill, but if we're not able to do it because it's not feasible, then I respect the recyclers who approached us.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate that costs do have to be considered, but I'm pointing out that this is a government that talked about reducing waste in the landfills. They talked about zero waste. The minister, I think, has even worn a plastic bag around his waist with his garbage from the day to encourage other people to reduce waste. In their third throne speech — the second throne speech do-over — they made a commitment to expand recycling. Before the ink was dry, they are contracting recycling.

I'm sorry if the minister takes offence to me calling them on it, but when you promise one thing and do the exact opposite, the public does expect the Official Opposition to hold the government to account for saying one thing and doing another. In the case of this, it appears to be a "back of a napkin" plan for implementing their move around tipping fees.

The minister has indicated in his last response that he would provide more information. I will accept that he doesn't have it at his fingertips. Will the minister commit to getting back to me with that breakdown of the costs and revenues anticipated per landfill facility by letter after the House has risen and before the end of the calendar year?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will certainly ask the department to do that work and to prepare it. I will ask them to do it as quickly as possible. I won't say that it will be by the end of the

calendar year. Just while I am up on my feet, I would like to say that both the Department of Community Services — the folks who are working on solid waste — and the Department of Environment and the municipal partners have been doing amazing work at trying to turn this ship around. I want to thank them for their work. It's not easy work. It's not always thankful work. I just would like to acknowledge that work. We will endeavour to get the information for the member opposite as quickly as possible, certainly.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate that commitment, and I will move on to other questions.

In the spring during the briefing with the department, I asked them questions about the cost that is being paid to the City of Whitehorse when waste has been shipped in from rural facilities. Based on my notes — and the minister can correct me if I'm wrong — my understanding is that the regular rate charged at the City of Whitehorse facility to non-government is \$100 per tonne and that \$160 is charged by the city to government.

Could the minister just either confirm or correct that and tell me what we pay for waste that is shipped in from transfer stations to the City of Whitehorse?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I don't have the numbers in front of me, so what I will do is — if I find out that the numbers are different, I will update the member opposite with those new numbers.

But it is correct that we are charged a higher rate than the typical rate. That is what I was already referring to — one of the really frustrating parts of the overall system right now is that we pay more money when we take something from our transfer stations outside of Whitehorse and bring it into the municipality than the people would if they went to the municipality in the first place.

Mr. Cathers: I will accept that undertaking from the minister. I would just remind the minister that, in addition to implementing and increasing diversion credits, one of the things that we did in government and during my time as minister was to also partner with municipalities around the composting facility at the Whitehorse dump. As the minister will recall, it was a partnership between the City of Whitehorse, the Yukon government, and the federal government. I was involved in a portion of it and should also give credit to my predecessor, then-minister Elaine Taylor, for her work on that.

Investing in composting with other government facilities is an important part of giving people the option for keeping things out of the landfill. At the moment, that is not an option being provided within much of the Whitehorse periphery, so I would encourage the minister to move forward on that and provide the composting option at rural facilities.

Before moving on, I should note as well that, at facilities that government is closing in this area — again, they decided to close them without consultation. I know that a number of my constituents in the Braeburn area are upset about the fact that government is closing that facility and chose to do that without any consultation.

The drive to the Deep Creek facility or to Carmacks is not a short one from Braeburn. For many people, it would be a drive

of roughly 45 minutes to dump their garbage. It is an impact there, and I know, as well, that the closing of the facility in Johnsons Crossing and Silver City has caused concern for people in those areas.

While, again, we recognize that costs are a factor, it is a concern when people have bought property in an area and, in some cases, bought businesses in areas with certain services available, and then government decides to cut back those services. It can lead to people, in frustration, potentially resorting to illegal dumping. Again, it does seem to us that this hasn't been a fully thought-out plan.

Speaking of plans that aren't fully thought out, in their climate change, energy, and green economy strategy which they just released the draft of, there is a commitment to have 6,000 electric vehicles on the road and to move toward that. Can the minister tell me, with regard to that, if the government has done any planning or assessment of what this will mean in terms of firefighting response capacity? What I mean, to that end, is — it is my understanding that a number of the electric vehicles — some of the cables on those vehicles have extremely high voltage and pose a higher risk for someone, after a motor vehicle accident, trying to perform an extraction. Has the government done an assessment of what that will mean in terms of the equipment and training needs for volunteer fire departments, rural EMS, EMS within the paid staff of EMS — what that will mean as well in terms of the RCMP — as the government plans to significantly increase the number of vehicles running around?

Again, what work have they done internally or with those partner agencies on understanding what the potential impacts might be of having an increasing number of electric vehicles that may pose a higher risk for people who are responding to a motor vehicle collision?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, I got a note that the tipping fees that the government is charged at the City of Whitehorse is \$175 per tonne. If it's unsorted, then it's \$350 per tonne — so it's twice. We do also support the composting. In this budget, there is — as I think I said yesterday when I was reading the original list for the member opposite — an investment of \$4.4 million, which the City of Whitehorse identified as one of their priorities. So it's under the Investing in Canada infrastructure plan.

Finally, I thank the member opposite for the question about the changes in vehicles and vehicle types. I know that motor vehicle accidents and motor vehicle fires are a significant concern for both our firefighters and our EMS. I can't speak for the RCMP, sorry. I will have a conversation with them to find out what kind of an analysis they are doing around changes that we anticipate. I think that, here in the Yukon, we should anticipate that there are changes coming for Canadians broadly over time. I think that this change will come and it is important that we consider thoroughly how it will affect our emergency response folks.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the answer from the minister and I would just encourage him to look into that, because it is a concern that I have about whether government is again making a decision — as this Liberal government has become infamous

for — based on ideology and not actually thinking through all parts of it. The potential move to an increase in electric vehicles is something where there are some additional risks in motor vehicles collisions associated with that, both from fire and the ability to actually save people's lives after there's a collision.

I'm not saying that to be alarmist. I am just simply saying that government should do a thorough analysis, work with their partners — and I mean including the RCMP, EMS — being a division of government — and municipal fire departments, as well as the fire departments that are staffed by volunteers and run by the Yukon government. Government should work with all of those partner agencies, as well as with other levels of government. Before being so quick to determine exactly how many electric vehicles should be on the road, they should have a clear understanding of the risk profile associated with that and what it means in terms of its impact, particularly in rural Yukon, on first responders.

I'll just leave that there and would encourage the minister to provide more information later and to do that detailed work. I would also ask if the minister could provide a breakdown at this point in the fiscal year of what has been funded under the well program — how many projects, what the total cost is, and what the total anticipated cost is at the end of the year — as well as under the rural electrification program — what government has provided. Both of those are areas — we created and expanded the well program and the rural electrification program. We changed it through Bill No. 80 the last time we were in government to make the loans available for solar, wind, and hydro.

Could the minister provide a breakdown on how many rural electrification projects for solar, wind, or hydro have been approved this year, what the total cost is and number of projects, and what the anticipated amount of those will be at the end of this fiscal year based on current projections?

In the interest of time, I'm just going to move on to a couple of specific projects the minister mentioned. The minister mentioned yesterday — on page 843 of the Blues, he made mention of \$60,000 for a Deep Creek water treatment plant bulk fill station. Could the minister confirm what this is for? The facility was designed to provide water to the general public through hooking up and connecting with either an inch-and-a-half or a two-inch hose, as well as through blue jugs. The facility was also modified from its original design to provide fill-up for fire trucks.

Can the minister confirm whether that \$60,000 in the budget is some sort of change necessary for fire truck fill-up, or is it being made available for commercial bulk water fill? If it is, what sort of arrangements will be in place? Will there be a charge to the commercial water companies? Has the government worked with the Hootalinqua Fire Department to ensure that they don't have any concerns about potential conflict between commercial water companies — if indeed that is the intended purpose of it — and fire trucks refilling both in terms of traffic management and the total water available?

Also, Mr. Chair, could the minister provide information — he mentioned \$2.8 million for Watson Lake wet well and lift stations and \$2.9 million for the Watson Lake reservoir. Could

he elaborate on what that work is? There was \$3 million for the Mayo reservoir. Could he provide information on that? As well, the minister mentioned \$4.8 million in buried infrastructure. Could he please provide information on what that is made up of? There is \$6.3 million in what the minister called "infrastructure upgrades". Could he provide a little more detail on that?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: There are quite a few questions there. I don't want to give any sort of sense that I don't want to answer them all, but there are a lot.

Let me start with the rural well program and the rural electrification and solar program. Out of the mains from earlier this spring, we have \$1 million for the rural electrification program and \$1.2 million for the well program. About \$800,000 of that is for outside of city limits and about \$400,000 of that is for within city limits, but obviously off of domestic water.

The Deep Creek water treatment bulk fill project is a gas tax fund project. I will have to check — I don't believe that we charge for the fire hall folks being there — I am not sure. My understanding is that the investment is just on general upgrades. It is not about commercial customers per se.

Then there were questions about both Watson Lake and Mayo. I mean, I can try to get more detailed information across to the members about those projects. I will note that all of those projects are under the clean water and waste-water fund. Just to remind members, when we landed, we took the list of projects that the past government had chosen under the clean water and waste-water fund, and we did not adjust those. My understanding is that those are projects that had been selected previously. I am happy to get more details.

Mr. Cathers: I appreciate those answers from the minister. If he could provide more information at a later date about the nature of the changes at the Deep Creek water treatment facility as well as those other projects mentioned, including in Watson Lake, that would be appreciated. I appreciate that he doesn't have that information at his fingertips here, but I know that the nature of those projects is of interest to people in those areas, so that would be appreciated if he could provide us with that information.

I just want to move on to another area which I previously — I am sure the minister was listening when I raised this matter with the Premier when we were asking questions about Energy, Mines and Resources. I had expressed concerns at the time around wildfire risk and mitigation and the importance of reducing fuel loads in and near communities. It doesn't really seem to have been a high priority for the government in the throne speech or in this year's budget.

The Premier, during some of our debates, suggested that I should ask the Minister of Community Services questions about it, and I am happy to do so, although in our view, the harvesting part of that problem primarily falls under Energy, Mines and Resources.

But if there is work being done by Protective Services — whether through the Fire Marshal's Office or the Emergency Measures office — working with First Nations and communities around that, I would be happy to hear any

information the minister can provide about that. It is a case, Mr. Chair, as you will recall me saying before — there has been an increasing amount of work by groups — including the Yukon Wood Products Association and the FireSmart Whitehorse citizens group — in raising awareness about the risks of wildfire.

For many Yukoners, watching the events that unfolded in Telegraph Creek and Lower Post as well as Fort McMurray and a number of other communities, including the Paradise fire in California — they have caused people to realize that, while we all value wilderness beauty and value our boreal forests, when it comes down to a fire risk perspective, the boreal forest — especially older coniferous trees in and near communities and near homes — does pose an increased fire risk. Government has taken some steps by encouraging people to firesmart. They have also done work for the firesmart program. But, as the groups that I mentioned have drawn attention to, the FireSmart program itself just does not go far enough in reducing that fuel load in and near communities.

There are calls, which we support, for government to work with other levels of government, with the private sector, and with groups including the FireSmart Whitehorse group, as well as the Wood Products Association, which represent a number of the private sector people in that area.

The argument is being made that there is really an opportunity here to look at wildfire risk mitigation through a targeted harvesting lens and use that identification of priority areas to immediately feed into your forest harvesting plans. As well, in some cases, perhaps government may need to pay a portion of the cost, but by leaving the fuel wood for the private sector to use, they can reduce the cost per hectare significantly below what firesmart costs per hectare. This also creates an opportunity to take the fuel from that and use it for heating homes, government office buildings, and commercial buildings through biomass.

So, it has appeared, through the answers I got from the Premier during budget debate and the lack of reference that our risk mitigation has in the throne speech, that this has kind of slipped off of the government's front burner and become more of a side-burner item.

Could the minister let us know what work is being done on this with the City of Whitehorse, the municipalities, and local advisory councils? What work is being done with First Nations? Is this something that the government is willing to do — as we're asking — make this a higher priority and make it a priority to move forward in a timely manner, seeing that — although, Mr. Chair, I don't want to be alarmist — the reality is that, in the wrong weather conditions — in a dry year, the wrong wind conditions, and a fire in the wrong area within the Whitehorse area could cause a fire that we simply don't have the ability to put out and prevent from destroying homes, especially if it's in the wrong wind conditions. But there are steps that can be taken in the short term to reduce that risk, including making targeted harvesting of coniferous trees in and near communities a higher priority — in some cases, replace them with — allow deciduous trees to naturally replace them; in other cases, other opportunities exist.

The minister will recall me raising previously in this Legislative Assembly the suggestion that, in areas, including within his riding, that the potential for developing agricultural land either through planned disposition or spot land application, provides an opportunity to create a firebreak that would allow government and its partners to more effectively control the spread of a fire.

As I mentioned at the time, I reminded the government that there was agricultural land being developed in my riding, but I challenged the government to point out agricultural development which is occurring anywhere else. As the minister will know, at the time, the government was not able to provide that information about any other agriculture projects.

So, I would ask the minister if work is being done — recognizing that Agriculture itself is under Energy, Mines and Resources — whether the Emergency Measures Organization or the Fire Marshal's Office have been involved in any planning work around targeted harvesting of trees, development of agricultural land, or other options to reduce the wildfire risk in and near communities, and if so, what is happening in those areas?

Recognizing that I have just given the minister a large number of items there, I will just add a couple others to the list. If he could provide information about what is being done in Destruction Bay on dredging — he made reference to it — and the Keno water fill station as well as balers happening across the territory and upgrades to the Carcross water treatment plant as well as updating recycling bins.

With that, Mr. Chair, in the interest of giving the minister a little more time to provide that response when he next rises and seeing the time, I move that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Cathers that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Chair: It has been moved by Ms. McPhee that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

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

Chair's report

Mr. Hutton: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

The following sessional papers were tabled November 26, 2019:

34-3-25

Crime Prevention and Victim Services Trust Fund Annual Report 2018-19 (McPhee)

34-3-26

Yukon Public Service Labour Relations Board Annual Report 2018-2019 (Mostyn)

34-3-27

Yukon Teachers Labour Relations Board Annual Report 2018-2019 (Mostyn)



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 30

3rd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Wednesday, November 27, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
Don Hutton	Mayo-Tatchun

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King
Liz Hanson	Whitehorse Centre

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Dan Cable
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, November 27, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

Withdrawal of motions

Speaker: The Chair wishes to inform the House that Motion No. 128, notice of which was given yesterday by the Leader of the Third Party, was not placed on today's Notice Paper as it is outdated. Motion No. 129, notice of which was given yesterday by the Leader of the Third Party, was not placed on today's Notice Paper, as it is similar to Motion No. 4, which was adopted by the House on October 30, 2019.

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I would ask my colleagues to please join me in welcoming Garbage Truck Santa, Wayne Henderson, Stephanie Pozzo, and Phil Willoughby, the general manager of Inland Kenworth, to the House this afternoon.

Applause

Ms. White: Also, for the same tribute, we have Jennifer Byram from Pelly Construction. Thank you so much for being here and representing you and your father.

Applause

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I would ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming Nicholas O'Carroll and Jeremy Beebe. They are Whitehorse firefighters and are here today representing the Whitehorse Firefighters Charitable Society. I would also like to welcome Val Royle — she is the deputy minister of the Women's Directorate — visiting us here today.

Applause

Mr. Kent: I would like members to join me in welcoming Ed and Donna Isaak, who — as many will know — used to run the Taku bar here in Whitehorse and started the Adopt a Family program, which was the forerunner to the Share the Spirit campaign.

Applause

Speaker: I would like to welcome Maxwell Harvey, Yukon's Chief Electoral Officer, to the Assembly. He is here to witness the tabling of the Chief Electoral Officer's report to the Legislative Assembly.

Applause

Mr. Hassard: A gentleman here today — I know he has been here many times and introduced, but I will ask all members to join me one more time in welcoming Mr. Jonas Smith.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors? Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Garbage Truck Santa

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my privilege to honour the legend that is Garbage Truck Santa. I would wager that there are few who have brought such joy to so many Yukoners over the years — someone whose selfless journey year after year captures the essence of Christmas. So, I ask those of you listening out there to lean in a bit closer because I am going to tell a story this afternoon.

It was the Christmas of 1996, back when the long winter nights were cold and the snow, deep and feathery. That year, there was a sick young boy who couldn't play outside or take part in Christmas festivities. He could not, in fact, meet Santa — until something magical happened.

A loud squeal was heard near the front of the house. The boy's parents sprang from the couch and flew like a flash to open the curtains and throw up the sash to see what was the matter. Headlights on the crest of the fresh fallen snow gave the lustre of midday to objects below. The boy stood at the window of his Porter Creek home pointing at something. "It's Santa," cried the boy. "It's Santa in a big truck." To everyone's delight, a mighty garbage truck bedecked with lights and antlers was turning from Larch Street onto Oak Street. Somehow Santa knew — he knew that this sick boy in the window needed the Christmas spirit.

To this day, the parents have no idea why that truck stopped on Oak Street in front of the house that morning, but it did. Garbage Truck Santa stepped out of his truck, lively and quick, and walked up to the knee-high windows, passing a candy cane through the open glass and delivering a hearty "Ho-ho-ho! Merry Christmas!"

The sick two-year-old had not smiled in days, but he clutched the candy cane in his wee hands and, with a grin from ear to ear, yelled, "Bye, Santa!" Santa paused, looked back, and waved. The boy turned to his parents. "That is the best Santa. He has a big truck."

Mr. Speaker, that little boy is now 25 years old. He's my eldest son.

Over the last 28 years, such stories are Garbage Truck Santa Wayne Henderson's legacy. He's brought wonder and joy to Yukoners young and old.

I'm proud to say Mr. Henderson is one of my constituents. His legacy matters. We know this because Yukoners support traditions that they hold dear, and recently they rallied to help Mr. Henderson. His garbage truck's transmission broke, possibly ending Garbage Truck Santa's rounds. A GoFundMe was established and within a couple of weeks Yukoners

volunteered time and substantial money to save this wonderful Christmas tradition.

Mr. Speaker, 28 years ago, Mr. Henderson took it upon himself to don a red suit and a white beard and to decorate a truck while working for the city simply to bring a smile to people's faces. He did something unique and has delivered joy year after year — something we should all strive for.

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Wayne Henderson — Garbage Truck Santa — and all his elves, especially his son Ryan and Ryan's fiancée, Jordan Kasprzak.

On behalf of the Liberal government, long may he exclaim, as he drives out of sight, "Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night."

Applause

Ms. White: What a lovely thing to stand on behalf of — so fantastic.

I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP and the Yukon Party to celebrate a true symbol of the holiday season in the north — Garbage Truck Santa. For 28 years, Wayne Henderson has been a herald of the holiday season. His brightly lit garbage truck has been causing smiles and head-turns on Whitehorse streets. But just like every super hero, Garbage Truck Santa has an origin story.

Wayne has been working for the City of Whitehorse for over 30 years, and way back in the very early 1990s, every Thursday on his regular route, Wayne would meet a little guy at the curb when he was doing the garbage pickup. This little human loved the garbage truck and loved Wayne. Instead of ignoring the little guy and seeing him as an obstacle, our super hero would let him help by pushing the buttons. In 1991, after a regular Thursday pickup, Wayne went back to the shop and asked his manager if he could decorate the truck with a couple of sets of lights, and then he went out and bought himself a Santa suit from the SAAN store. Imagine the delight that first Thursday, after the legend of Garbage Truck Santa was born.

All but one year since that first Christmas, Garbage Truck Santa has been making his rounds, delivering smiles, ho-ho-hos and holiday cheer. In the last four days before the school holiday break, Garbage Truck Santa will visit 10 schools, 20 daycares, and seniors facilities all over town. He and his trusty steed, Rudolph, will hand out over 3,000 candy canes to those both young and old.

When the city truck that he used to use needed to be retired and he missed a holiday season, Wayne thought that his run as Garbage Truck Santa was over. You know, Mr. Speaker, every good Santa has the support of a team of elves, and our Santa is no different. Tina Woodland, from Whitehorse Motors, approached him with an idea. If she could find a truck, would the legend live on? Of course, it would. We all know the answer.

So, for six years, Santa borrowed a garbage truck from Maggie Holt at the Takhini Mobile Home Park, and all was running smoothly until this spring when the truck's transmission stopped running so smoothly. Maggie called Wayne, and a plan was hatched. She would gift him the truck for \$1. So, now Garbage Truck Santa had a rig without a

transmission, so what is a Santa to do? Another elf or two stepped up with a solution. Jordan and Ryan sent out a public call for help, and help they got.

Then more elves appeared, Mr. Speaker. Keith Byram and his daughter Jennifer from Pelly Construction wanted the legend to live on, so they gifted Santa and Rudolph a transmission.

Wayne and his son, Ryan, were ready to roll up their sleeves and do the work themselves when Phil Willoughby and the crew at Inland Kenworth stepped forward. They had the space, the skill, and a love of the legend, so the transmission was installed.

Not to be missed, Yukon College came forward to install the inverter and do the inspection. Now the lights will continue to twinkle with the flip of a switch.

Whitehorse Motors opens their shop every year for the decorating blitz that's required to adorn Rudolph's sides. The shop is a festive place as those who were once kids enchanted by Garbage Truck Santa take over the task of sleigh masters as they install over 6,000 lights.

Elves come in all shapes and sizes, so holiday cheer to Canadian Tire, which supplies the lights, and festive wishes to Independent Grocer, Superstore, and Save-On-Foods for equipping Santa and Rudolph with candy canes.

One last holiday hurrah — a thank you to Wayne for sharing his love of the holidays with the community for the last 28 years.

Mr. Speaker, it doesn't matter how old you are — everyone loves Santa. If you are lucky enough to live in Whitehorse, then you know — 'tis the season when you first glimpse the Garbage Truck Santa out on the roads. Thank you very much.

Applause

In recognition of the Share the Spirit and the Bare Essentials campaigns

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Speaker, today I rise on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to two wonderful charitable campaigns that take place as we approach the holiday season here in the Yukon: Share the Spirit and the Bare Essentials campaigns.

Share the Spirit began many years ago as Adopt a Family and has grown now to become geographically the largest Christmas support program in Canada. Our territory is large, and Share the Spirit reaches into every corner in the most generous way.

The Whitehorse Firefighters Charitable Society works closely with Santa Claus to make deliveries to Yukon children and families who need it most during this holiday season — for many in the past and into the future. The goal this year will be to provide gifts and food baskets to help up to 380 families across the territory.

Yukoners who want to sponsor a family can do so by going online at Share the Spirit Yukon 2019. It's very easy to find. They will be provided with a wish list of children if they sign up — children who are in need around the territory.

Privacy is a key part of the program, so children are identified by their age and their gender, and you can choose as many or as few as you can help. Yukoners can also make monetary donations or volunteer to work as an elf to wrap and help deliver gifts.

Thank you so much to Whitehorse Toyota and the Mason family for generously donating the old Toyota building again this year at 6th and Main as “elf central” during December.

The Bare Essentials campaign is held every year around the holidays to collect donations of essential personal items for transition homes around the Yukon Territory. The reality of experiencing violence, gender-based or otherwise, is very complex, and there are barriers to reporting and accessing the supports that a person might need. Those who access the transition homes are typically leaving in an emergency situation due to violence. They may not have the time or the resources to get the items that they need to bring with them.

The transition homes use products donated from this campaign for the rest of the year and throughout the year. The products that are needed are personal hygiene products and products for children like toothbrushes and toothpaste, socks and underwear, hair brushes, feminine hygiene products, deodorants, disposable diapers, soap, shampoo, and baby formula.

This campaign began many years ago through the Canadian Bar Association, Yukon branch, which was part of it. At that time, it was part of a national campaign. It was later taken over by the Yukon government, Women’s Directorate. Government departments across the territory have donation boxes available until November 29, and they have been out for several weeks now. Staff give generously each and every year, and so do individuals who visit those departments. All donations are welcome.

Volunteers then collect and distribute the items to the four transition homes throughout the territory. Donations go to Kaushee’s Place here in Whitehorse, to the Majedi Safe Home in Ross River, to the Help and Hope for Families home in Watson Lake, and to the women’s shelter in Dawson City.

I would like to take the opportunity, on behalf of my colleagues, to thank our Yukon transition homes for the work that they do every day. They make Yukon a safer and a better place.

I would also like to thank Yukoners at this time who give generously and who volunteer their time, because they truly know, at this time of year and all year, that it’s the little things that make a difference.

Applause

Ms. Van Bibber: I am pleased to rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition and the Third Party, the NPD, to pay tribute to two wonderful Yukon Christmas traditions: the Share the Spirit and the Bare Essentials campaigns. Each of these groups provide Yukoners an easy, wonderful way to give and help families in need during the holiday season and beyond.

Going back to the start, 1997, it all began with an idea launched by Ed and Donna Isaak, who operated and managed

the Discovery Bar in the old Taku Hotel. The idea was to start a campaign to raise \$3,500 to bring Christmas to seven families. The name: Adopt a Family. They raised funds by soliciting businesses and holding events in the bar. Soon, Catholic schools in Whitehorse, local bank branches, and more schools became involved. The campaign was so successful that, in 2004, the campaign was taken on by the Whitehorse Kinsmen and then later the Kinettes who ran the campaign for 15 years under Share the Spirit.

Today, the Whitehorse Firefighters Charitable Society is entering its fourth season bringing Christmas joy and fun to many families, and they have proven to be a force to be reckoned with. Not only are toys and gifts delivered, but food hampers and, not forgotten, all the fixings for a wonderful Christmas dinner. Yukoners willing to help can drop off new, unwrapped gifts to the old Toyota building on 6th and Main.

Also, thank you to the Mason family and Whitehorse Toyota for donating this facility as “elf central”.

Visit the Whitehorse Firefighters Charitable Society’s website — afterthefireisout.com — to find out other ways you can help out in the community during this holiday season and beyond.

Special thanks to the Whitehorse Firefighters Charitable Society, as well as everyone who shares the spirit through donations and volunteering.

I also want to thank those who contribute year after year to the Bare Essentials campaign. Basic items, toiletries, diapers, formula, and much more are collected for women and children who find themselves in emergency housing due to abuse or unsafe home conditions. Our sincere thanks to the Women’s Directorate staff for their role in organizing this important event each year and to all the staff who organize donations within their respective departments.

For Share the Spirit, it’s all hands on deck to get things ready and get everything delivered before the big day, so if you are able to donate some time for this cause, now is the time to step forward. Even a little goes a long way — a few dollars, one gift, or a few hours. As to helping, I leave you with a quote by that wonderful author, Dr. Seuss: “If you never did, you should. These things are fun, and fun is good.”

Applause

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Speaker: Pursuant to sections 317 and 318 of the *Elections Act*, the Chair has for tabling the Chief Electoral Officer’s report to the Legislative Assembly.

In addition, the Chair has for tabling a legislative return in response to Written Question No. 1, tabled by the Member for Klwane.

Are there any other returns or documents for tabling?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I have for tabling a legislative return in response to a question asked on November 7, 2019, by the Member for Klwane.

I also have a legislative return in response to a question asked on November 21, 2019, by the Member for Copperbelt South.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I have for tabling a legislative return responding to a motion for the production of papers put forward by the Member for Whitehorse Centre.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I have for tabling today the Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues annual report for 2018-19, as required under section 15 of the *Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues Act*.

Hon. Ms. Frost: I have a legislative return in response to a question asked by the Member for Watson Lake on November 25, 2019, regarding nursing at the Watson Lake hospital.

Further, I have a legislative return in response to questions asked by the Member for Kluane on November 18, 2019, pertaining to moose surveys.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with Northwestel to reinstall the conduit on the Ross River footbridge in order to restore phone service to residents on the far side of the Pelly River.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to ensure that all \$5 million in upgrades to the Mayo aerodrome that were committed to in the budget are completed.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explain why \$3.85 million of the money that was to be invested in the Mayo aerodrome this summer was reallocated.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to tell Yukoners why the Nares River bridge project came in \$2.5 million overbudget.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Minister of Highways and Public Works to provide details, including cost to taxpayers, of planned expropriations of private property associated with the changes to the Alaska Highway near the Hillcrest subdivision.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with the City of Whitehorse to implement their bicycle network

plan that will connect the southern part of the city to Robert Service Way via a separate trail along the Alaska Highway.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Minister of Highways and Public Works to include the following safety improvements for the Alaska Highway in the 2020-21 budget:

(1) a northbound acceleration lane from Alusru Way; and

(2) improved signage and turning lanes near Yukon Yamaha that make it safe for Standard Bus Lines to access their property.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to work with First Nations, the Klondike Placer Miners' Association, and other stakeholders to eliminate permitting delays related to wetlands in the Indian River area.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to provide the total budget for the Yukon mineral development strategy, including but not limited to fees for panel members, fees for the facilitator, travel costs, website costs, and any transfers to the Council of Yukon First Nations.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Minister of Education to honour the following commitments made at the March 5, 2019, Selkirk Elementary School Council meeting:

(1) to only have one French immersion kindergarten class at the school in the 2020-21 school year;

(2) to maintain Selkirk Elementary School as a dual-track school; and

(3) to address safety concerns raised on Selkirk Street, including improvements to lighting, surfacing, and sidewalks as well as improved links from the new parking lot to the school.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT the Minister of Education immediately inform the Selkirk Elementary School Council about the plans for a portable classroom at their school.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to use its 2020-21 capital budget to improve safety on the Alaska Highway in front of Porter Creek Super A by adding a turning lane and a slip lane.

I also give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of all costs, including staffing costs, related to the logo and website changes, including a breakdown by department.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to ensure that all capital project tenders and contracts are released prior to March 31, 2020.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to release details around occupancy and staffing for the recently opened Housing First facility in downtown Whitehorse.

I also give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of all documentation related to all costs associated with the purchase, renovation, inspections, and permitting of the government's group home at 22 Wann Road.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to improve highway safety at the intersection of the Mayo Road and the Alaska Highway by ensuring that its 2020-21 capital budget includes funding for the project that was supposed to begin construction in the 2018 construction season, including widening two kilometres of the Alaska Highway, lengthening the turning lane, and adding a through lane.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to recognize that serious safety issues, including aggressive driving, are due in part to the lack of passing lanes on the long section of highway between Vista Road and the top of Two Mile Hill by using its 2020-21 capital budget to reinstate the four lanes on the Mayo Road in the Hidden Valley/MacPherson area.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to use its 2020-21 capital budget to improve the safety and functionality of Takhini River Road by:

- (1) investing in engineering and design work aimed at doing a major upgrade to the roadbed, road surface, and ditches; and
- (2) providing funding to begin a major upgrade to the roadbed, road surface, and ditches of Takhini River Road.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Minister of Education to recognize that not everyone in the Yukon has access to high-speed Internet by ensuring that all Yukon parents who choose to home-school their children continue to have paper-based options for teaching their children instead of forcing them to use the Internet.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to work with Humane Society Yukon to ensure that the Mae Bachur Animal Shelter is able to continue to operate.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Premier in his capacity as Minister of Finance to recognize the importance of providing proper funding to the Yukon Hospital Corporation by taking actions, including:

(1) convening Management Board to deal with the outstanding financial decision on millions of dollars of the hospital's core funding for the current fiscal year, which witnesses from the Yukon Hospital Corporation informed the Assembly of on Thursday, November 21;

(2) recognize that a witness from the Yukon Hospital Corporation told the Legislative Assembly, "We had set a budget early in the year, and we are, right now, looking at making sure that core funding has been established in its entirety" by approving that financial request at Management Board;

(3) recognize that the Yukon Hospital Corporation CEO told us that they are also waiting for funding for the current year for the new orthopaedic program that they have established by approving that financial request at Management Board; and

(4) in future, ensure that the Yukon Hospital Corporation is never again forced to wait until eight months into a fiscal year to have its core funding approved by the Yukon government.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to ensure that all mental health hubs are fully staffed and that services are available to Yukoners who require them.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to develop an effective plan to recruit and retain nurses for Yukon hospitals, public health centres, community health centres, and continuing care facilities.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with the Yukon Hospital Corporation and provide them with the necessary resources to reduce wait times for Yukoners needing the care of visiting specialists.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to include increases to medical travel assistance to Yukoners in the 2020-21 budget.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Minister of Health and Social Services to advise what new services the Yukon government is going to provide to rural Yukoners in our community hospitals.

I also give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of all documentation related to the operation and maintenance costs of the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter since the government took control.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to address the current shortage of psychiatrists in the territory and to ensure that Yukoners do not have to check themselves into the hospital in order to receive their prescriptions.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Minister of Health and Social Services to investigate outstanding accounts payable and wages owed by Many Rivers to vendors and former employees and report back their findings to this House during the 2020 Spring Sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Finally, I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Canada to make medical cannabis tax exempt.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Canada to respect the importance of protecting the rights of law-abiding firearms owners, including hunters and target shooters, while going after the criminal misuse of firearms by taking the following actions:

- (1) ensuring that police have appropriate resources to target organized crime and criminal acts involving firearms; and
- (2) respecting the right of law-abiding firearms owners to keep property they lawfully acquired.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Minister of Education to recognize the needs of Yukon families in rural Yukon by ensuring that parents who home-school their children are properly consulted before any changes are made that affect curriculum, including the availability of paper-based textbooks and lessons.

I also give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of documents showing the full cost of Yukon Energy Corporation's planning, engineering, and consultation on the proposed 20-megawatt thermal generation facility that was cancelled by the Liberal government.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to include the construction of turning lanes into Takhini and Mendenhall subdivisions in the 2020-21 budget.

I also give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of documentation related to all costs associated with the rental, shipping, operation, maintenance, and use of diesel generation units in 2017, 2018, and 2019.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to include the construction of the new Kluane Lake School in Burwash Landing in the 2020-21 budget.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to initiate consultations with the St. Elias Seniors Society, the Village of Haines Junction, and the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations on the construction of phase 2 of seniors housing in Haines Junction.

Last but not least, I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House recognizes and thanks those Canadian soldiers on active duty who will not be home for Christmas.

Ms. White: I rise to give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of an update on the Government of Yukon's draft regulations on the protection and management of sensitive areas from off-road vehicle use, as stated in Motion No. 272 on March 13, 2019.

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

THAT the Members' Services Board consider the creation of a seniors advocate as an officer of the Legislative Assembly and report to the Legislative Assembly by the 2020 Spring Sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT, pursuant to the July 2019 PricewaterhouseCoopers review of matters related to security for mine reclamation and closure, this House urges the Yukon government to implement a plan to limit public liability by:

- (1) identifying measures to be taken by the Yukon government to amend the current legislation and policy framework to require a risk-benefit assessment based on the financial documents of the company and the life of the mine plan prior to the licence being granted;
- (2) mandating inspectors to identify and report on risks other than direct environmental risks; and
- (3) establishing a clear communications protocol concerning which issues should be escalated to senior management, including the manner by which issues should be escalated.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with the Child Development Centre to develop programs and funding options necessary to facilitate the provision of therapeutic services for Yukon children and their families on a year-round basis.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I give notice of the following motion that we had hoped would come before this House:

THAT a Yukon Legislative Assembly select committee on electoral reform be established;

THAT the membership of the committee be comprised of three MLAs from the government caucus selected by the Premier, two MLAs from the Official Opposition caucus selected by the Leader of the Official Opposition, and one MLA from the Third Party caucus selected by the Leader of the Third Party;

THAT the leaders of the parties represented in the Legislative Assembly confirm the names from their respective caucuses by December 9, 2019;

THAT the Premier shall select the committee's convener from the membership of the committee;

THAT the chair shall be elected by the committee from the members of the committee;

THAT the chair of the committee has one vote on each matter before the committee;

THAT the committee conduct public hearings for the purpose of receiving the views and opinions of Yukon residents on the following:

(1) whether the first-past-the-post voting system should be replaced;

(2) how a referendum would be put in place to give effect to any recommendations made by the committee; and

(3) such other matters pertaining to electoral reform as the committee determines to be appropriate.

THAT the committee have the power to call for persons, papers, and records and to sit during intersessional periods;

THAT, during the drafting of the final report, the committee should conduct its business in a consensus decision-making manner to the greatest extent possible, and when unanimity is not achieved, the report will show the differing views of the committee members;

THAT the committee report to the Legislative Assembly on its findings from public hearings and any recommendations that it might have on matters covered in those public hearings, no later than the 2020 Fall Sitting of the Legislative Assembly;

THAT, if the House is not sitting at such time as the committee is prepared to present its report, the committee chair shall transmit the committee's report to the Speaker, who shall transmit the report to all Members of the Legislative Assembly and then, not more than one day later, release the report to the public; and

THAT the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly shall be responsible for providing the necessary support services to the committee.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Housing action plan

Hon. Ms. Frost: Mr. Speaker, our Liberal government is committed to making strategic investments that build healthy, vibrant, sustainable communities. This includes our work to address the housing pressures that Yukoners are facing following years of inaction and lack of planning. As the Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation, I have been tasked with increasing affordable housing options across the territory, including making effective use of federal funding to support housing.

In 2017, we were pleased to see Canada's first national housing strategy announced. In March of this year, we signed our Yukon-Canada bilateral agreement under the *National Housing Strategy*, which will provide stable funding for housing in the Yukon for the next decade and will allow us to respond to Yukon's needs across the housing continuum.

I am pleased to inform Yukoners that the Yukon Housing Corporation and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation have developed a three-year action plan under the *National Housing Strategy*, an essential step in securing funding under our bilateral agreement with the Government of Canada. The three-year action plan outlines a coordinated approach for the Government of Yukon and partners to make effective use of over \$11 million in federal funding to achieve the goals of the housing action plan for Yukon and the Safe at Home community-based action plan to end and prevent homelessness.

We developed a three-year action plan with input from our partners to make sure that we captured the key goals and actions of these existing plans and can meet the distinct needs of different communities. A key priority is to lift our Yukoners out of housing needs with housing options that are adequate, affordable, and suitable.

This funding will support the completion of the new Housing First residence in Whitehorse. This unprecedented project will provide permanent housing to persons who are experiencing homelessness, and it marks a major shift in the way Yukon provides housing and supports to those in acute need.

Funding will also go toward the mixed-use, mixed-income housing project that is currently being designed for downtown Whitehorse. This innovative project will enable social diversity while supporting better social outcomes for our clients. With up to 48 units, this project at 4th Avenue and Jeckell Street will help meet housing needs in Whitehorse. Funding will also support a new 10-unit housing complex in Old Crow. This community housing project will be a first for Old Crow and will include a spectrum of housing options from affordable rental units for community members who wish to live independently to those who wish to age in place.

This three-year action plan will help us to improve access to housing options across the territory to better meet the needs of Yukoners. We will increase the number of affordable homes in Yukon in part by partnering with local developers and

enhancing the corporation's rent supplement program. We will address housing adequacy and suitability by repairing and renovating our community housing units and supporting First Nation governments and Yukon homeowners to repair the homes they own.

We will continue working with our federal partners at the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation toward a diverse and abundant housing option that increases the health and stability of all individuals in communities so that everyone has a safe and affordable place to call home.

Ms. Van Bibber: Thank you for the opportunity to respond today. I do think that the minister did forget some important context, which is the social and senior housing wait-list that has skyrocketed under her watch. The wait-list for social and senior housing had 105 people in 2016. This spring, it had grown to 270. Perhaps the minister could provide an update on those numbers when she gets up to respond.

It is important to note that the minister has been slow to act on these issues, and this has contributed to a housing market where the average price for a home is completely unaffordable for a first-time homebuyer. I do appreciate the minister also re-announcing a number of initiatives that she has already announced and re-announced in this House — for example, the Housing First project. We have discussed how the minister mismanaged this project, went overbudget, and was late. I know that the minister did the ribbon-cutting a few weeks ago, but can she confirm if residents have moved in or not? If not, when will they move in?

The minister also dedicated a good section of her ministerial statement to the mixed-use, mixed-income housing project. The minister previously delivered a ministerial statement on this project on March 14 of this year. At the same time, I asked a number of questions and the minister was not able to answer them. Since it has been eight months, I am hoping that she will be able to answer those questions today.

As we mentioned at the time, the government had earmarked \$18 million for this housing project. At the time, we asked her whether any analysis had been done to suggest that this was the most effective way to spend \$18 million in addressing housing needs in Whitehorse. The earlier ministerial statement said that the work on this 4th and Jeckell project will not start until sometime next year, so last March, the minister announced a project that won't start for another year. She is re-announcing that project in November and it seems like it won't start until sometime — who knows — in the future. Is there an update today on when construction will begin? Has design work begun? Has there been any money spent on it yet? Have consultations taken place? Has anything changed on this project since March when the minister was unable to provide details?

On the topic of the Vimy housing project, the government has been noticeably silent. The project could potentially address some of our housing issues. Is this no longer a priority for this government? I hope the minister can give an update on this.

With respect to the budget, the spring budget earmarked \$19 million for residential lot development; \$4 million was for

rural and the remainder for Whitehorse. Can the minister tell us how many lots have been developed as a result of this investment and break it down by rural and city?

The budget also announced \$3.6 million for a housing initiatives fund to — quote: “Help Yukoners create new rental housing options”.

Can the minister tell us if she has any data to suggest that funding has been successful at meeting its goal? How many projects has this funded? How many have been committed to so far?

Ms. White: Like I mentioned in my tribute to National Housing Day last week, I've stood in this Chamber more times than I can count speaking to the issue of housing. It's the last day of the Sitting and like many, I'm feeling a cynicism of press releases without action.

We saw this very thing with the press announcement from this Liberal government in December of 2017 of the creation of the sexual assault prevention team promised to be up and running by the spring of 2018. Here we are at the end of 2019, and no sexual assault response team is in place.

I appreciate all the points that the minister has made, but it's not the first time Yukon has heard a minister wax poetic about their vision for housing in the Yukon. Who can argue with more housing units, an expanded rent supplement program, or housing in our northernmost community? Certainly not the NDP.

I guess we, like others, will need to wait additional years to see this vision come to life. The Yukon NDP will be paying close attention to be sure that these are more than just words or press releases and that this government follows through on their commitments. Ever the optimist, Mr. Speaker, I'm hopeful that they do.

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to thank the members opposite for their comments. I would like to also just say that we are working hard and we have addressed a lot of the housing pressures across the Yukon — housing pressures that we are facing in rural Yukon communities.

Some of the comments with respect to — I can respond to some of that through my ministerial statement. I want to just right off the hop say that, from 2013 to 2017, the former government spent \$24 million on lot development. This year alone, we spent \$30 million. That's an indication that we are working toward meeting the needs of Yukoners.

The previous government sat on federal funding for years before cancelling a \$13-million affordable housing project that would have helped Yukoners in need and now we're playing catch-up. The decision was widely criticized as demonstrating incompetence and indifference on the housing file, not to mention the unnecessary uncertainty it created for the local contracting community. We are providing certainty, Mr. Speaker. We are providing consistency in terms of working with our communities.

The good news for Yukoners is that they elected a government in 2016 that is committed to increasing the number of options across the housing continuum. The three-year action

plan we are discussing today will support Yukon's first Housing First residence, providing 16 units. That's a process that we want to ensure that we can model in other communities where we have significant pressures — say, for example, like Watson Lake, where we see significant pressures. Maybe, just maybe, we can look at that in the future if that's a need of the community. Those are discussions we are continuing to have with our community.

When we look at support, when we look at new supported initiatives that look at mixed use and mixed income and we look at creating the 48-unit facility — we had significant discussions with the aging population to talk about seniors, opportunities for seniors housing to stay at home longer and continued supports. The project that we're looking at in Old Crow — it has never been supported historically. Not once has there been resources put into the community. There are other communities that have not been supported, and we will ensure that we continue to support our communities.

Over the past two years, our investment in housing programs committed to housing development supported over 400 units. That's 61 units of housing with services, 216 new, repaired, or renovated affordable housing homes, 14 home ownership options, and over 200 homes across the housing continuum through the housing initiative fund.

We talked a bit earlier. There were some questions with respect to the sexual assault response team, which is significant. Why is that, Mr. Speaker? We want to ensure that every person is given a home, a safe place —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Ms. Frost: Exactly — so we are working on that. The Minister of Justice highlighted all of the successes and all of the good work that has been done by the departments. We are proud to be working together with our communities to increase the number of options across the housing continuum. We are working together to build healthy, vibrant, and sustainable communities across the territory, and we will ensure that we provide supports to communities across the Yukon that require the supports — when they need it, where they need it, and with their involvement.

Speaker: This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Dawson City Airport

Mr. Hassard: In a September 23, 2019, press release from the Liberal government, they claim that the construction of the Dawson City Airport maintenance facility cost only \$7.7 million. However, the Official Opposition has obtained the financial documents associated with paying the contractor, dated June 11, showing that the actual costs were over \$8 million. That's \$300,000 over what they claimed was spent. So, why did the Liberal government mislead Yukoners about the true cost?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Our government is making strategic investments in safe, efficient aviation systems for Yukoners. This spring, we paved the runway at the Dawson City Airport and built a new maintenance facility. We have also invested in

the develop of a new south apron to address congestion issues on the north apron on the airport. Together, these investments are going to help enhance economic opportunities in Dawson City and the surrounding region.

Mr. Speaker, I'm absolutely elated with the work of the Department of Highways and Public Works in executing on this project in a very short period of time. I will say, Mr. Speaker, that our investments in our aviation community are bearing real results. We're seeing an expansion in our air carriers. We're seeing more routes opening up to Yukoners. It is working, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

Mr. Hassard: Even before the Liberals' misleading claim in their September press release, they awarded the original contract for the Dawson City Airport maintenance facility at \$7.4 million. As I mentioned, the final construction cost came in at over \$8 million. That's actually \$600,000 more than the contract that was awarded.

Why did the project go so significantly overbudget?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I'm happy to be talking about the Dawson City runway paving this afternoon on the last day of the legislative Sitting this time. This is an investment that this government promised at the beginning of our election. We actually delivered on that promise. We now have a paved runway in the Klondike. That's something that had been long talked about, but never delivered.

This government stepped up. We built a heated maintenance facility in Dawson City. It's a tremendous asset to the community. It's a tremendous asset to the territory in terms of its aviation community.

The investments that this government is making in our aviation infrastructure are bearing real fruit. We're seeing Air North flying to more destinations. We're seeing more flights into Whitehorse than we have ever seen before. We are seeing flights now into Dawson. We have seen jets that can now land in Dawson without fear of having gravel damage.

Mr. Speaker, the investment that this government is making in our aviation community is bearing real fruit. We just certified another airport in Mayo. Again, this is more development on this aviation file. Our airports are safer, they are better run, and they are bearing real fruit in the aviation community, which is seeing a lot of expansion.

Mr. Hassard: Unfortunately, the questions that I am asking the minister are about dollars and cents on the maintenance facility. He doesn't appear to be interested in answering those questions. But if you go to the Yukon government contract registry, you will see that there is actually a significant amount of additional expenditures related to the construction of the new airport maintenance facility. In fact, there was approximately \$320,000 extra spent on planning and design of this project. That brings the total cost of this maintenance facility up to \$8.3 million.

What is interesting about this additional design work is that the project was a design/build. So, why would the government give over \$300,000 to one company to do design work associated with this project and then give out an \$8-million design/build contract to another company for the exact same project?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: What we are talking about this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, is the completion of projects that we promised. We are actually talking about successes that we are seeing in the Klondike region and across the territory. I am happy to talk about those things.

We promised that we would pave the Dawson City runway. Part of paving the Dawson City runway was to make sure we had a heated maintenance facility. This government built the heated maintenance facility and delivered on that promise to the residents of Dawson. In speaking to the highways and maintenance staff in Dawson, they are elated to finally have a place where they can work out of the weather and actually maintain the expensive equipment that we have in the Klondike area. That is actually going to bring down the cost of maintaining our infrastructure — our equipment — into the future, Mr. Speaker.

What we have this afternoon is talk about promises made and promises delivered. This Liberal government promised to pave the Dawson City runway. We paved that Dawson City runway in a week. We paved it because we got our procurement done early which allowed our contractors to get up there on time and actually pave that runway. We also built a heated maintenance facility that is now maintaining that paved runway, Mr. Speaker. Now, because of that, we have certainty for our air carriers who want to fly jets into the Klondike to actually deliver on the tourism industry.

Question re: Robert Service School

Mr. Kent: On August 10, the Liberal government notified the Robert Service School community in Dawson City that they discovered mould in the portables at the school and, as a result, they would have to be shut down. At the time, the government was criticized for waiting until so close to the start of the school year to notify parents, teachers, and students, as this would have a negative impact on the programs run from those portables.

On August 22, the Liberal government told CBC news that the shutdown was communicated to the community as soon as the mould was discovered. However, the Official Opposition has obtained documents that show that the Liberal government became aware of the mould issues on June 10, a full two months before they communicated these issues to the community.

Why did the Liberal government mislead Yukoners on this important issue?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I'm happy to talk about how we're procuring portables for our schools across the territory. Highways and Public Works is issuing tenders for the purchase of five modular classrooms for Yukon schools. Tenders for the supply and delivery of two modular classrooms were issued earlier this year, and a third will be issued this winter. Tenders for two more modular classrooms are anticipated to be posted in 2020. The portables are being procured for the following schools — we have tenders for Golden Horn and Selkirk, and we're evaluating whether to renovate or replace the Robert Service School portables. In the meantime, the existing portables remain closed to students.

Mr. Kent: Hopefully, the minister is able to find the right briefing note while I ask this next question. These documents show that the Liberal government knew about the mould issues in the Robert Service School portables since June 10, yet they did not notify parents, teachers, and students for two months, waiting until a week and a half before school started, forcing everyone to scramble to come up with plans for the programming offered in those buildings.

In these documents, there's a report dated July 2, entitled — and I quote: "Mould Impacted Materials Assessment" for Robert Service School portable. According to this report, after they tested the air quality in the portables, levels of some types of fungus were 335 percent higher than they were outdoors, yet the Liberal government sat on this information. We know that they didn't inform the community when they discovered the mould on June 10, but why didn't the Liberal government inform the community immediately upon receiving this concerning report?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I'm happy to talk about the importance of maintaining safe facilities for our students in the Yukon. Providing Yukon students with safe, comfortable spaces to learn remains a priority for our government.

During an assessment, mould was found in the portable classrooms at Robert Service School. We evaluated whether to renovate the portables at Robert Service School or replace them altogether. In the meantime, the portables will remain closed to students.

As my honourable colleague can confirm, Education has found a space within the school to accommodate students who are displaced. We're planning to have the work done in time for the 2021 school year.

Mr. Kent: On May 25, 2017, the Official Opposition first called on the Liberal government to replace the old portables at Robert Service School with new or additional ones. Instead of listening, the Liberals plugged their ears. Then, two years later, they found mould in the portables, sat on the information for two months, and then only gave parents a heads-up 11 days before school started. This stubbornness and poor planning by the Liberals meant the loss of learning spaces in the portables for this school year.

A contributing factor to this is the fact that the Liberals have not lived up to their campaign promise to get all the seasonally dependent projects out by March of each year. If they had, then this mould could have been caught earlier and this work could have been dealt with prior to the beginning of the school year. But, Mr. Speaker, now we are where we are.

I'm wondering if the minister can provide an update on the cost to repair or replace the portables. Will that work be completed for next school year?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The member opposite is still on his question rotation. He heard the answer that I gave to the first question, and now he is asking for that answer to be repeated. I'm not going to do that, Mr. Speaker.

I will say, though, that providing Yukon students with safe, comfortable spaces to learn remains a priority for our government. The school is being used; the portables aren't. We have the students learning in the school, and next year, as I said

earlier in my first response, we're looking at finding a replacement for these portables so that the school can continue to provide the excellent education that students and parents in the Klondike have come to depend on.

Question re: Social inclusion and poverty reduction

Ms. White: Let's talk about poverty. Consider for moment that, instead of being a Member of the Legislative Assembly, I'm a Yukoner employed in the accommodation and food services industry. According to the Yukon Bureau of Statistics, I make a hair over \$2,000 a month. I got lucky, and my apartment only costs \$1,000 a month, including heat and hot water. I spend \$300 a month on food and another \$300 a month on my car insurance and gas. I spend another \$150 on Internet and my phone bill, and so that leaves me \$250 a month left over for everything else.

Because I'm precariously employed, I don't have any health insurance, and one day, my teeth start to hurt. I put it off as long as possible before finally going to the dentist, who tells me that I need a \$3,000 root canal and a crown. At my current pace, it would take me a full year to save the money needed for the procedure.

Mr. Speaker, what essential part of my monthly budget does the government suggest that I cut to get the dental care that I urgently need?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I appreciate the question from the member opposite. Earlier this year, I tabled the document entitled *Living Wage in Whitehorse, Yukon: 2019*. I would like to thank the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition for completing this annual report and presenting it to us.

I won't be able to answer the question directly as it is posed, but I will be able to discuss ways in which we have been working to address Yukoners who have a lower income. There are a suite of ways — whether it is through Health and Social Services and the programs that they provide, whether it is through Education, or whether it is through our Finance department. Within my department, one of the areas that we work on is reviewing the minimum wage. I presented the Yukon living wage report to the Employment Standards Board as well as the economic analysis that I promised last year, and I look forward to their deliberation and coming back to us.

What I can say is that last year we raised minimum wage by over \$1 — it went up to \$12.71 — and we reduced the gap between a living wage and a minimum wage.

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, I want to continue to talk about poverty — with the lived experience of the Yukon food service worker.

In 2018, I got lucky. According to the Yukon Bureau of Statistics, my average monthly income increased by \$240. This unexpected windfall is great, and I start thinking that I should save to buy a home, but while reading the news, I see that the average price of a house in Whitehorse has increased by \$44,000 in the same period that my wage has gone up by \$240 a month. On average, the cost of a house has increased 15 times more than my raise. At the same time as housing is becoming increasingly unaffordable for me, the Yukon government is

developing and selling lots above the cost of development, meaning that the Government of Yukon, which is supposed to act in the best interests of all Yukoners, is contributing to rising housing costs that will make it impossible for me and people like me to ever own a home.

Mr. Speaker, when is this government going to stop selling lots at market value and get out of the business of making housing unachievable for working-class Yukoners?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Earlier this year, we released quite a few lots in Whistle Bend. They were all at the development cost charged; none of them were at market value. I am not sure where the member opposite is getting her information.

I am happy to share that the work that we did was to release a range of lots. This set of lots, based on planning from the City of Whitehorse, included quite a few lots that were much more modest in size and therefore much more modestly priced. The average was \$58,000 for those smaller lots. There were also, within there, several multi-family lots, and we will have many units on those lots. That is all about density. That is all about reducing price, and that is working with the City of Whitehorse to try to get lots across the spectrum so that those who don't have the means can get entry into the housing market.

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, as a minimum-wage earner, last spring I saw that this government, when given the opportunity, decided to increase the minimum wage by only \$1.20 per hour because they said that they had to consult with Yukon businesses about how a further increase might impact their bottom line. I realized that this wage increase, like almost all government decisions, was not made with my best interests at heart.

I notice that income inequality and unaffordability are making life increasingly difficult for working-class Yukoners like me. I hear the government pointing out that the economy is doing well and that unemployment is low, but what I see is that those at the top are the ones reaping the benefits of those increases while those of us at the bottom are getting left behind. My wages are barely increasing while the cost of living in Yukon skyrockets.

Mr. Speaker, is it this government's policy to create a permanent class of working-poor Yukoners, or will they finally do the right thing and immediately raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, closing the gap between that and the living wage?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Last year, we raised the minimum wage by \$1.20. It was approximately a nine- to 10-percent increase in minimum wage in one year. We did that on the recommendation of the Employment Standards Board. We continue to work with the Employment Standards Board — to ask them for their recommendations — because they set the minimum wage. Well, technically, they give us an order, and we either accept it or reject it. We worked with them over the past year to provide them with more economic analysis and we look forward to what they will recommend for us going forward.

What I want to say is that the living wage today is just about the same as the living wage when I first landed here as a minister. In the meantime, our minimum wage has gone up. Is

it enough? I look forward to talking with the Employment Standards Board.

If I look at that report, there are a suite of ways in which we need to work together on how to address poverty ranging from transit to lot prices and ranging from affordable housing to minimum wage. We'll work on all of them.

Question re: Alaska Highway corridor upgrades

Ms. Van Bibber: Earlier this Sitting, we asked the government about their plans for expropriation along the Alaska Highway. At the government's open house on November 12, we were told that the government is in negotiations to purchase the Salvation Army's property where the Adult Resource Centre is located. The current plans do not show any planned roads or through roads going through this property, so it would seem strange that the government is looking at this property.

Can the minister confirm that the government is looking at purchasing this property and, if so, for what purpose? Is the government looking at creating a quarry or a gravel pit?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I can tell the member that the government has done extensive assessment and planning work along the Alaska Highway through Whitehorse, and we're focusing on intersection safety improvements and considering all users, from large trucks and personal vehicles to cyclists and pedestrians. We have prioritized segments of the highway for improvements.

Mr. Speaker, we do know that there are some obstructions on the highway right-of-way through the section of highway right in front of Hillcrest. I have asked the department about this. They are currently speaking with the owners of the Airport Chalet, but that's the only site that, I've been told, we are actually working on to obtain to make the highway right-of-way wider.

Question re: Queen's Printer and Central Stores services

Mr. Kent: The elimination of Central Stores and the gutting of Queen's Printer are other examples of poor management and poor leadership by the Liberals.

This is certainly a case of decision-based evidence-making as the minister fumbles and bumbles his way through this file. We have found out from the private sector that suppliers were invited to a meeting in early November only to be told what the government's plans were. No consultation, no engagement — certainly no being heard. At this meeting, vendors were told that the new model would be to supply, warehouse, and deliver goods Yukon-wide.

For context, Mr. Speaker, there are 200 delivery locations in Whitehorse alone, and there are no minimum orders associated with this.

Can the minister tell us why there was no consultation with vendors prior to this decision being made? What guarantees are in place for local contractors and vendors to be successful in bidding on these jobs?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: We are modernizing our operations, moving to improve procurement, and expanding our digital

workplace and online services. We are moving our government to a data-driven 21st century institution from a 19th century model. We are striving to be balanced and reasonable and fair in our approach.

I'm not sure how the member opposite — whether he agrees or not with the approach we're taking. I'm not really going to address that right now. I will say that we're working very hard to manage the change within the Department of Highways and Public Works. We know that change is difficult for some of the staff. We're working very hard to make sure that they are accommodated. As I have said before, no employee is losing their job with the Government of Yukon. As a matter of fact, they're retaining their wages and their status within the Yukon government through this transition.

At the end of this, we will have modernized and actually changed the way we procure goods and services within Highways and Public Works for the entire government. We will have saved an awful lot of warehouse space, and we will actually save the government about \$1.6 million.

We're following the collective agreement. We're respecting our employees' jobs and making sure that they have a place to stay, and we are saving the government \$1.6 million. I'm not sure what the member opposite disagrees with. I look forward to finding out.

Mr. Kent: For the minister, I'm flagging concerns that were raised by the private sector about the lack of consultation prior to this decision being made. As I mentioned, at the meeting in early November, vendors were told that the new model would be to supply, warehouse, and deliver these goods Yukon-wide.

By the looks of things, the government is just turning over the warehouse and delivery aspects of what was being done through Central Stores to the private sector. Can the minister again tell us why there was no consultation with vendors prior to this decision being made? Can he provide for us one concrete example of cost savings by just turning this over to the private sector?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: As I said, the government is working very hard to modernize and improve the way we procure goods and services and save money. We're doing so in a way that respects the collective agreement and our employees.

Mr. Speaker, this modernization initiative that we undertook was planned out by the Department of Highways and Public Works and the Public Service Commission in detail.

In fact, what the member opposite is suggesting is that we would have gone to the business community and said that this is what we're doing before we made the decision and actually had our employees find out about what we were doing or planning or maybe doing through the business community. We did not take that approach. We wanted to respect our employees, and once we took a decision, we informed the union and worked with them through the whole process. At the end of dealing with the HR issues within the Department of Highways and Public Works in a methodical fashion, we then went to the business community to say, "This is our plan, and this is where we're going."

To have done that the opposite way would have actually undermined any efforts we had and would have actually suggested that we made a decision when we had not. We took a decision and then we acted. That's how we do it; that's how it should be done, and I'm very proud of the way Highways and Public Works is executed.

Question re: Private venture capital funds

Mr. Istchenko: Earlier this year, the Minister of Economic Development announced that the Yukon government was spending \$2 million to invest in a private venture capital fund based in Montréal. While we see the benefit of investing in venture capital funds rather than picking winners and losers by directly subsidizing businesses, we have some questions about this investment.

What percentage of the \$2 million will actually be invested in the Yukon tech sector?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Taking into consideration that the fund is looking for the opportunity to grow the portfolio of investment, I would say that it will be determined by the opportunities that they see arise in Yukon. If there are many strong companies in that particular space which we're starting to see in the Yukon, that will determine — but you cannot predetermine an outcome of business analysis here in the Legislative Assembly today.

Mr. Istchenko: It's not unusual for other government corporations in Canada to invest in private venture capital funds. In fact, the Alberta Enterprise Corporation also invested in Panache Ventures. However, the Alberta Enterprise Corporation takes a much different approach to how they spend their money. For example, they require any venture capital fund that they invest in to provide key deliverables to them. Among other things, those deliverables require that the venture capital fund maintain a permanent presence in Alberta and that the province will benefit from the return on its investment.

Can the minister tell us why he didn't require these types of deliverables from Panache Ventures before giving them \$2 million of taxpayers' dollars?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: The member opposite probably doesn't have all the information, so let me just take that opportunity.

Either through research by caucus staff or through conversation, what would have been good is if the Alberta fund had taken the opportunity as well to let the member opposite know that actually the Yukon negotiated the best terms of all the investment portfolio. Actually, what happened during this process was that Québec as well as the banking community in Alberta went back to seek better benefits in the investment based on the terms that were negotiated by Yukon. Of course, that is mentorship, having the opportunity to have a presence here, having them build capacity with an individual to have an office here in the future, and as well, hosting in the very near future over 60 CEOs from a number of companies. Those are all things that we negotiated and they were the best terms and of course the rest of the country then wanted to use the terms that we had.

Mr. Istchenko: Let's re-cap the deal that the minister has negotiated. He is giving away \$2 million of taxpayers'

dollars, and in return, he has no firm commitment that any of the \$2 million will be spent in the Yukon. The Yukon government will receive no direct financial return on this investment and the capital venture fund is not even required to have a permanent presence in the Yukon. These are not outlandish things to ask, Mr. Speaker; in fact, they are exactly what Panache was required to provide in return for the investments from Alberta.

All that the minister can tell us is that, from time to time, staff of the fund will visit the Yukon and provide advice. So, \$2-million worth of advice — does the minister believe that this is a good deal for the Yukon government?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I don't think it is a good deal to send the Member for Kluane in with half of the information and then ask me these questions. That what I don't think is a good deal.

The premise of the question reflects a misunderstanding, so let me just clarify this. First of all, the decision that was made on the investment was made by the seven First Nations — the Da Daghay Development Corporation, Dakwakada Capital Investments, Selkirk Development Corporation, Kluane Dana Shãw, Chu Níikwãn from Kwanlin Dün, and Na-Cho Nyäk Dun — one of the biggest investments ever pulled together in Yukon history with First Nation development corporations.

On top of that, we have a commitment for a minimum investment in Yukon companies. But we believe, based on the success of the companies that we are seeing — such as Proof and Proskida, which just outfitted the Swiss ski team in the last week at the World Cup — companies like this that are starting to roll, that we are getting behind — that is really leading to true diversification — Yukoners getting jobs in this sector, which we hadn't seen previously, and expansion of our economy.

So, once again, many benefits negotiated, and I would like to thank the First Nation groups that came together and their leadership for this. So, once again — a lot of misinformation from across the way. Good investment here is something that all Yukoners should be proud of.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Ms. McPhee: 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 (Mr. Hutton): Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter now before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 51, Department of

Community Services, in Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

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. 200: *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Department of Community Services — *continued*

Chair: Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Cathers, you have 11 minutes and 31 seconds remaining.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Chair, when we finished off yesterday, I had asked the minister a number of questions, which I'm hoping he may have answers to today.

Just to refresh his memory, those included: What work is being done around wildfire risk mitigation in and near communities? I encouraged the government to work with First Nations, municipalities, local advisory councils as well as groups including the Yukon Wood Products Association, FireSmart Whitehorse, and of course the private sector as well on coming up with an action plan for targeted harvesting in and near communities of trees with the intent of looking at that through the lens of wildfire risk mitigation.

Also, I had asked him a number of questions regarding emergency medical services and fire services, including with regard to the government's plan released in their climate change and energy strategy to put 6,000 electric vehicles on the road. I had asked him about the risk of high-voltage cables in those vehicles and what steps had been taken in terms of understanding what the risk was and working with the partner agencies to have a clear understanding of what risks might occur as a result of that when it comes to first responders, including EMS, fire, and police, in responding to a motor vehicle accident.

I missed mentioning, and should have, what risks might exist and increased risks to the general public if someone was assisting with a roadside motor vehicle accident. Again, not to be alarmist in that area, but I am simply pointing out that the concept of doing something should not be the only thing that is considered. There should be full consideration of the other impacts of moving toward putting vehicles on the road which do have higher voltage cables in them.

I had also asked the minister to provide a breakdown, which he indicated he would provide later — I'm expecting that I might hear it today or I might receive it in a letter on a

breakdown — by facility of how much money the government is going to lose by implementing tipping fees since the minister acknowledged that they are actually going to be running at a loss at facilities that the Yukon government is operating.

As well, I had noted that it seems strange and disappointing that, when the government committed in its throne speech to expand recycling, just weeks later — practically before the ink is dry on the paper of the new throne speech — the government was actually announcing the shutting down of glass recycling. Of course, they could have chosen to work with the private sector and the company Raven Recycling on a model for diversion credits.

Of course, I also asked the minister, as they are committed to implementing tipping fees, what the government is doing to provide access to composting at the dumps that Community Services runs.

With that brief recap, I will turn it over to the minister and I look forward to hopefully receiving some answers.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will try to be brief. I thought I had answered the question about the vehicles. I believe what I said was that electric vehicles are coming whether we have our climate change plan or not. It is going to happen nationally. It will be happening. I think it's a good point, and we will be checking in with the department to see what training is planned or underway.

I thank the member opposite for that question. In the way that the member opposite phrased this notion — saying that we are going to be losing money — I will try yet again today — and I will actually make an appointment to sit down with the member opposite and try to go over it, because somehow I am not helping to further the understanding here. Overall, we currently spend a lot of money. If you like, then, we don't recoup any money, so we are losing money now or it is subsidized for our solid-waste facilities across the territory. By charging a small fee that will make it level for every Yukoner, what we anticipate is that the amount of loss will decrease. On a facility-by-facility basis, it might be a little bit different, so I am going to have to wait to get the numbers and the full analysis for the member opposite. What we are saying is that, by charging a little bit, it will end up overall being better, but that doesn't necessarily mean that, in any facility that we are going to go from that full subsidy and now we are going to be making money. No, we don't think so. We think that there will still be a loss, just a much lower loss than when we didn't charge something. Okay. Again, I think this is going to need a fuller conversation. I have already said and I will say again today — and I said several times yesterday — that we will get the information for the member opposite about the economic analysis on that work.

With respect to glass, we have always been working with both the private sector and the social enterprises like P&M Recycling, like Blue Bin, and like Raven Recycling. It is they who said to us: "No, we are not doing this anymore." We accept that. While it is not something that we wish were the case — and we will continue to look for ways in which to find a local, viable methodology for recycling or reuse of that material — it is not a complete negative for two reasons.

The first one is that glass is an inert material compared to some of the other materials that we deal with like waste oil, like batteries, even like organics, as an example, if they go in the wrong stream. The other reason is that glass as a commodity is not the largest commodity that we try to deal with. Plastics is a larger issue; paper is a larger issue.

I have asked the Solid Waste Advisory Committee to work on all recycling, and with that, I hope that it includes composting. Currently, they are working on solutions, and they will be coming back to me. I look forward to sharing those with this House at some point.

Finally, with respect to the overall strategy, I think the phrase that the member opposite used yesterday was “side burner” and “back burner”. The way I would like to characterize it is “front burner”. As an issue, one of the most critical issues that we are working on in terms of risk is wildfire. We are aggressive around it. We’re working with communities. We have a game plan in place. For example, we’re working with the City of Whitehorse, with the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Ta’an Kwäch’än Council on a solution here around Whitehorse. We are working in other communities. I think I listed off the four where we’re starting. Again, I’ll just check to make sure, but they were Teslin, Watson Lake, Mayo, and Haines Junction.

On a community-by-community basis, we will work on these resiliency plans. If you think of firesmarting as being right around the neighbourhood, then the next layer out — that first line of protection — is where we’re working. We are working with the Forestry branch. As I have already said, we are working with the Wood Products Association unless the wood is someplace that is inaccessible. We’ll use every technique that we can to reduce that fuel load, but in doing so, we want to be smart about it. We want to take that material, turn it into biomass, turn it into usable energy, and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions at the same time.

Mr. Cathers: I think what the minister is missing is — I do understand the words that he’s saying, but without the numbers to back them up, we really do not have the information that we need to understand the actual costs. Without the numbers, we don’t have the numbers.

I’m not going to spend too much more time on that or pointing to the government saying one thing and then doing another on recycling. I’m sure we’re not going to get much further than we already have with the minister. He’s likely to repeat the same rhetoric.

I will ask the minister — the issue of the Mae Bachur Animal Shelter, of course, has come up in the media. I would ask the minister what the government is doing — whether he is working with the Mae Bachur Animal Shelter, or I should say the Humane Society Yukon — to ensure that the government is assisting them on dealing with their challenges and helping them to find a path forward to keep in operation.

The Mae Bachur Animal Shelter — of course, the last financials that they have shared, based on what has been passed on to me, show annual costs of roughly \$455,000 with a contribution from government of just under \$100,000. The contribution actually first began at \$75,000, which was the

result of the then-Minister of Community Services, Glenn Hart, agreeing to part of a request that I had made. I had originally proposed a larger amount of core funding for the animal shelter, but the minister agreed to \$75,000. It began from there and has been increased since that time to just under \$100,000. But for the value of the service that they provide to the community in keeping animals from being in unsafe situations — whether on the street or perhaps not surviving — the value that they provide in allowing animals to be re-homed and adopted is a good one for the community overall.

I would just ask the minister if he could confirm, first of all, whether they are working with Mae Bachur. Secondly, what does that entail? Thirdly, in recognizing that they’re having increasing financial stress and that right now the contribution from government to them is less than 25 percent of their overall revenues, whether the government is considering increasing funding to the Mae Bachur Animal Shelter to ensure that their work is appropriately supported.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would just like to begin by thanking the board, the member, and all of those people who work to support the Mae Bachur Animal Shelter and Humane Society Yukon.

Last night at the public meeting, the board had a very open dialogue with members of the public and supporters. My understanding is that they got 16 folks who signed up to help out with the board. I thank them for the work that they are doing. I know that it is important work.

Unfortunately, due to some internal issues that the board had been addressing — I believe that there was a court case and some other issues — they made the decision for a while to try to do their books internally, in-house, and that led to some problems. Then they went out of compliance, so one of the things that we are doing as a government is to try to help them get back into compliance. I know that our Corporate Affairs shop is working with them to guide them to what they need to get back into compliance — to work with their members. As I heard at the meeting last night, their hope is to have a special general meeting in December or early in the new year to do that work.

We have been supporting them financially during this time to get their books back in order, with modest support. I know that the Department of Environment is the main funder for the humane society. I know that, in 2017, the Department of Environment increased their support for the humane society by about 40 percent, so it has increased in recent years — that would have been in 2017 — so that’s good news. We remain open to talking with them about their funding situation.

The other thing that we have offered to do to help them is, as they get a new board and start to address how to ensure that they are sustainable over time — and I think both the Department of Environment and my Department of Community Services have just reached out and said, “Hey, let us help you do some capacity building with your board to make sure that you have your governance models working well for you in place and that you are able to land on your feet.” I had several conversations about that last night. I had a very brief conversation with the Minister of Environment today so far,

just discussing the situation. I have been in correspondence this morning already with folks from the humane society.

I hope that is a reasonable update for the House.

Mr. Cathers: While I do have some more questions, in the interest of moving on to other departments, I will wrap up my remarks and just thank the officials here as well as those assisting in the background for their work in assisting the minister and providing answers here this afternoon as well as yesterday. I would just close with a reminder, as always, for officials that, when we disagree with the political leadership on matters that they have made decisions on, we do not wish in any way for that to be taken by the hard-working staff as a reflection on their work in carrying out the directions that they're given.

With that, Mr. Chair, I will conclude my remarks in Community Services and cede the floor to other members.

Chair: Is there any further debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services?

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

Mr. Kent: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 51, Department of Community Services, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 51, Department of Community Services, cleared or carried

Chair: Mr. Kent has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 51, Department of Community Services, cleared or carried, as required.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$19,000,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$45,300,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$64,300,000 agreed to

Department of Community Services agreed to

Chair: The matter now before the Committee is Vote 7, Department of Economic Development, in Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Would members like to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

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

The matter before the Committee is Vote 7, Department of Economic Development, in Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Department of Economic Development

Chair: Is there any general debate?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I would like to welcome the officials to the Legislative Assembly today. Supporting me this afternoon will be Deputy Minister Justin Ferbey from the Economic Development department and our director of Finance, Catherine Marangu. I will just start with a few opening words, and then we can move right into questions.

The Department of Economic Development requested a budget increase of \$1.5 million to support a First Nation investment and \$1.5 million for the business incentive program. I will start with the First Nation investment. The Government of Yukon is pleased to support the Yukon First Nation Investment Corporation and their participation in a pan-national, early stage start-up fund. Panache Ventures, launched in March 2018, is raising capital for a private equity capital fund of \$58 million, intending to invest in a portfolio of approximately 100 companies across Canada. The sector focus areas are artificial intelligence, fintech, digital health care, enterprise software, and blockchain.

Yukon First Nation Investment Corporation is investing a total of \$5 million in Panache Ventures. The Government of Yukon will contribute \$2 million to this \$5 million total over the course of two fiscal years. The investment benefits Yukoners because: it delivers training, mentorship, and support for early stage technology start-ups; it develops investment infrastructure here in the Yukon for the technology industry; it opens up technology sector ecosystems to Yukon First Nation investors; and it contributes to the diversification of Yukon's economy.

It is within my mandate to attract new investment to Yukon businesses, develop innovation in the knowledge economy, and strengthen entrepreneurial opportunities for First Nation development corporations.

I am requesting \$1.5 million for our \$2-million commitment. Government support for this investment has the potential to open up new opportunities for Yukon start-ups and change the investment landscape in Yukon.

My second request is for the business incentive program. The program gives rebates to businesses working on eligible Government of Yukon contracts. The rebates are for Yukon hires, youths, apprentices, and adults or Yukon-made goods and services creating opportunities for Yukoners.

This program provides two types of rebates to contractors and manufacturers: (1) Government of Yukon construction contracts and rebates for labour and apprentice costs, youth employment, and Yukon manufacturers whose materials are incorporated into eligible construction projects and (2) goods and services purchased by the Yukon government and rebates to Yukon manufacturers for items produced in Yukon and sold directly to the government.

I'm requesting an increase of \$1.5 million for the business incentive program. This is in response to the high level of

demand for the program. It is oversubscribed for the 2019-20 fiscal year due to the number of government tender projects that are expected to be completed this fiscal year.

Approving these budget increases will allow the Government of Yukon to: (1) make strategic investments that build healthy, vibrant, and sustainable communities; and (2) support a diverse growing economy that provides good jobs for Yukoners in an environmentally responsible way.

With that, Mr. Chair, I will leave it to the opposition for questions.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the minister for his opening remarks. I also do want to welcome the officials who are here today to assist the minister and those who are listening on the phone who always provide a little extra information.

I'll get right into my line of questioning. There are no line items this year for either of the following: the strategic investment and northern economic development — in 2018, it was \$1.29 million — and the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency — in 2018, it was \$735,370. Can the minister explain why there is no line item for this, please?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Can I just get the member opposite to repeat the question, please?

Mr. Istchenko: When I was looking through the accounts, there is no line item — no dollar amount in the line item for strategic investment and northern economic development in 2019. Also, there is no dollar amount for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency in 2019. But there were numbers in there in 2018. For 2019, there is nothing for those two.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Our understanding is that those line items reflected transfer agreements that originated with the federal government. Because those transfer agreements are no longer in place with the Department of Economic Development, they're not identified here in our accounts today.

Mr. Istchenko: Thank you for that. Next question: How much funding this year was dispersed through the regional economic development fund and the strategic industries development fund? How does this compare to the previous years?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Although we're still within this fiscal period, our anticipation — similar to last year — is that both funds would be fully expended — \$800,000 each. I think it's important to note — with our commitment to ensuring there's proper financial capacity for interested and eligible parties within our communities, many of which are serviced through the regional economic development fund — that it was about 24 months ago that we actually doubled the number of dollars available through the regional economic development fund compared to what we had seen in the past.

This fund — we work in partnership with municipal and First Nation governments, businesses, and NGOs to make strategic investments in communities throughout the territory. Our supports help turn plans and ideas from the regional economic development fund into economic activity by providing both advice on project design and financial resources from the regional economic and community development funds.

We supported First Nation governments, development corporations, municipalities, and economic partners with interest in the western Alaska highway corridor by coordinating the St. Elias Corridor Economic Development Conference. The Member for Kluane would know this event well. I think he had an opportunity to speak at it and, as well, was supportive of it. This is something that the member strongly believes in. That is an example of things that we can do through this.

At that particular event, more than 100 delegates met to plan regional economic development initiatives. We supported First Nation economic development officers and land managers as well through Yukon's first Links to Learning conference and trade show, which helped build capacity and share practices. It is also important to note, Mr. Chair, with the regional economic development fund — that was the second year we had seen this type of community-based regional conversation. The previous one was the year before in Watson Lake.

We are also working with municipalities to help create positive long-term impacts on employment and wealth creation. For example, we have provided funding in Dawson City to develop a renewed development incentive policy that will encourage targeted residential development, increase future tax revenue for the city, and create housing options for local business operators with seasonal employees. We are also helping the Town of Watson Lake to implement prioritized community and economic development initiatives focused on governance, land development, land procurement, tourism, and encouraging local economic activity.

We are also supporting organizations and governments to deliver programming that provides long-term sustainable economic and social benefits to Yukon communities. An example of this is that we provided funding to the Dawson Society for Children and Families to build a safe and engaging enhanced outdoor play area for the children attending the Little Blue Daycare in Dawson City.

We are also providing funding to the Kluane First Nation in the member opposite's constituency to develop a community memorial park in recognition of those who have recently been lost and to provide an opportunity for the people of Burwash Landing to heal as a community.

The department — I think that it is important to add that it seeks to foster economic growth throughout the Yukon really by focusing on a number of key areas: business and industry promotion and facilitation; research and innovation; capacity development and growth planning; policy and regulation; and economic infrastructure. These are the activities through the department.

As well, when we look — based on the question opposite about how we have expended or if we have expended the dollars — we're also looking at supporting the development of Yukon businesses and funding projects that create economic benefits and provide economic opportunities to Yukon communities. Also through these funds, we look at projects that provide social benefits and facilitate community involvement and increase social capital or have other long-term benefits and projects that facilitate regional economic development

planning — such as the event in Kluane last year — as well as facilitate organizational capacity development.

Also, we focus on projects that open up new markets or significantly expand existing markets, particularly export markets — also projects that identify and facilitate the development of strategic industries and projects and economic infrastructure and those that facilitate the maximization of secondary benefits from strategic projects. It's also important to increase awareness of investment in strategic industries and in strategic projects.

Some of the other key projects that are good for those, as the member opposite said, who tuned in today just to see some of the good work by the Department of Economic Development and the strong team that is there — in the Village of Carmacks, we spent just over \$11,000 on strategic planning and finance policy development. The strategic plan will provide the Village of Carmacks counsel in managing staff, with a clear mandate that includes its updated vision, mission, and new strategic priorities. The finance policy will also establish accountability, consistency, and compliance measures for its finance departmental operations.

Another great project in the Town of Watson Lake — just about \$50,000 — is the Watson Lake strategic initiatives where we're helping the Town of Watson Lake to implement and prioritize community and economic development initiatives focused on governance, land development, procurement, tourism, and encouraging our local economic activity.

Also, in the member opposite's constituency — not only the conference, but also the St. Elias Chamber of Commerce — we have provided them with just over \$12,000. That is for a regional travel brochure. It's not only bringing people together to share ideas and listen, but also supporting the outcomes of that conference to ensure that they can put their ideas into action.

The regional travel brochure will identify the Kluane region as a tourism destination and promote the opportunities that exist for experiential travel. The primary objectives of this are to increase the length and time visitors stay in the region. The brochure will serve as a marketing tool for private businesses and government service providers, as well as provide an avenue for promoting cultural tourism opportunities.

Just in closing to this question, here in the City of Whitehorse, we also provided just over \$16,000 for a skills gap analysis of the trade sector. The skills gap analysis will analyze the current and future labour demands for specific skills in the trades and identify strategies to attract skilled workers and retain skilled workers. That work was done with the City of Whitehorse. Once again, \$1.6 million through those two funds and last year's budget — again, looking to fully expend that.

Maybe just important for the strategic industries fund — for those who are tuning in today — I'm just happy to talk about a couple of projects there as well — again, major projects approved in the 2019-2020 budget year.

Yukon Mining Alliance — this is for Invest Yukon 2019-2020, so \$87,000 there. Yukon government provided funding to the Yukon Mining Alliance to help with the development of

a set of digital promotional tools for the Yukon's mining industry. That's a great project which gives the opportunity for First Nation governments, lands departments, as well as mining proponents and NGOs that work along with the mining sector to populate a digital platform that really gives people a virtual tour and information opportunity within the Yukon.

So, you could go into a region such as Na-Cho Nyäk Dun — the potential for the First Nation to put in information about their lands department, their self-government agreement, mining protocols, or even how they direct companies to engage at an early stage as they start to do exploration. Then, of course, the companies that are working within that region can populate that information as well and talk a bit about their projects and what they're doing over the next number of years. It's just a really key opportunity with significant visuals that really provides a better story about these particular regions.

It's very cutting edge. It has been done. The team they have worked with — that Yukon Mining Alliance has worked with — has done a bit of work for some other major companies around the world, and this is something that, really in this day and age — and also when you look at a new generation of investors — it's important that you use tools that they're comfortable with. That's something that we were happy to support.

The Pine Heart Farm was \$25,000 for business planning and Yukon government provided them with that to undertake business planning activities related to the development of growing facilities for cannabis in Yukon. Of course, we would like to see organizations or businesses in the Yukon seeing the benefits of that legal market now. Pine Heart seems to want to be the first actors on this and our department was happy to support them.

Also, Yukon Berry Farms — just over \$18,000; that was for prototyping and market research. Yukon government provided to Yukon Berry Farms for recipe development and sample production and test marketing of a variety of haskap wines for export. This of course is some of the early stage work that the Department of Economic Development is doing. Alongside the Agriculture branch — having the responsibility for both of those areas and having the two deputy ministers as well as the teams really work in collaboration — understanding that this agricultural industry not only is going to help us with our own food security, reducing our GHG on supply chain by having food grown here, but also there is a key opportunity for export.

Significant interest has been shown around the haskap portion of our agriculture industry. The haskap sector — Yukon is doing a great job when we look at other regions where there is some of that, whether it be out east or Saskatchewan. We do know and we are focused. We have worked with the federal government and we are patiently waiting to see if we are getting support, but we think there is a real opportunity for research and development — a commercial hub to produce products. We will see how that works out, but it's something we're excited to support and be engaged in.

Hvactech, a well-known Yukon company — we provided \$10,000 for a market analysis related to the demand for biomass

systems in Yukon and Alaska. I know, even this morning — Hvactech just reached out. I'm pretty excited — they have some specialists in town and wanted to meet up and have a coffee and talk about the good work that they see and the opportunities that they see ahead.

Also, Chu Níikwān Development Corporation — we provided about \$7,500 for land development and leasing opportunities for the corporation so they can examine the models for lease structures to incentivize leasing while reducing the risks to landlords or mixed-use development in a subdivision.

I think it's important to congratulate Chu Níikwān Development Corporation. Not only have they moved on some — their first lease on commercial — but they have done some development in downtown Whitehorse. Sometimes we have heard in the Legislative Assembly that we should be working with our First Nation governments on these particular projects. Sometimes people don't have all the information. It's important to understand that the scenario is different with many different First Nations.

Some First Nations have passed an approved lands act — so that's really important to have that in place first, because that becomes the governance mechanism to do that leasing. Other nations do not have that legislation in place. On top of that, some First Nations, such as Kwanlin Dūn, have moved to work with the government.

We're happy to work with them, and we want to support them and congratulate them on their continued success.

I hope that gives a fulsome answer around those particular funds and a sample of some of the good work that the department is doing on this particular topic.

Mr. Istchenko: Next question — Dempster fibre. I'm just looking for an update on it. A couple of things I'm looking for — or anything else that the minister might have — would be if the permitting is in place and if our friends — to quote the minister — “across the way in the Northwest Territories” — is their permitting in place? When does construction start?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Sorry for the delay. I wanted to try to see if I could just gather some more detailed information.

I will give all the information that I can — out of respect for the member opposite — but this is, of course, being led by the Department of Highways and Public Works at this particular time. Economic Development negotiated the early agreement with the federal government, as well as the agreement with Northwestel. The department also undertook due diligence concerning both potential routes that were available, whether that be the Skagway route or connecting to the infrastructure that was being built in the Northwest Territories. Once that work was concluded, the department made the final decision to look at the northern route, which we felt was very important.

The reason that I bring this up — some things have played out over the last number of months, and I think that it is important to share those with those who are tuning in because, really, what it does is it solidifies the good work done by the technical team at Economic Development.

I guess what I would like to share is that many people were kind of caught off guard in the sense that there was an announcement for a fibre project. A US company was going into the constituency, actually, of the member opposite, and it was going to connect into an area just around Haines Junction. That was a decision that was made by a US company to build redundancy into the Yukon. Of course, we felt that we had the responsibility in Economic Development to reach out to the company — MCI, I believe, is the acronym — and we had an opportunity to have a discussion with them about the project and how long they had been contemplating the project. These are things that, of course — if they had already been contemplated — we would have potentially taken into consideration in our decision-making before looking at the Dempster.

What we quickly came to learn was that the lines that were being used in Alaska — whether through the northernmost part of Alaska or even through southeast Alaska where you were seeing fibre that was laid on the ocean floor — these cables were becoming — well, put it this way: There was really some concern about the consistency that people could see in the use of those lines.

We contemplated, here in the Yukon, going to Skagway. We even had reports through the Alaskan team that the Skagway line had problems this summer with rupture or tear. That is the same concern, I guess, for the group based out of Anchorage. Their concern was the cost. Purchasing bandwidth on those particular lines was so expensive that they also wanted to have this potential backup or even potentially primary use of the line through the Yukon. Of course, I state that for the Assembly today because, once again, it puts to rest the conversation when it comes to — for us at least — what we felt was the right decision, looking at and verifying all the variables that needed to be contemplated.

Where we are at this particular point — I think I should be able to give a little broader information to the member opposite, so I can provide a legislative return as well. I think that it would be appropriate in this case.

The team at Highways and Public Works — I had a chance to attend a CYFN leadership meeting with them just a few weeks back — with Minister Mostyn. The conversations with the First Nations along the route seemed to be going quite well. There have been broad conversations in all the communities and with all the communities, and that includes the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, and Vuntut Gwitchin and with members of the Gwich'in Tribal Council.

On the permitting process, I would have to look — I apologize, but I am not the primary on the file — to see if that has concluded, but I know that the team at Highways and Public Works is contemplating having the work out this winter and looking at construction in the upcoming construction season.

Of course, it's a very significant project. Having had the opportunity to read through some of those original engineering reports, it is quite daunting when you think about 1,100 water crossings, and then there is some pretty significant technical drilling that will need to be put in place because of the bodies of water in the northern part of the route. It is a total route of

about 777 kilometres. When you take into consideration the Mackenzie Valley, probably we will get caught here and miss a bit. It is quite factual that, when you take that whole fibre loop, it almost is the length going from the north right to the US-Canada border. It's quite significant in total length when you take a look at it.

This is something that is important, because it will connect the entire north.

Just in closing on this, I would say that there has been criticism around the methodical approach that we took. I would stand by that approach, because in both other territories that have built lines — in the Mackenzie, we saw very significant cost overruns — over \$200 million in total capital expenditures. Just lately, there has been a lot of news out of Nunavut, and that has been focused on their line which, I believe, is going from the eastern coast of Canada to Greenland — again, a very significant cost overrun.

I think it's better for me or Minister Mostyn to take the criticism here. That's probably a better outcome, of course — and ensuring, at the same time, that the project is done in a very appropriate way, that the First Nation partners that are there have a chance to see some benefits from this, and that we look at all the opportunities that will come from this fibre line as it moves up the Dempster, as it shores up the satellite — very innovative infrastructure that's in Inuvik and something very important to the Government of the Northwest Territories.

At this point, I think that we're looking good for a build season next year. I think that it will probably be more than one season to complete a project of this magnitude, and I feel that things are moving well — but a commitment from me back to the Member for Klauene for some more details and some timeline information when appropriate.

Mr. Istchenko: I look forward to that.

We have spoken at length in this House, I do believe — the Member for Lake Laberge and also my colleague from Watson Lake — about expanding cellular service throughout the Yukon, particularly to the communities with significant populations, including Junction 37, Grizzly Valley, Deep Creek, Fox Lake, Ibex, Mendenhall, and Champagne. We have had this discussion before.

I'm just wondering if the minister has any plans for cellular expansion to these areas and if there is any work being done to this date on expansion.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: We have been in discussions with Northwestel — “We” being the Department of Economic Development — have had meetings with the deputy minister — with me.

There have been some dollars that have been earmarked for all three territories for increased cellular. We have continued to try to champion increased cellular — to be very open — in the constituency of the member opposite as well as the Member for Lake Laberge.

Just so the opposition knows, when we have that opportunity to take their priorities forward, we do. That's what we have been doing. We have also met with Bell Mobility, so we're looking to see if there's an opportunity over the short run to expand into Mendenhall and Champagne, and we are also

looking to see if coverage can become a bit more consistent north of Whitehorse.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the minister for that.

In the 2018-19 budget, there was a transfer under the Yukon business development program to Synergy Industries Incorporated. I believe it was for \$120,000. Can the minister explain this transfer and what this money was being used for?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: This was money that was paid to the previous contractor — I think, a long-time contractor — for the Yukon business development program, and now a different Yukon company has taken over that work. I think that's what it was — it was a transfer payment for a program. I think it was probably a program that the member opposite would remember from his work and previous mandate under the same contractor.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the minister for that. I want to jump back a little bit to my previous question about — I asked about the Dempster fibre, and then the minister gave a little bit more explanation on the diverse fibre line through to Beaver Creek.

I'm of the understanding that — and the minister can correct me if I'm wrong — the American company — the contractor, MCI, or what the minister had said — will only be purchasing excess capacity in that line. Can the minister confirm that?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I can't confirm that. In my role, I have only had one conversation with the CEO from MCI. They talked about redundancy. They talked about the concern that they had for the cost moving out of Alaska. That's all I can share, based on their business model and business plan.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the minister for that.

Another question — and it has been hugely brought to my attention — is the issue with, basically, technology. It has caught up to us. The old systems that we have at some of the old highway lodges don't work anymore through Northwestel.

There is a place, the White River Lodge, that is a great example. They have a beautiful airstrip there. Mining exploration companies work in and out of there. They have a great RV park with a lot of old military vehicles, but they can't accept credit cards most of the time or even get on the Internet. This line is running right by. I'm just wondering if the minister had a conversation with those companies.

Someone else — for example, Klauene First Nation bought the old Buckshot Betty's from way back at Pine Valley. They do their culture camps and a lot of their retreats there now. Everyone is kind of wondering if they can access that. I'm just wondering if the minister has had that conversation yet.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I think we'll endeavour to see what those opportunities are.

In my conversations with some of the stakeholders, it seemed as though there was some increased connectivity being provided in the Burwash Landing area, I believe, and potentially Destruction Bay. Let me make sure that I have the appropriate information.

My sense was that, even during some of this procurement — of course, Klauene development corporation having a big role in doing this work — there was some opportunity. It makes

good sense that, yes, the lodge and anybody on that route would have access to this connectivity.

We will look to get some of those answers for the member opposite.

Mr. Istchenko: That's great. I look forward to that.

In March, the Canadian border agents raided the offices of Economic Development. I'm just wondering: What were they investigating? Regarding that investigation, were any files or computers confiscated? What's the status of that now? Is it closed?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Well, that calm questioning took a hard right.

I think that it is an active investigation. What I have come to understand is that it is actually looking at some historical activity that had happened. Maybe the members opposite would know even more than I do, but it is an active investigation at this particular time. I think that, if the opposition wants to reach out to the Canada Border Services Agency — I don't know if they will share anything because it is an active investigation. That is all that I am aware of at this particular time.

Mr. Istchenko: I have a few questions here about the new community immigration pilot program. Currently, the pilot project is set to launch in January 2020, so this date is coming up pretty quickly. Basically, is the date still on track, and can the minister say whether there are individuals lined up for placement in these communities?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Chair, I am just going to give a little bit of information about the program. The member opposite is talking about the program that we are looking at to address labour market issues identified by the Yukon business community. We have signed our letter of intent with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada to establish a multi-year immigration pilot program in Yukon.

The Yukon community pilot will be a new stream of the Yukon nominee program, intended to meet labour force challenges and increase retention in Yukon communities where seasonal and part-time employees are needed. This program would give us up to 50 nominees per year who will be eligible through the program to receive work permits, enabling them to work for up to three employers in participating communities on a year-round basis.

As far as I am aware, we are still looking at a launch date of January 2020. Of course, the employers in Dawson City, Watson Lake, and Haines Junction have expressed concerns about the availability of seasonal workers. In working with them — I would like to thank, specifically, Kendell Tricker in Carmacks for her leadership on this.

What happened was that we gathered business leaders throughout the Yukon and let them speak directly to the Canadian federal government and said, "Look, we need to support our business people." Some of these organizations may only have 10 or 15 hours of work available, but if they come together as two or three businesses in a smaller community, they can provide that full-time work. We are seeing more and more interest through the nominee program for individuals to go to our communities and also to stay in Yukon. We are seeing strong retention. People, of course, are appreciating the

opportunity and the quality of life, and they want to work hard, contribute, and be part of our community.

We are pretty excited about this. It is the first of its kind in the country. It was something that we felt there was a huge need for. There will be additional positions available over and above our current allotment through the nominee program. If there are any changes in the timeline, I will make sure that we have an opportunity to discuss that. As well, now that we have a new immigration minister in place, I have already asked my officials to reach out so I have an opportunity to have a discussion with Minister Mendicino. We want to ensure that this stays on track.

Mr. Istchenko: With regard to housing, has consideration been given to whether there will be housing available in these communities? Was there a discussion about housing?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: That is an important question, but a broad question. I think that, first and foremost, we will have to see which communities these opportunities go to and what the full uptake is. I know that, in some communities, we have seen individuals, and I have talked to some — I will give an example — in Dawson City where business owners have gone out and purchased housing for their staff, and they have said to me, "Our staff will be provided with housing, and we are not as concerned." Of course, in other communities, it's not quite the same scenario.

I can't speak to that yet. I think we will have to see what the uptake is, and we will see in which communities people are hired. From there, we can have a fuller conversation.

I think it is fair to say that, seeing a bit more housing — market housing and market rentals — available in our communities, probably most of our communities would say that's something that's needed. The private sector in many communities is now starting to see that opportunity and starting to build, and then, of course, the municipalities are working in conjunction using some of the same incentives that we saw first here in Whitehorse, but now in other communities, to build housing to support the increase in population.

Mr. Istchenko: Another question I wanted to ask was: Is there criteria for how long an individual must stay in a particular community? Was there a timeline put on that?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I don't believe — I'll check on it — I don't believe that there is. I do believe there's a period of transition that's allotted to the individual so that they can find other opportunities within the Yukon while they're still within that status. I believe that's the criteria at this time. Let me just check with the official to make sure that I have the appropriate answer.

I guess additional information would be that, yes, that transition time is allotted to individuals if they're moving from, say, Carcross to Carmacks and they want to find an opportunity somewhere else. I think the restraints are more around if they are looking for permanent residency. During that process or application process, I believe there is some criteria about ensuring that the individual continues to be with that consistent employer while that process and application are being undertaken.

Mr. Istchenko: Thanks for the answer. In his initial response, when I first brought it up, he talked a little bit about the nominee program. Does the minister anticipate that there will be more applications to the nominee program, given that this new pilot program is out and about?

Maybe while the minister is up, he could provide the number of applicants that were approved in the nominee program each year or — actually, for the last five years. Maybe if he doesn't have any, a legislative return would be good. I'm sort of wondering if he figures there will be more uptake in the nominee program with this new pilot program.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: There's definitely a potential for increased numbers through the nominee program. Over the last number of years, 270, I believe — we approved 270 nominees between 2018 and 2019. There were 200 critical impact workers, 44 skilled workers, and 26 through the express entry. Going back — I'll go back about 12 years here — if we look between October 2007 and October 8, 2019, about 1,446 principle applicant nominees were approved. Of those, 1,104 were critical impact workers, 291 were skilled workers, and 41 were Yukon express entry applications. We have an extra 50 opportune positions.

It's important to say — I believe — and this was just being briefed by immigration officials — that I think in 2007, we saw the total allotment of opportunities, positions were met, and then there was a period of time since maybe 2008 that there wasn't. This last year was the first time that we've now seen that number met. To add once again, there's the 270 positions that are allotted by the federal government and now this additional 54 — the communities that have been identified — a bit more opportunity at probably a time when it's well-needed.

Mr. Istchenko: Moving on to another subject, is the minister able to provide today the number of applicants to CDF this year since the changes were made to the eligibility criteria and whether there has been an increase over applications prior to these changes? I think I asked this one time before but it's good to ask every year.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I appreciate the opportunity to rise and speak to this question. The applications that the community development fund has received over the last year have been funded in full. It's nice to see that we're not finding applications or more competition and that others are not getting an opportunity to access that money. We are seeing some municipalities, which is good. Even with this additional information that we have put out where First Nation development corporations — we have seen a few, but not a large number. So, at this particular time, we are always continuing to improve and revisit our program, but it seems to be working well, and I'm quite happy.

If the members opposite need anything else — maybe what I will do is — I will make sure that, at the end of the session, I have the community development fund annual report, April 1, 2017 to March 31. So, I'll make sure that I also provide that to the member opposite.

Mr. Istchenko: The next question is about the NorthLight innovation hub. How many government offices are currently located at the NorthLight building?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: There is one office that is from the community development corporation, and there are four staff who work out of that particular office.

Mr. Istchenko: I'm wondering what the cost to lease that office is, and how long are the leases for?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Let's leave that to — we can have that discussion if we can get through the questions on Economic Development, because next up is the community development corporation, so we can talk about the rent at that point — just because we're in supplementary budget, we have two line items, and we haven't even really discussed those two line items. I'm happy to get into a larger conversation about the community development corporation and its cost, if we have time this afternoon.

Mr. Istchenko: I'm confused. The community development corporation?

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Istchenko: Oh, okay. I thought we had created a new one, and I missed that. That's good.

Okay, another thing that comes with Economic Development is PNWER.

I attended a few PNWERs back in my day, and they are a good place to mingle, learn, chat, and find out what other jurisdictions are doing.

This summer, I believe a press release was put out about Shakwak and conversations about Shakwak. I wonder if the minister can give me a little bit of an update on some of the conversations that were had with the government when they were at PNWER.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Chair, I apologize to the Assembly. Yes, I was speaking about the Yukon Development Corporation just because it was the last item today here with our supplementary budgets. The member opposite had asked about the rent that Yukon Development Corporation is paying, so I thought it would be appropriate to speak to that particular topic while we spoke about the Yukon Development Corporation.

Concerning PNWER, first of all, the first year that I was in this particular role, I had the opportunity to attend PNWER. We usually, through the summer meetings, always have Economic Development officials in attendance. I know that this last year, one of our MLAs, Paulo Gallina, attended and had some success with having a motion around supporting Shakwak supported in the process there — so we continue to make sure we have representation at PNWER.

Really, what we have tried to do is to look at what is being done from a representation perspective by British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba at PNWER when you are fully engaged in that process — not only at the summer meetings, that but there are quarterly opportunities — and ensuring that we have the opportunity to fully engage in that conversation. Of course, we had PNWER meetings that we hosted here — and it was the first time in about a decade. The members opposite had a chance, I think, to attend some of that.

It was about a year ago. We're happy to host PNWER. We see great value in working with the team there. Topics, of course, such as Shakwak — but also other topics that are important to the region — are key.

We also have been supportive of ensuring that the Arctic caucus is back up and in place. Something that we think is important, there was — about two years ago, the chairmanship was, at that particular time, with Alaska and we had to wait for the House in Juneau to appoint somebody to lead that process.

Once again, congratulations to Mr. Gallina for his work on getting the motion passed. I think it's important that, anytime we can talk about Shakwak, we do. Once again, we will continue to be focused on —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Chair: Mr. Cathers, on a point of order.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Chair, I would just ask you to remind the minister that it is out of order to refer to members by their names in this Assembly, as he just did with his reference to the Member for Porter Creek Centre.

Chair's ruling

Chair: Point taken — Mr. Pillai?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Yes, Mr. Chair, absolutely. For some reason, because I am in Committee, I thought I had that opportunity. I am sorry. Yes, it is the Member for Porter Creek Centre.

Mr. Istchenko: I will just stick with PNWER for a little bit — or not PNWER so much, but the Shakwak.

I know that there was some economic analysis done in the past on the number of trucks and basically how busy the corridor is through there. The federal government has changed some of their shipping regulations through some of their bills. I am just wondering if it is on the radar to do another analysis to see if there will be an increase to traffic — or a decrease — with some of the new regulations that are coming in.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: There haven't been discussions concerning a new economic analysis of that particular stretch of road. I will speak with department officials to take a look and see if I can track it down — if the member opposite just wants to send me an e-mail and just identify what that particular study was.

Because we are contemplating working with other regions on the electrification of the Alaska Highway, this is something that we will be looking at doing some work on and analysis of what the traffic flows are. We can probably disseminate some of that data and provide it to the member opposite to see what that looks like. I don't know if it is going to be an in-depth discussion around the economic impact.

At this particular time, I think we are all aware of how vital and important that particular stretch of road is and, again, why we think that it is something that we should look to electrify. It is going to be a major route and artery for a long period of time in the economy of northwestern North America. I will make

sure that I share any details that come up concerning more advanced studies on this particular topic.

Chair: Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

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

The matter before the Committee is Vote 7, Department of Economic Development, in Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Mr. Istchenko: Prior to the break — I will send a letter to the minister referencing what we were chatting about.

That concludes my questions for the day. I want to thank the staff who are here, and I will turn the floor over to the Third Party.

Ms. Hanson: I realize that the two main items in the supplementary estimates for the Department of Economic Development — a couple of comments that the minister made piqued my interest, and I do want to go back on them to confirm, either today or by means of a legislative return from the minister.

In speaking about the pilot project and the nominee program, there had been a question raised by the Member for Kluane regarding expectations with the provision of housing. I can see it if the expectation is that you have a full-time job coming here, but the minister was quite clear in outlining that — there are a couple of questions that I have. He talked about this being very useful for employers who may not have full-time employment to offer a potential nominee, so they would cobble together two or three 15- or 20-hour jobs and thereby create a full-time, or more, job.

What expectations are placed on the employer applicants in terms of ensuring that somebody has a full-time job so that they don't show up — in Carmacks, Dawson, Watson Lake, or someplace — and are left with 15 hours? The reason I ask this is because it has a material impact on somebody's eligibility for nominees.

We have seen situations where nominees come to a community — and we have had situations in this territory where a nominee came to another jurisdiction, and the employer said, "Oops, too bad, so sad — we don't have a job for you" — and that person then was booted back out of the country.

My question is: What requirements are in place to ensure that an employee is not going to be stuck in one of these communities where it's very difficult to find accommodation in the first place, and then, if they're not working full-time, who carries the can on that?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I'll do my best — there are a couple of questions that I might ask for clarification on.

I probably should expand a little bit on the program and some of the criteria just in the sense that it's not just about having the opportunity to have multiple employers. It's also about some business owners who have the opportunity for

multiple roles as well, and they have different activities within their business.

I think it's also important that we continue to do the work that we do on going out and checking on these nominees to ensure that the working conditions and how they are being treated are appropriate and that the worker is respected.

Some of those obligations, of course, for Yukon immigration programs — and some of the safeguards that we have built in to protect the integrity of the program, the employer, and the nominee — so mandatory orientation sessions are provided for recent Yukon nominees and their employers. Yukon nominee program participants sign a tripartite agreement which sets out the rights and responsibilities of the nominee, their employer, and the Yukon government. The Yukon government monitors the agreement with site visits, as well as meetings with the nominee and their employer. Immigration unit staff of course are open for those meetings. I think that it is important that we continue to have those discussions. Our hope — and it is something we can ensure — to communicate back to the officials who are on the front lines of these conversations — is that the employers, especially — as the member opposite said — in some of these smaller communities where there are not as many options are taking into consideration the well-being of the employee and, as part of that holistic approach, understanding that housing is a very important part of that conversation.

I certainly don't want to see anybody in a position to lose an opportunity in an inappropriate way and then be kicked out. I think that the track record over the last number of years, going back, has been good. I think there have probably been some situations that have occurred. In our earlier questions, we did talk about the number of people who, since 2007, have come to Yukon. I think that by far the majority of the stories are good versus stories that are negative.

I know that the member opposite wants me to finish quickly. I will just say that we will take into consideration, of course, during the orientation — ensuring that the employer knows that housing is a very important part of anyone's well-being.

Ms. Hanson: I appreciate the minister's answer, but the second part of that was on creating precarious employment situations. We are talking about, as I understand it, a pilot project — 54 people in communities dispersed around the territory.

My question is: What obligation is there before you place a nominee in one of these communities — potentially with an employer who has multiple roles or multiple employers — who may be going 15 hours and 15 hours there, so in fact they are going to have a cumulative total of a full-time job before they are placed in that community?

In order to shorten the discussion — and I know that the minister wants to get on to YDC; I will have one or two questions on the supplementary estimates — but I would like to see what the minister can provide by way of a legislative return on the criteria. I anticipate that this will become a casework kind of situation. We have seen it in the past, so it would be helpful for opposition members to not have to try to

scour through the website in which it is impossible to find anything that gives us any data that would help someone in a situation if they are asking questions.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Chair, I will just once again repeat that the Yukon nominee program — no, I will do my best to answer this question.

There is a tripartite agreement that sets out the rights and responsibilities of the nominee, their employer, and the Yukon government. That is the framework that we use to ensure that the employees are treated appropriately. I am sure that we can get a copy of the documentation; that is not a problem. We can be very transparent with the member opposite to provide that. That is what is key.

I think it's important that, this year, there was an announcement early on about our ability to work more efficiently with the government of the Philippines. Through that process — the Department of Economic Development's work on how they treat and safeguard the nominees here in the Yukon — we have been asked to provide that as a template for the rest of the country, so I think there's a good policy framework in place. We always want to make sure that people are treated correctly and appropriately. This week, we had two different consular generals here, one from Indonesia and one from India. In conversations that I was witness to, people who had come through the nominee program spoke to the consular general. What they spoke about was how Whitehorse was an incredibly welcoming community. They had good experiences around the nominee program, so I believe — whether it is through the work that we have been done or the previous government has done on this file — that it is a good framework and we take into consideration the rights of those who are here as nominees.

Ms. Hanson: What I didn't hear in the minister's response — he simply says the rights of the workers, but the question was quite specific.

It's nice to talk about rights. Do those rights include the right to not be exploited — the right to know that, if you're going to be accepted as a nominee or given a nominee position — a position which is then broken into several employment statuses or employment states within a community — that you will have a full-time job?

I'm really looking to see where in the documentation I will be able to see that a nominee on this pilot project is not necessarily by — in some cases, we know that immigrants to this country, including nominees, work more than one job. That's a choice. But it's a different thing to be in a situation where you are going on a pilot project to a smaller community where there may not be as many opportunities and you're going there because the design of the program is to facilitate multiple employment opportunities to get a cumulative total of a full-time job. I was looking to get some assurances that the design of the program will ensure that somebody has that full-time number of hours — the full-time equivalent, I guess — that kind of parlance.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Chair, every time that we work with our nominee program — the values that are the foundation of this are to ensure that the individuals, whoever they may be,

are treated appropriately and that their rights — so, that question I think pertained to, “Let’s ensure that they’re not exploited.” Well, if you’re exploiting somebody, I don’t believe you’re ensuring that their rights are upheld. So, I have committed to ensuring that the documentation that is the foundation of the tripartite agreement is provided to the member opposite.

We will continue, through our process of site visits, to ensure that the individuals who are in this program — it is a pilot program, so it gives us an opportunity to ensure that the structure of the program — whether it be multiple roles, multiple employees, or multiple employers — that this turns into a good situation for individuals, all the while, understanding that the tripartite agreement is something that is signed by the Yukon government — we have a responsibility — as well as the other two stakeholders in this.

Once again, just for — I think there have been just some comments made, so it’s important to put on the record that Yukon’s immigration programs — they are federal programs which the Yukon government administers in partnership with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. The federal *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* defines federal immigration programs, including the Yukon nominee program, as an agreement between Yukon and the federal government defining the administration of these programs. So, it’s very important to talk about the fact or share that the policy is anchored in the refugee protection act.

Yukon government has a limited scope to review federal programs, but we continuously work with IRCC to ensure that Yukon is maximizing existing programs to explore future opportunities. That’s what we’ve tried to do here. This is about giving individuals opportunities in the Yukon; it’s about meeting the needs of our employers to ensure that we have vibrant and sustainable communities. It also is about ensuring that we respect the federal protection act as well as the framework that we have which of course has grown out of that and to ensure that a pilot program — which we think is quite innovative and based in respect — is something that works. So, we are going to monitor how it transpires. If there are places to improve, we’ll focus on improving.

Let’s start the program before we come up with the many potential problems that have not occurred yet. Once again, I think the majority of nominees that come to the territory have had a positive experience. I’m not saying that’s for everybody, but I think far and over the majority of people — and that’s what I hear when I talk to people who have used this particular program — the actual individuals who have gone through the program.

Ms. Hanson: I won’t belabour the point. The minister is talking about two different things. He’s talking about the existing nominee program and he’s talking about a pilot project which is, in his words, innovative and different because it’s going to provide multiple employers for these nominees in these communities. I’ll leave it there.

We’ll look forward to receiving that. I do think that, when we set up new innovative community pilot projects, the criteria that we establish to guide how it’s implemented will give us a

really good basis then for assessing how effective it is and to guide those who are charged with monitoring how respectfully and how fairly those nominees are being treated. We have every expectation that employers will do that. We want to make sure that it’s built into the design because it’s kind of hard to come afterwards and say, “Geez, we missed that. We didn’t think that might occur.” That’s why we have the ability to anticipate and design into the framework for what could be a very innovative program.

The minister has brought forward a supplementary budget of \$1,500,000 for the Yukon business incentive program. What I have heard so far is that this \$1.5 million is in response to the high level of activity and in response to a number of government projects tendered.

I have some very simple and straightforward questions for the minister with respect to the business incentive program. In the main estimates for this year, there was \$1,062,000 that was forecast for the business incentive program. Now we are being asked to approve an additional — more than doubling it with the \$1.5 million.

On the website, it simply says that the business incentive program gives rebates to businesses working on eligible Government of Yukon contracts. What are the eligible government contracts, and what eligible Yukon government contracts more than doubled the estimates for this program this year?

If the minister could give a descriptive listing or an actual listing of the government’s eligible contracts — what makes an eligible Yukon government contract? What makes a contract eligible for this business incentive rebate? Also, some information as to the more than doubling of the amount spent in there — not just simply that it is a hot economy; that is not what I am looking for. I am looking for actual economic information.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: The business incentive program supports businesses bidding on Yukon government tenders, enabling government investments to support local economic activity and diversification. The program encourages the use of locally manufactured materials, products, and increases in training opportunities.

The year to date has seen significant uptake in the program, indicating that Yukon contractors are securing government contracts and that Yukon tradespeople, apprentices, and goods are benefiting.

It is about the fact that contracts are going out, that there are big capital budgets, but also that the people who are winning those capital budgets are tending to be Yukon-based companies.

Recognizing the significant benefit — we have the City of Whitehorse municipal operations building. The Government of Yukon granted inclusion under the bid as well. The Department of Economic Development has had discussions — just to talk about some of the framework — and I have been at some of those and our department has — with the Yukon Contractors Association regarding options to update the program. We have looked at other jurisdictions such as Northwest Territories, and these were things that we reviewed during the negotiation of

the *Canadian Free Trade Agreement* when we identified certain exceptions.

Anyway, I will leave that. I'm going to get into, as the member opposite said, some of the economic information.

A number of contractors have had the opportunity. In the fiscal year to date, \$979,383 has been paid out, which translates to about 100 percent of our budget. A further \$3,681 has been committed. The department is currently processing five additional rebates, with an estimated cost of \$387,000.

The program has supported the hiring of 170 Yukon employees this fiscal year, including over 20 apprentices. We anticipate that contractors will be coming forward for the following eligible projects: the City of Whitehorse building, which was estimated to have a remaining BIP cost of about \$303,926; the Housing First project, which we had estimated a remaining BIP cost of about \$90,283; the produce and stockpile aggregates that are out there for other contracts — and so some local companies also have the opportunity through that stream and are qualified — that's about \$80,676; the francophone secondary school has an estimated BIP impact of potentially \$245,475; the Carmacks grader station replacement has an estimated BIP cost of \$163,700; and the Dawson runway and paving and asphalt patching on Front Street have a BIP cost of potentially \$249,642.

All total of the accrual and the anticipated request that we're looking for — the total would be about \$2.5 million. This is good news in the sense that it's Yukon companies that are accessing these programs. I think that the Minister of Highways and Public Works and the Minister of Community Services, with the Minister of Finance, have done an exceptional job of getting some of the most capital out in the history of Yukon. Because of that — the other good part of the story — Yukon companies are getting a chance to do that work.

Yukon government contracts — again, just to clarify: rebates for labour, apprentice costs, youth employment, and Yukon manufacturing whose materials are incorporated into eligible contracts — those are the companies that have an opportunity. Some of the major projects for 2019-20 — more of that economic information that has been requested. The Whistle Bend continuing care facility total cost was about \$122,921,251 out of that work. The general contractor was PCL. It wasn't a Yukon company, but luckily we saw a labour rebate, so Arcrite Northern had \$244,111 for the labour rebate. The apprentice rebate for Arcrite was \$210,949, and the youth rebate for Arcrite Northern was \$5,037. Supply and delivery of concrete, and roadside barrier was \$997,000. The supplier, Territorial Contracting, also got a goods rebate of \$169,575. There were six bridges that came to about \$1,184,000, and the supplier, Klondike Welding, had a goods rebate of \$209,589. As well, to produce and stockpile various aggregates on Highway No. 1 and Highway No. 2 — the total project was \$3,227,035. Nuway Crushing had a labour rebate of \$17,243 on that particular project.

I hope that gives the member a good idea. Some of the projects that are there, once again — there have been some significant projects, and those projects have increased. Until people go through the tendering process and you see who they

are — and if they are a local company, then you see the economic impact for the community, but also if they are on budget. It's just to state that, in the partnership with the City of Whitehorse, the comments that were made after a local company, Ketz Construction, won that contract and had said that, if the business incentive program partnership was not in place with the municipality, they wouldn't have been able to win that contract. We think it's important to keep Yukon companies growing and succeeding, and as you see here, there are many Yukoners continuing to work here in the Yukon.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for that response. The New Democratic Party obviously does support the business incentive program. We established it as a government many years ago, so we recognize its importance to local businesses and to trying to attract bids from local businesses and ensure that we are using that money to develop the skilled labour force that we need going forward.

The minister talked about — and there are, as I recall and as he just described — the made-in-Yukon — and there is the labour component. In particular, the aspect that I am interested in are those aspects that look at apprenticeships — and then the material — like the aggregate and that. Are there different percentages applied in terms of determining what the rebate will be?

I'm not asking him to go into what the mathematical calculation is here, but I would be interested in — as part of the legislative return that he is going to provide, as he indicated, to the opposition parties — if he could include that kind of program detail for the opposition as well.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Just to clarify, we'll move to get some of the criteria and potentially those percentages that are identified in the data or in the framework. That's one of the commitments that we made.

As well, just to go back, I just want to make sure that, just on the record, the other information that was requested by, I believe, the New Democratic Party was around the trilateral agreement that would be associated with the pilot project over and above the current framework that's in place with the nominee program — understanding that it is still part of our nominee program. It's just an extension of the nominee program. I didn't mean to cause any confusion.

Ms. Hanson: So, in the O&M section of the Economic Development supplementary budget — the \$1.5 million, a portion of which will be spent, as the minister indicated, in part this fiscal year and in part next fiscal year, with the majority in this fiscal year.

Can the minister provide to the Legislative Assembly the economic analysis that was done with respect to making this investment of \$1.5 million into Panache — the Yukon portion of it?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Part of the work that was undertaken by the department was to do due diligence — first of all, on the specific investment. I understand the question is about — it's about due diligence, but it's about economic impact as well.

One of the things that we can do is to go through this. If there's any proprietary information concerning specific items, we would look to remove that, but we looked first in the

department to find somebody who had a very strong track record of doing this type of work to ensure that the investment was an appropriate investment or the entity was a good entity to invest in.

The other part of that is — part of why we felt that this was important — and I know that the member opposite would be very well aware from professional work undertaken previous to being an MLA — we did believe that this investment in the First Nation investment corporation did clearly sit within just the key items of chapter 22 in the *Umbrella Final Agreement*. When we think about — item 1 was “... to provide Yukon Indian people with opportunities to participate in the Yukon economy; to develop economic self-reliance...” as well as “... to ensure that Yukon Indian People obtain economic benefits that flow directly from the... Agreements.”

I would stand behind the fact that providing the funds to seven First Nation development corporations — bringing them together — and now what has happened of course because of that is that group of development corporations is now working together to look at other opportunities. There are probably other opportunities outside of working with Economic Development, but now they're in a position — whether it's going to be real estate development, whether it's going to be working with the government on other items — there's some key pieces.

I would say that it's yet to be determined — the total impact of that investment. We know that there are projected returns. We know that the due diligence that was undertaken — we feel it is good and strong due diligence. When you take into consideration the potential return for the development corporations and the fact that the money, in many cases, of course flows back to Yukon — and that was what we felt was important. There was a long period of time where many of the corporations and trusts would invest in other jurisdictions and we felt that it's good that those investments were here.

We can endeavour to grab that work that was done with due diligence. Inevitably, the final decision of investment was with seven development corporations that have very strong capacity and great leadership. We think, after listening to the tech sector over and over again talking about the fact that they needed to have venture capital money available here — we can go back down history lane probably at the same time as the member opposite touched on. The business incentive program was put in place. There was also a time when governments made decisions on investments. Upon going back and looking through all of the decisions that were made with the Yukon Development Corporation and those investments and taking a look at what the returns or the losses were — significant — we can talk about that, maybe in the springtime here. I felt that, in the role of this responsibility, it's better to provide the First Nation development corporations — which essentially are the private sector — with an opportunity to make the decisions on these investments — not that it would be made within government.

That's the route that we took. I stand behind that decision. We think the return on investment that's projected, which is very significant, is money that will go back into the Yukon and into the communities and, at the same time, will meet the

demands of what we heard from our digital community where they said that either there's going to be money available here or companies will end up going to other jurisdictions — where a company from Toronto or a company from Vancouver will come in and provide those venture capital funds — and once that comes into place, the companies will then, at some point, be required or requested to move closer to where the home of the fund is.

I hope that provides some information to the member opposite and I look forward to probably what is our last question today.

Ms. Hanson: The reason I asked the question is because of the \$2 million that's a Yukon government contribution. When I look at — and I have tried to find additional information. I have read a lot about Panache, and it is a venture capital entity that has not a long history as a venture capital entity and has made contributions, to date, to 52 entities, none of which are in the Yukon.

So, that is one of the reasons why we look to see what criteria and what data Yukon used to make this assessment that this was an area that they wanted to complement the investments made by Yukon First Nations — because ultimately the accountability the minister has to the Yukon Legislative Assembly is for the \$2 million from the Economic Development budget.

So, we look forward to getting that hopefully unredacted information — cleansed of proprietary information as is necessary to be cleansed. Then we can have a more meaningful conversation about this in the spring when we actually have the full budget debate and not these 20-minute rushed endeavours.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I would just like to finish up. I know that we have some other important business that we have to get to. Just in closing, I would maybe just add a few comments. First, I would like to thank the officials — the deputy minister and the director for coming in today — Deputy Minister Ferbey and Director Marangu. I thank you for your support today. I would also like to have the opportunity to thank the department. I apologize that we were rushed today. We had lots that we wanted to touch on. We went through, I think, the entire Fall Sitting without one question on Economic Development, so there were lots of things that we wanted to share.

In closing, I would just touch on the fact that there are some things, Mr. Chair, that we think should be highlighted here in the Legislative Assembly. The staff and the team over there have done a phenomenal job on the BreakOut West event. It was a great success. Many Members of the Legislative Assembly had an opportunity to attend that. It was a great chance to showcase all the talent here in the Yukon.

We continue to wait to hopefully have some good news around the partnership between Yukon College and our agri-food innovation centre, which is something that we have applied for and something we think is a great item.

Again, Proof Data, which we have actually heard lots about — actually, just to correct the record, the venture fund group has invested in one company so far, which is Proof. We are hoping to see more investment. We talked about the Pine Heart

Farm, Yukon Berry Farms, Hvactech, and all the other items here that have been worked on.

On the First Nation capacity side — Champagne and Aishihik First Nations on their capacity development; the Yukon First Nations Chamber of Commerce, as well as with some of our land use planning and development through the department; Little Salmon Carmacks, some of their great work; the Chu Níkwān investment, which we also talked about; and the continued good work by the mining alliance.

We still have some significant — the team has had some significant accomplishments over the last 36 months in the department. I appreciate that. I want to thank the deputy minister, the ADM, and our directors — Mr. Schroff and others — but really, 53 people working really hard and who have accomplished a significant amount. I know that, over the end of the mandate, they are still focused on some really significant projects, things that are making a difference. I just ask Yukoners to keep an ear out. They will of course be engaging with Yukoners over 2020 to get their feedback as we consult on some continued concepts and ideas and changes within the department — changes that we think can give us stronger tools to ensure that we continue to work on diversification of this economy and also be able to better meet the needs of our clients.

That's really what we have been trying to do, ensuring that we're listening to the needs of the private sector and using the tools that we have to better meet their needs and working alongside the Department of Tourism and Culture with their new strategy, understanding where things are moving even in areas where we haven't seen such growth, whether it be film or in the music industry, or so much local talent.

Mr. Chair, the time being 4:59 p.m. — once again, I want to thank you for everything that you do and thank the deputy minister. It was a real pleasure today to talk about some of the good work and commend the people who do all this work at Economic Development. It says something for them that we didn't get to have any questions during Question Period when you think about those 150 questions or whatever it is — so we had a chance to share some information today, Mr. Chair.

Chair: Is there any further debate on Vote 7, Department of Economic Development?

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

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Business and Industry Development

Termination of Sitting as per Standing Order 76(1)

Chair: Order, please.

The time has reached 5:00 p.m. — and everybody is anxiously awaiting — on this, the 30th day of the 2019 Fall Sitting.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Chair, the government directs that Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, be called at this time.

Bill No. 200: *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — continued

Chair: The Committee will now deal with Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

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

Hon. Mr. Silver: I move that all clauses, schedules, and the title of Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, be deemed to be read and carried.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Silver that all clauses, schedules, and the title of Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, be deemed to be read and carried. As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall now put the question. Are you agreed?

Motion agreed to

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$20,500,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$47,257,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$67,757,000 agreed to

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to

Schedules A and B agreed to

Title agreed to

Hon. Mr. Silver: I move that you report Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, without amendment.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Silver that the Chair report Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, without amendment. As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall now put the question. Are you agreed?

Motion agreed to

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

Speaker resumes the Chair

Termination of Sitting as per Standing Order 76(2)

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Hutton: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, 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.

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

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

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

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

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

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Speaker, the government directs that Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, be called for third reading at this time.

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 200: *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 200, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Silver.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I move that Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, be now read a third time and do pass. As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall now put the question. Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Disagree.

Mr. Kent: Disagree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Disagree.

Mr. Cathers: Disagree.

Ms. McLeod: Disagree.

Mr. Istchenko: Disagree.

Ms. White: Disagree.

Ms. Hanson: Disagree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 10 yea, eight nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.

Motion for third reading of Bill No. 200 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 200 has passed this House.

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

Commissioner Bernard enters the Chamber accompanied by her Aides-de-Camp

ASSENT TO BILLS

Commissioner: Please be seated.

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

Clerk: *Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act; Liquor Act; Technical Amendments Act, 2019; Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009; Act Amend the Elections Act; Yukon University Act; and Second Appropriation Act 2019-20.*

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

On behalf of Yukoners, I would like to thank you for all of your work this Sitting. I would like to invite you to the annual Commissioner's Christmas open house on Friday, December 13 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Taylor House. There will be cookies and hot chocolate from the Yukon Chocolate Company, music, and Santa will be there from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. for pictures with the children and yourselves if you want to.

Please join me at the New Year's Levee on Wednesday, January 1, 2020, at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. There will be good food and great entertainment, and we will be presenting the first inductees into

the Order of Yukon. I am happy and delighted to announce that we have a full roster of awardees.

I am very excited to talk about a project of translating Commissioner of Yukon — Commissaire du Yukon — into the eight First Nation languages in the territory. We are slowly getting the translations. As I found out, there is no word for “Commissioner” in the First Nation languages, so it’s going to be a description of my role. We are getting some in, and we are hopeful to be able to unveil them on June 21, National Indigenous Peoples Day.

2020 will be an exciting year for our office. We are working on some very exciting projects, so keep your eyes peeled for upcoming news releases from the office of the Commissioner, in the newspaper, and on our Facebook account.

So, as you get ready to celebrate with family and friends, remember this from Buddy the Elf: “We elves try to stick to the four main groups: candy, candy canes, candy corn, and syrup.” So, happy holidays. Joyeuses fêtes. Merci. Thank you.

Commissioner leaves the Chamber

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

Before I adjourn the Fall Sitting of the Yukon Legislative Assembly, I have a few brief comments. I would like to extend my thanks on behalf of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, and the Deputy Chair of Committee of the Whole and on behalf of all Members of the Legislative Assembly, to Clerk Dan Cable, Deputy Clerk Linda Kolody, Clerk of Committees Allison Lloyd, Director of Administration, Finance and Systems Helen Fitzsimmons, Operations Manager Brenda McCain-Armour, Finance and Operations clerk Lyndsey Amundson, as well as Sergeant-at-Arms Karina Watson and Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms Harris Cox, who all provide invaluable support to all MLAs and their staff in order for us all to continue to do the important work that we are sent here to do on behalf of all Yukoners.

As well, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the skilled team at Hansard for their timely and accurate service, the pages for their admirable efforts to deliver papers and documents and to keep us all well hydrated, and all other background staff and contractors who keep this operation going, including my microphone.

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

I wish members of the Legislative Assembly all the best for the winter season. I hope you find time to reflect on the year that was. I wish you safe travels as you each go to your respective ridings to connect with your loved ones, extended family and friends, and with your constituents.

Happy holidays to all, and all the best in the new year.

Thank you very much.

As the House has now reached the maximum number of sitting days permitted for this Fall Sitting and the House has completed consideration of all designated legislation, it is the

duty of the Chair to declare that this House now stands adjourned.

The House adjourned at 5:16 p.m.

The following sessional papers were tabled November 27, 2019:

34-3-28

Chief Electoral officer's Report to the Legislative Assembly — A Summary of Electoral Activities and Proposed Elections Act Amendments — November 26, 2019 (Speaker Clarke)

34-3-29

Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues — Annual Report 2018-2019 (Dendys)

The following legislative returns were tabled November 27, 2019:

34-3-9

Response to Written Question No. 1 re: Members' Services Board agenda (Speaker Clarke)

34-3-10

Response to oral question from Mr. Istchenko re: Kluane Lake School relocation (McPhee)

34-3-11

Response to oral question from Mr. Kent re: teacher staffing (McPhee)

34-3-12

Response to Motion for the Production of Papers No. 6 re: Government of Yukon auxiliary-on-call employees (Mostyn)

34-3-13

Response to oral question from Mr. Hassard re: Community nursing shortage (Frost)

34-3-14

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Mr. Istchenko related to general debate on Bill No. 200, *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — moose surveys (Frost)

The following document was filed November 27, 2019:

34-3-26

Community Development Fund Annual Report — April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018 (Pillai)

The following written questions were tabled November 27, 2019:

Written Question No. 3

Re: licensed physicians and nurses practising in Yukon (McLeod)

Written Question No. 4

Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Health and Social Services (McLeod)

Written Question No. 5

Re: website and visual identity costs for the Women's Directorate (McLeod)

Written Question No. 6

Re: expropriations of placer and quartz mining claims (Kent)

Written Question No. 7

Re: Yukon resource gateway spending (Kent)

Written Question No. 8

Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Education (Kent)

Written Question No. 9

Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources (Kent)

Written Question No. 10

Re: land withdrawals and staking bans (Kent)

Written Question No. 11

Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Finance (Cathers)

Written Question No. 12

Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Justice (Cathers)

Written Question No. 13

Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Environment (Istchenko)

Written Question No. 14

Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Economic Development (Istchenko)

Written Question No. 15

Re: website and visual identity costs for the Yukon Development Corporation (Istchenko)

Written Question No. 16

Re: website and visual identity costs for the Yukon Liquor Corporation (Istchenko)

Written Question No. 17

Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Community Services (Van Bibber)

Written Question No. 18

Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Tourism and Culture (Van Bibber)

Written Question No. 19

Re: website and visual identity costs for the Yukon Housing Corporation (Van Bibber)

Written Question No. 20

Re: website and visual identity costs for the Public Service Commission (Hassard)

Written Question No. 21

Re: website and visual identity costs for the Department of Highways and Public Works (Hassard)

Written Question No. 22

Re: website and visual identity costs for the Executive Council Office (Hassard)

Written Question No. 23

Re: website and visual identity costs for the French Language Services Directorate (Hassard)