

November 12, 2019

Liz Hanson, MLA Whitehorse Centre
Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, YK



Dear Liz Hanson,

I am writing today because I'm concerned about the privatization of Yukon Government services, including the Queen's Printer and Central Stores.

It's clear from the debates in the legislature that the Yukon Government intends deeper cuts to departmental budgets, which will result in a loss of public services for the people of the territory. This is unacceptable. Public services are critical to quality of life.

Replacing Central Stores with a hodge-podge of private sector companies – many from outside, will do nothing to serve Yukoners. Local companies with supply contracts will suffer from the loss of business, and from the increased burden of warehousing and distributing the thousands of items needed to maintain the work of government. Imposing that burden on the private sector will cost taxpayers more and will worsen the problems of precarious work and poverty in the community.

The Queen's Printer Agency does more than the Minister seems to understand when he calls the work antiquated and obsolete. Eliminating a government agency that is legislated to exist makes no sense, especially since the local private sector already does much of the printing for the QPA.

Governments around the world have realized that privatizing public services does not save money, often costs even more, and results in a poorer quality of service. And when the privatization fails, and it often fails, governments end up underwriting the risk, and then must pick up the pieces, usually with an even higher cost to the public.

Even the United Nations High Commission on Human Rights has identified that privatization results in the reduction in human rights protections and increases poverty, especially in already marginalized communities.

So far, I have seen nothing that supports the government's claim that this will save \$1.6 million. Moving workers from one job to another is not a savings. I've also seen nothing that suggests the work will be protected, and that the Yukon private sector would benefit. Sending Yukon taxpayer dollars to outside companies is a non-starter.

I am asking you to commit to maintaining these important public services. Please let me know that you will stand in the legislature against any cuts to public services in the Yukon, and that you will encourage your colleagues to do the same.

Penny Goldsmith