



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 277

1st Session

33rd Legislature

HANSARD

Thursday, May 26, 2016 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Patti McLeod

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SPEAKER — Hon. Patti McLeod, MLA, Watson Lake
DEPUTY SPEAKER — Darius Elias, MLA, Vuntut Gwitchin

CABINET MINISTERS

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PORTFOLIO
Hon. Darrell Pasloski	Mountainview	Premier Minister responsible for Finance; Executive Council Office
Hon. Elaine Taylor	Whitehorse West	Deputy Premier Minister responsible for Tourism and Culture; Women's Directorate; French Language Services Directorate
Hon. Brad Cathers	Lake Laberge	Government House Leader Minister responsible for Justice; Yukon Development Corporation/ Yukon Energy Corporation
Hon. Doug Graham	Porter Creek North	Minister responsible for Education
Hon. Scott Kent	Riverdale North	Minister responsible for Energy, Mines and Resources; Highways and Public Works
Hon. Currie Dixon	Copperbelt North	Minister responsible for Community Services; Public Service Commission
Hon. Wade Istchenko	Kluane	Minister responsible for Environment
Hon. Mike Nixon	Porter Creek South	Minister responsible for Health and Social Services; Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board
Hon. Stacey Hassard	Pelly-Nisutlin	Minister responsible for Economic Development; Yukon Housing Corporation; Yukon Liquor Corporation

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Party

Hon. Patti McLeod	Watson Lake
Darius Elias	Vuntut Gwitchin

OPPOSITION MEMBERS

New Democratic Party

Elizabeth Hanson	Leader of the Official Opposition Whitehorse Centre
Jan Stick	Official Opposition House Leader Riverdale South
Kevin Barr	Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes
Lois Moorcroft	Copperbelt South
Jim Tredger	Mayo-Tatchun
Kate White	Takhini-Kopper King

Liberal Party

Sandy Silver	Leader of the Third Party Klondike
---------------------	---------------------------------------

Independent

David Laxton	Porter Creek Centre
---------------------	---------------------

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Floyd McCormick
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Rudy Couture
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Doris McLean
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, May 26, 2016 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

Retirement of Sergeant-at-Arms

Speaker: Before proceeding with the Order Paper, the Chair wishes to formally inform the House of the retirement of our Sergeant-at-Arms, Rudy Couture.

Rudy and his late wife Janet arrived in Yukon in March 1954 when they moved to Watson Lake to work with Rudy's uncle and aunt at the Watson Lake Trading Post. He later opened his own store, Yukon Self-Serve, in Watson Lake.

Rudy and Janet moved to Whitehorse in 1967, and Rudy worked briefly for Whitehorse Copper. He then worked for the Government of Yukon from 1968 to 1972 as a labour relations officer and liquor inspector. In 1972, they moved to Faro, where Rudy served as the town manager from 1972 to 1985. They moved back to Whitehorse in 1986 and Rudy became the executive director of the Association of Yukon Communities, a position he served in until his retirement in 1994. Rudy began his service with the Legislative Assembly as the Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms on October 24, 2001. He was appointed Sergeant-at-Arms at the start of the 31st Legislative Assembly in 2003. His tenure makes him the longest serving Yukon Sergeant-at-Arms since G.I. Cameron, who served the House from 1972 to 1987.

While he has served diligently as an officer of this House, at one time Rudy aspired to be a member of this House. It was during the 1967 territorial election that he came within about 15 votes of being elected the Member for Watson Lake.

Rudy's commitment to public service did not begin with his appointment as Sergeant-at-Arms. He served as a coroner and justice of the peace while living in Watson Lake. After retiring from Association of Yukon Communities, Rudy served for a number of years on the Yukon Housing Corporation Board of Directors, including as chair of the board. It was in that capacity that he appeared before the Public Accounts Committee on February 11, 2010. As far as can be determined, he is the only Yukon Sergeant-at-Arms to appear before a standing committee of this House.

As Robert Service said, "There are strange things done in the midnight sun...", and sometimes strange things occur in this House. Perhaps the oddest to occur during Rudy's tenure as Sergeant-at-Arms happened the day the Mace fell apart when he placed it on the Table. But in all of his time as Sergeant-at-Arms, Rudy was never called upon by the Speaker to escort a member from this Assembly for unparliamentary behaviour, and in case any members are thinking about changing that record, I don't think Rudy is looking forward to that today.

Rudy Couture has been a dedicated and dignified officer of this House. He has also been a kind and friendly presence

in this place. I know that all members, the clerks, and the staff of the Legislative Assembly Office — past and present — join me in thanking him for his service. We wish him the very best in the future and we will miss him. I know there are a number of folks here to help us with our tribute today to Rudy, but I would like to make special mention of his daughters — Judy Couture, and Wendy Callaghan and her husband Kip — if you'll all join me in welcoming them.

Applause

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will now proceed with the Order Paper. Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Hougen Group of Companies and Yukon Telecommunications History exhibition at MacBride Museum

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Today, I rise on the last day of Sitting of the 33rd Legislative Assembly to congratulate the Hougen Group of Companies and the MacBride Museum of Yukon History on last night's opening of the Yukon Telecommunications History exhibition and grand reopening of the Dominion Telegraph Office.

The Dominion Telegraph Office is a key piece of Yukon history. It was once part of our only telecommunications link to the rest of the world.

The man who has done the most to connect our territory over the decades is Rolf Hougen. I wish to pay tribute to a family that has helped to make Yukon what it is today. For more than 70 years, the Hougen family has been a household name for Yukoners and a key part of our economy.

How did it all begin? The first Hougen store was open in 1944 as an agency selling Rawleigh products and Fuller brushes. The store was only about 200 square feet and it was on the corner of 2nd Avenue and Wood Street in Whitehorse, where the courthouse now stands. Today the Hougen family continues to be involved in businesses ranging from radio, real estate, women's clothing and sporting goods to furniture, electronics and wilderness adventures.

Like many who settle here, the first Hougen family member came to Yukon, left, and then just had to return. Berent Hougen first came to the Dawson gold fields in 1906 and then settled in Yukon with his wife Margrethe in 1944. It was their son who was the most well-known of the present day Hougens and one of our most famous entrepreneurs. Rolf and Margaret Hougen and their family have done a great deal for Yukon communities over the decades. Family members have received many awards for their philanthropy and services to the community. So significant was Rolf's contribution that he was awarded the Officer of the Order of Canada.

The Yukon Foundation, the Yukon Sourdough Rendezvous Festival, Arts Underground — Hougen's Heritage Gallery and Artspace — are just some of the treasured institutions that owe their existence to the Hougen family.

We are also indebted to the Hougens for their preservation of much of Yukon's past, thanks not only to Rolf's support of institutions, such as the MacBride Museum and Yukon Archives, but also to his inspiring passion for photography, filmmaking and history, right from a young age.

Just this month, a bust of the famous author Pierre Berton was unveiled here in Whitehorse, which was commissioned by Rolf and Marg. Pierre Berton joined Jack London and Robert Service on Main Street — just some of the busts that have been commissioned by the Hougens over the years. The contribution that the Hougen family has made to so many aspects of Yukoners' lives is immense. Today, Hougen family enterprises continue to contribute to our territory's thriving economy, creating jobs and opportunities for Yukoners.

Modern day Yukon is built on families like the Hougens. Rolf was a pioneer in Yukon's telecommunications sector. He founded the first radio station north of 60 and the first cable TV company to broadcast local news, as well as sports and entertainment. Back in the early days, this included the huge and expensive task of taping programs in Vancouver and flying 200 pounds of tape daily to Whitehorse. It is hard to imagine that today when we can so easily access programming from around the world instantaneously.

There is more: Rolf pioneered the Canadian Satellite Communications Inc., better known as Cancom, which constructed the world's first scrambled satellite television network. Like I always say, Madam Speaker, Yukoners punch above their weight. It is very fitting that Hougen's Ltd. is a major sponsor of the MacBride Museum's telecommunications history exhibition.

Last night's event was a perfect setting to celebrate more than 70 years of the Hougen Group in Yukon. Today I am proud to say "thank you" here in this Yukon Legislative Assembly for all they have done and continue to do.

If I can at this moment recognize that there are a number of members of Rolf and Marg's family here in the gallery — thanks to MJ, I have a cheat sheet with me. We have Rolf and Marg up there. Perhaps we can recognize them right now.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Joining them here, in no particular order, are Craig Hougen, Michael Hougen, Erik Hougen, Kim Hougen, Miles Hougen, Tanner Hougen, Jenna Hougen, Cody Hougen, Kai Nielsen, Connor Nielsen, Mary-Jane Warshawski, Melina Hougen, Karen Hougen-Bell and Jim Bell.

I would ask all members of the Assembly and the gallery to join me in welcoming them here today.

Applause

In recognition of 40th anniversary of Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise today to pay tribute to the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre. Forty years ago, the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre was established with the goal of creating a safe and respectful place where women can connect with one another, access

support and services and work together to create positive change for women and the community.

The creation of the women's centre was spearheaded by the Yukon Status of Women Council back in 1974. In early 1975, the women's centre officially opened the doors under the name of Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre, and in 1976 became incorporated with an independent board of directors.

The centre was named after Victoria Faulkner, a trail-blazing Yukoner who was an active volunteer and leader, first in Dawson City and later in Whitehorse. At the time of the opening of the centre, it had one part-time staff person, a few resources and one very small office. Four decades later, the centre has grown with 17 staff, a variety of programs, including: Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies, a community kitchen, a Girls and Trans Club, a private suite for rural pregnant moms, as well as various summer recreation programs in support of moms and kids — all of which directly touch the lives of more than 5,000 Yukon women, girls and children every year.

For 40 years, the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre has facilitated a community of women helping women by creating programming, services and campaigns that have made a genuine difference to the lives of women in the Yukon. They have helped generations of women to build upon their own inherent strength. The centre has offered support groups for women at all stages of life in a variety of circumstances. There have been countless workshops and training sessions, from yoga and wellness to financial independence. They have run successful campaigns to shed light on inequality and discrimination and to encourage everyone to take responsibility when it comes to violence against women and children in our society.

From the very beginning, the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre has always provided a place that helps women and their children feel safe and creates opportunities for women to take leadership on the issues that matter the most to them. Throughout their early days, the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre provided these crucial programs and services, all while managing financial insecurity and location challenges.

In 1997, the Government of Yukon alongside the Yukon Status of Women Council, was able to help support the purchase of the centre's permanent home at 503 Hanson Street. Over the years, the Yukon government has and continues to support the very important and valued work of the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre through partnerships, collaboration and funding for important programs such as the women's advocate, as well as special projects and ongoing initiatives such as A Safe Place — a supportive, low-barrier, drop-in space for women and children on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings.

Likewise, the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre has also been working with the Anti-Poverty Coalition in providing supports when it comes to the Whitehorse affordable family housing initiative through their program coordination. These and other programs can be found on the centre's newly launched website situated at <http://www.vfwomenscentre.com>

that was officially launched during International Women's Day celebrations in March of this year.

Madam Speaker, in support of the important work being carried out by the centre, our government was very pleased to increase funding to the centre — an additional \$40,000 — in support of the women's advocate and continued work in support of violence prevention and public education campaigns as well as strengthening community partnerships that they do so very well at.

In closing, Madam Speaker, let me use part of a quote from the famous Margaret Mead: "... a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." This could not ring truer than when speaking of the hard work and dedication of the staff of the Victoria Faulkner's Women's Centre. I, for one, am so very thankful for all of the hard work they have done over the past 40 years and I am looking forward to seeing what the next 40 years comes to bear.

Applause

Ms. Moorcroft: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Today I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP Official Opposition to pay tribute to the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre. I would like to thank the minister opposite for her tribute and for her ongoing support of the women's centre's activities.

The movement to create a women-only space in Whitehorse originated with the Yukon Status of Women Council in 1974. In 1976, the women's centre opened at the YWCA, now the High Country Inn, as a women-only safe space. With only a coffee pot and a hotplate, it was a welcoming environment that led to discussion, action and change.

What started as a small gathering of determined women transformed into a strong movement throughout the Yukon. The centre has so many outstanding achievements to celebrate: direct services, targeted programs, political advocacy and collaboration with other women's groups in the community.

In the early 2000s, the women's centre launched the Yukon's first Court Watch, an 18-month pilot project, with Status of Women Canada funding. Court Watch restarted a three-year project recently with the Yukon Status of Women Council, which we affectionately refer to as the "mother" of Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre. Court Watch helps women by evaluating and collecting data about sexual assault trials and the differential treatment of women in the justice system. This spring, on International Women's Day, March 8, Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre celebrated 40 years of public service.

I would like to read just briefly from the blog they posted about that event. "Turning 40 is a milestone for anyone, but for a non-profit women's organization, it is an incredible achievement. We have survived changes in government, political culture, funding environment, and in the women's movement itself. We have grown from a small one room office to a thriving organization. We have responded to the needs of women in Whitehorse, as the realities of violence

against women, colonization and gender identities shift in our community and in our awareness."

The centre relocated many times over the years due to financial instability. I was proud to be part of helping the women's centre find a permanent home and, in 1997, when the Minister of Justice and the Women's Directorate took part in celebrating the opening of their new permanent home at 503 Hanson Street. With the stability of a permanent location, the centre organizes countless annual events such as International Women's Day, Sexual Assault Prevention Month and the Take Back the Night march.

This coming week, the centre is paying tribute to Victims and Survivors of Crime Week and organizing more than eight seminars next week alone. These programs focus on raising awareness within the community and striving to prevent future abuse for all Yukoners. These are not lofty goals and yet the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre has been making substantial progress in educating Yukoners. There is no shortage of drop-in hours, as well as their numerous programs, and the women's advocate is always there as a support. Recently the housing navigator was added to the staff team. The centre continues to be well-used by women and their children in the community, particular at the Wednesday lunch.

The centre's original philosophy continues today. It mandates women helping women, recognizing the strength, resilience and expertise that all women possess and providing the space and support for women to create their own solutions. Victoria Faulkner would be proud that the centre maintains her personal goals of strength, leadership and commitment to the community. A huge number of women in Whitehorse and rural communities have been involved with the centre's activities over the years, raising money at walk-a-thons, serving on the boards, writing funding proposals and bringing their kids to drop-in. I want to thank all of the staff and volunteers of the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre and welcome today in the gallery: Hillary Aiken, the program coordinator; Esther Armstrong, the housing navigator; and Judith Desjardins, the student researcher. We want to thank you for your work and look forward to the next 40 years.

Applause

In recognition of World No Tobacco Day

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of all members to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing May 31 as World No Tobacco Day. According to the World Health Organization, tobacco use is the single most important preventable cause of death. In a new report issued this month presenting the status of Yukon health for 2015, smoking is still high on the list of concerns.

Smoking continues to be prominent public health issue in Yukon. Over one-quarter of Yukoners aged 20 and over report daily or occasional smoking in 2013-14, compared to about one-fifth of Canadians in that same age group. On a positive note, in 2013-14, we saw a substantial drop in our smoking rate compared to the previous reporting period of 2011-12 — from 31.7 percent to 27.1 percent. The steeper decline in Yukon's smoking rates could be linked to the fact that more

and more people are using the Quitpath tobacco cessation program than ever. This program includes coaching, education on the impacts of smoking on our health as well as up to 12 weeks of free nicotine patches.

Again, I would like to reiterate that smoking still creates a heavy burden on the medical system. Even though smoking rates have fallen, not only is smoking a risk factor for lung cancer, it is also a risk for a host of other cancers, premature mortality and generally worsened health. Individuals who smoke have a higher risk for diseases such as heart disease, stroke, chronic respiratory disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. We still have work to do to help Yukoners quit the smoking habit and encourage Yukoners to avoid picking up the smoking habit in the first place. However, we see encouraging signs of slowly declining rates of tobacco usage and apparent behaviour changes, especially among our youth.

Health and Social Services, with their community-based tobacco prevention resource, entitled “Kickin’ Ash”, have spoken to just over 450 children and youth in schools and outside of school programming. They also trained 10 youth leaders from throughout the territory who then presented and worked with an additional 84 youth. In addition, there are free nicotine patches throughout the Quitpath program.

World No Tobacco Day is an opportunity to remind us of the devastating effect that smoking has on our bodies. In fact, a smoker will die on average 20 years sooner than they would have if they didn’t smoke. As a former smoker myself, I encourage all smokers to take the step to think about quitting. It is never too late to quit smoking, and improve your health in the process.

In recognition of Whitehorse Connects

Ms. White: Thank you, Madam Speake r. I rise today to celebrate the beauty that is Whitehorse Connects. Whitehorse Connects is a living, breathing example of social inclusion. It is an opportunity for those who are homeless, living in poverty or among the working poor to come together for a range of health and human services they may not otherwise be able to access. Whitehorse Connects is all about building ties between those who have and those for whom life is a daily struggle. The Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition spearheads this initiative, but it is the broader community that is responsible for its evolving scope and continued successes.

Connects day is run by volunteers from all facets of our community. We have the high school students from social justice clubs, retired folks, people who have taken time off of work, musicians, sound techs, nurses, veterinarians, photographers, the business community, and so many more — and they are all supported by the incredible staff at the Old Fire Hall.

My caucus colleagues and I did not know what we were getting into back when we first volunteered in 2012, but we have never looked back. At least one of us has volunteered at each Connects since our first and we all have stories to tell, but today I will share with you my perspective.

I love Whitehorse Connects. They are some of my favourite days of the year. People are made to feel welcome from the second the line starts to form outside the doors at the fire hall at 9:00 a.m. Yesterday, despite the rain, there were easily 100 people waiting by the time the doors opened at 10:00 a.m.

My favourite post is at the front door. Everyone is greeted with a smile. I always introduce myself first, before asking for someone’s first name. I want them to know that this is a safe space and that they will be respected. First names are all we need, as this is how we are able to calculate the number of attendees and plan for the next events. I ask if they have ever attended before, and this helps us understand how people are learning about the event. For the newcomers, we explain the services available — haircuts and foot care are by appointment only — and then we point out the regulars, like the photo booth run by GBP Creative in the back corner, and highlight the nurses who are there to administer immunizations and blood pressure tests. We explain that everything in the room is free — from the appointments, to the clothing and shoes on the tables, to the coffee and snacks, and the lunch that will be served at noon. All the while, as more and more community members enter the room, live music is being played on the stage in the front of the room.

Every Whitehorse Connects sees these services expanded. Yesterday we had nurses from the Mental Health Services, representation from the Residential Tenancies Office, and a veterinarian. Each of these services is gold, and the time given by the people behind the tables cannot be measured in dollars. The Lions Club was, once again, out back, under tents, grilling burgers for lunch. They do this in the rain, in the sunshine — no matter what — and they are amazing.

I wish I could describe how the room feels, but I think you need to be there to fully understand. I have learned so much from my time at the registration desk. I know that exchanging first names is the first step to being seen as more than a statistic. I know that getting that haircut is so important to how a person feels about themselves that people are willing to wait in the rain or the cold for more than an hour to get the chance to get one of the 30 appointments that are available. Rick Karp has not only generously donated salon space, but hairstylists for the better part of a day, and he has done this again and again and again.

I notice how differently people hold themselves after a haircut. They stand a little taller and smile a little broader, and yesterday, for the first time, I was able to stop by the salon on my way back to work. If you could get power from smiles, downtown could have been powered by how people were feeling about themselves as they were waiting for haircuts.

People who are often made to feel invisible are seen for who they are through the camera lens of GBP Creative. The portraits I have seen shown by attendees are incredible. For some, these are the only photos that they have of themselves or their families. I have learned that compassion, shown over and over by the front-line workers who attend Whitehorse Connects, makes all the difference for the people they see three times a year. They are made to feel like they matter.

No matter how much love I have for Connects days, I worry, because the reality is that more and more of our community members depend on the services that are offered three times a year. Yesterday, more than 300 people came through those doors. That's triple of what we had in 2012.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank some people who are there each and every time. I would like to thank Gary and Brianne Bremner from GBP Creative and Bri's mom Judith, because it's through them that they capture the beauty of everyone they meet.

I would like to thank Mary-Beth and Ann who are the nurses who come to do foot care, and they show up with a smile each and every time.

I would like to extend a big thank you to Rick Karp for what he does and to his stylists at Hair Sensations, Kristina Craig from the Anti-Poverty Coalition, Kristina Mercs and the staff at the Old Fire Hall, and, of course, all the volunteers who make Whitehorse Connects the event that it has become.

I would especially like to thank someone who has come to the gallery today. Kim Winnicky is the driving force behind Whitehorse Connects and is the person who gets all the balls in the air, juggles them around and is constantly putting out fires and problem-solving — Kim, if you could stand up so we could thank you for what you do. Whitehorse Connects is phenomenal. Without Kim's energy and her dedication to it, I don't think we would have gone on as much.

Kim, thank you so very much for what you do.

Applause

In recognition of Vadzaih Choo Drin, or Caribou Days

Mr. Elias: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise on the last day of the 33rd Assembly and pay tribute to Vadzaih Choo Drin or big Caribou Days and the importance of the Porcupine caribou herd.

The Porcupine caribou herd was literally running through the streets of Old Crow last week. A video posted on Facebook of a herd of caribou running past the Chief Zzeh Gittlit School in Old Crow has now surpassed 65,000 views.

I had the pleasure to participate in the celebration of the caribou once again last week, and it was absolutely fantastic. Thank you so much — to our community and to the organizers, especially Teresa Frost and Tadda, also known as Natasha Frost, and all the volunteers. It was so awesome to see everyone in Old Crow laughing, smiling and participating all weekend. Vadzaih Choo Drin, Caribou Days, is celebrated every year on the May long weekend when the Vuntut Gwitchin people celebrate the return of the Porcupine caribou herd.

Each spring, the 200,000 strong Porcupine caribou herd travel to their birthing grounds, and between 40,000 and 50,000 caribou calves are born on the Arctic coastal plain. Calving will begin in a few days.

It is because of the vadzaih — the caribou — that we as Gwich'in people have been able to maintain and thrive in our way of life. For thousands of years, we have depended on this herd for our sustenance, for our food, for our clothing, shelter,

tools, medicine and even games. Imagine hundreds of thousands of caribou and their newborn calves running across the tundra, hoofs thundering, magnificent antlers pointing toward the midnight sun. Every spring and fall, excitement fills the air and lifts the spirits of our remote Gwich'in villages, as we welcome back the migration of the Porcupine caribou herd, which sustains our way of life. The Gwich'in are one of the northernmost indigenous peoples, living in 15 small villages scattered across a vast area extending from northeast Alaska in the United States, and northern Yukon and the Northwest Territories in Canada.

The lives of our Gwich'in people are inextricably and spiritually linked to the caribou, which roam our northern landscape today, much as the buffalo once did on the Great Plains. Madam Speaker, the buffalo were nearly wiped out, millions of them, but today we have an opportunity to protect the Porcupine caribou herd and keep alive the Gwich'in way of life. A quote translated to English: "We are caribou people. Caribou are not just what we eat; they are who we are; they are in our stories and song, and the whole way we see the world. Caribou are our life. Without the caribou, we would not exist."

That was a quote from Elder Sarah James from Arctic Village, Alaska.

In 1988 in Arctic Village, Alaska, with the increased threat of oil and gas development in the birthplace and nursery grounds of the Porcupine caribou herd, the Gwich'in Nation came together and agreed unanimously to speak with one voice in opposition to oil and gas development on the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska — a very specific mandate. I was there in 1988 as a teenager and, to this day, it was the most powerful exhibition of solidarity that I have ever experienced in my lifetime. It was a life-changing experience. I will always remember when the oldest Gwich'in elder at that time spoke to the Gwich'in Nation, and he said — translated to English: "When you speak around the world to protect our caribou, you do it in a good way and you don't harm anyone." To accomplish this task, the Gwich'in community has established the Gwich'in Steering Committee. I recognize their tireless efforts over the decades to protect the caribou birthing grounds and our Gwich'in way of life.

Our elders recognized that oil development in the calving grounds was a threat to the very heart of our people. The elders knew that, without their nursery, the caribou would not survive. Madam Speaker, last weekend in Old Crow, as we always have, we paid homage and celebrated the caribou with hundreds of our friends and visitors. We danced, we talked, we played and we prayed. Everything we did had a connection to and a respect for the caribou, from fashion shows to talent shows, races, log-sawing and muskrat-calling. We show the youth and our visitors the symbiotic relationship the caribou have with everything.

Many shared their stories and expressed that their journey with the caribou began in their mother's womb. The blood that flows through us before we are born, when we are growing in our mother's womb — much of that nutrition comes from the caribou. That's where that relationship starts.

I was once camped beside the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in my former job as senior park warden for Vuntut National Park. One morning, I was walking toward the refuge in a mountain pass and there wasn't a cloud in the sky. I heard what I thought was thunder, so I stopped and I saw a cow caribou and a calf come over the pass. In just minutes, I was surrounded by 20,000 caribou. I felt so insignificant — and a sight and experience and a power that I will never forget. The Porcupine caribou herd birthing grounds on the coastal plain is sacred, not only to the Gwich'in, but to millions of North Americans who have, time and time again, voiced their steadfast support for permanent protection of the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as wilderness. Many Yukoners are so proud of the fact that we have such a wonderful resource within our boundaries of our territory. I believe Yukoners want to see our continued leadership on this issue.

Mahsi' cho to the Yukon government for supporting the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation's efforts over the decades with an annual \$50,000 transfer to our community, and also to the Porcupine Caribou Management Board for their excellent work, and to the men and women who have dedicated their lives to the health of the herd.

Madam Speaker, this is also about a healthy northern ecosystem and it's about the intrinsic value that we have — a treasure that is alive and well in our territory. Mahsi' cho; shuuluk nait. For the hundreds of times the people of Old Crow have travelled to Washington, DC, to speak with and educate the congressmen, the senators and the American public and to help us protect the Porcupine caribou calving grounds in Alaska. It's very hard work — I know.

Translated to English, it's called a "sacred place where life begins". I say to my fellow Yukoners today, "Long live the Porcupine caribou." It's a herd that the Gwich'in Nation depends on. It is the foundation of our culture and traditions and essential to the social, economic and spiritual fabric of our being — a relationship that is difficult for some to understand. I know. That is why we celebrate and we teach all who will listen about vadzaih choo drin. It is because of the vadzaih — the caribou — that we as Gwich'in people have been able to maintain our way of life for thousands and thousands of years, well before the great pyramids of Egypt were built.

It has been eloquently articulated on the floor of this Assembly by every Vuntut Gwitchin MLA about how important the Porcupine caribou herd is to our people. I reaffirm in this Legislature today that the destiny of the Porcupine caribou herd is without a doubt the same destiny as that of the Gwich'in people; they are inseparable. The intricacies of our relationship with the caribou are what make us unique. The caribou give us strength and a sense of security when they are healthy, and without them, our culture would simply perish.

Madam Speaker, to me, the inherent aboriginal right to harvest also includes our responsibility to conserve for future generations; to protect the caribou in our traditional uses and values. The Gwich'in Nation's accomplishments in protecting their traditional source of sustenance are significant. One of

the reasons for our success was the high degree of community involvement in the process and the way in which support was solidified at the grassroots level.

Although much of the work to protect the Porcupine caribou was done in cities and houses of government, the essence of the effort came from those directly affected by the loss of the caribou — the Gwich'in. Although the organizational structure of lobbies and educational efforts and committees created by the Gwich'in is not new, blending traditional values in a modern approach is innovative. The Gwich'in, faced with a problem, acted according to traditions, while benefitting from an international lobby and public education effort.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I would like to share a message for our youth.

Vadzaih yeendoo gwiheendaii geenjit. It translates to: "Caribou in the future — they are going to live."

There have been so many eloquent voices over the years who have spoken to this important issue, so I'll end with this.

The Gwich'in relationship with the northern Arctic ecosystem and the Porcupine caribou that is thousands and thousands of years old — if that relationship becomes extinct and is gone, to me, that would impoverish humankind, and we shall never allow that to happen. These could be very well my last words in this Chamber, Madam Speaker, so I wanted them to be about the caribou.

Dearest constituents, my family and friends — thank you for your support. To my fellow members of this Assembly, I salute you and I wish you well.

Haii Choo.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: Thank you, Madam Speaker. No doubt my tribute on behalf of the Official Opposition differs from that of the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, not just because the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin is Gwich'in and speaks from the heart about the caribou, but because for both the Member for Takhini-Kopper King and me, going to Old Crow for Caribou Days was a completely new adventure. To be clear, Madam Speaker, that's not because I'm a newbie to travelling to Old Crow. It's a bit daunting to acknowledge that my first trip to Old Crow was as a young social worker, I would say in about 1978, so it has been fascinating to watch the evolution of this small northern community that has such a special place in the hearts and minds of all Yukon and indeed of Canada. Through the years, the scientific, anthropological, ethnographic research conducted in and around Old Crow has expanded our collective understanding of Yukon's original history.

Whether it was being one of the first four First Nations to sign First Nation and self-government agreements or — as the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin just pointed out and elaborated on — leading international lobbying efforts to protect and preserve the Porcupine caribou herd, citizens of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation have worked hard to retain their culture, their sense of place and community.

But, like many small isolated communities, Old Crow has not been immune to the conflicting pressures of change, of

modernization. At times, the impacts of change are not all positive. Change can threaten or undermine the importance of knowing and taking pride in one's history and, in Old Crow, one response is Caribou Days.

Caribou Days originated, as the member opposite said, 16 years ago. The series of events that take place over the May long weekend have been put together to achieve a number of interrelated objectives. A primary objective is to reinforce many of the traditional Gwich'in practices and pursuits and to do so in a manner that fully engages both young and old in the community.

It was amazing to observe and participate in the jam-packed schedule over this past weekend. It was also amazing to observe the formidable force — as the member opposite said — that is Teresa Frost. As the original coordinator and founder of Caribou Days, in addition to many other roles that she plays in the community — if you have ever been to the RCMP detachment, you know that she is there — Ms. Frost is passionate about the importance of providing kids in Old Crow with a safe place to be during holiday periods in that small community. Having observed what she, almost single-handedly, organized over the course of three days, I can only imagine the whirlwind of activity that takes place in the Old Crow community centre over the two-week Christmas break.

Dedicated and passionate community leaders are vital to the deepening of pride and understanding of Gwich'in language and culture. As the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin said, the underlying theme, the essence of Caribou Days, had everything to do with caribou, but there was so much more. It was great to see the enthusiasm with which the kids who had participated in the Gwich'in culture camp held on the land engaged in activities like muskrat skinning. Both the member from Old Crow and my colleague from Takhini-Kopper King took some excellent pictures depicting the intense concentration on young faces as they carefully executed this task — one that tracks back millennia — or in geese- and muskrat-calling contests. On that point, I invite the members of this Assembly to offer congratulations to the MLA for Vuntut Gwitchin for winning the muskrat-calling contest, a contest that was judged by a panel of three or four elders seated outside the community hall listening to over 20-unnamed contestants. As the one who was assigned to assist the judges — and I can tell you that I don't know how they did it — it was apparent that they were experts in this, and they chose the MLA for Vuntut Gwitchin as the winner of these 20-some contestants. He is the best muskrat-caller in Old Crow.

Madam Speaker, Caribou Days is a lively, fun series of events with a purpose. Whether it was a community discussion on climate change involving elders or youth, or Gwich'in names bingo, caribou-skinning or black-duck-plucking, the organizers' intent was to ensure an environment of safety and fun and, through that, opportunities to both learn and deepen pride as Vuntut Gwitchin youth. Watching the interactions of kids with kids, adults with adults, and elders with youth, I was left with a sense of hope and optimism for the future. Clearly, the Vuntut Gwitchin understand in a deep

way that they are truly part of the land, part of the water. In closing, I extend our thanks to the community of Old Crow for their welcoming hospitality, and a very special thank you — mahsi' cho — to the volunteers for the relentless dedication to and belief in the youth of Old Crow.

Applause

Speaker: Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Thank you, Madam Speaker. In the gallery today, we have Amy Law — she is a policy analyst with Policy and Planning, Aboriginal Relations branch — and we also have Cassandra Kelly, who is the manager of Corporate Planning and IFA Policy Planning, Aboriginal Relations branch. They are here for the state of the environment report today.

Before we welcome them, I also want to welcome Donna Milne — she is the executive assistant to the Deputy Minister of Environment — and my executive assistant, Lila McConnell. I want to thank them for their tireless work keeping the deputy minister and me going in the right direction. I want to thank them very much. Please help welcome them to the House. Thank you.

Madam Speaker, I would also be remiss if I did not say something. There is a lady in this House today whose name is Judy Desjardins. She was instrumental in the upbringing of my youngest boy. He is doing quite well — he is getting all As in school — and thanks Judy.

Applause

Mr. Laxton: Thank you, Madam Speaker, I would like to introduce to the House Conrad Tiedeman, a friend of mine and a constituent, as well as Ruth Fitzsimmons, a long-time friend.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I guess I would like to have the House recognize my incredible wife Tammie, who is here. I think she is here for a number of reasons today. I think she wanted to bear witness and support the tribute to our Sergeant-at-Arms, Rudy Couture, and also the acknowledgement of the Hougen family. She was here at the beginning of this session and appropriately is here at the end of it. I think she was here once or twice in the middle of it, but I would like to invite everybody to join me in welcoming her today.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Graham: Thank you, Madam Speaker, I have for tabling the *Yukon Department of Education Annual Report 2015*.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Thank you, Madam Speaker, I have for tabling 2016 Yukon state of the environment interim report.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have for tabling *Yukon FASD Diagnosis and Case Management in Adult Corrections Population — Final Report — June 2015 — For Public Health Agency of Canada* by the Yukon government.

I also have for tabling a Canadian study, preliminary results from the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, entitled *Abducted then Murdered Children*.

I also have for tabling a summary report from the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, entitled *Keeping Children Safe from Abduction*.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have for tabling *Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues — YACWI Annual Report — 2015-16*, as well as the Yukon Arts Centre annual report for 2014-15.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have two documents for tabling. The first is the *Queen's Printer Agency 2016/2017 Business Plan*. The second document I have for tabling here today is the *Fleet Vehicle Agency 2016-2017 Business Plan*.

Speaker: 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?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Economic outlook

Ms. Hanson: Thank you, Madam Speaker. When this Yukon Party government took power in 2011, it promised Yukoners a brighter future, it promised to promote the social, environmental and economic well-being of the territory and to secure Yukon's future. Yukon was still experiencing a period of growth, driven by high commodity prices, global demand and movements in global investment. Mineral exploration was high and we had three operating mines. It was a time to invest in other sectors. Times were good.

Fast-forward to 2016: three consecutive years of GDP decline, a further 23-percent drop in mineral exploration in 2016, 112 less local businesses since 2012, and average business revenue down \$73,000. This government can repeat their campaign rhetoric, but the numbers are clear.

Madam Speaker, why did this Yukon Party government fail to take steps to lessen the impact of the commodity boom-bust cycle?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Thank you, Madam Speaker. We are proud of the efforts that this government has put forward over the term of this mandate, as we have been speaking about in recent days. Those efforts are paying off, but let's talk

about the fact that, in the five years of this mandate, what have we seen? We've seen an increase in population every year in this territory. We've seen continuous low unemployment. We see record capital investment that's creating jobs and building for our future.

We are now the only jurisdiction in this country that has no net debt — the envy of the whole country. We need only look at such investments recently as the Goldcorp acquisition of the Kaminak Coffee project for in excess of half a billion dollars. I believe the future of this territory looks very bright under a new Yukon Party government.

Ms. Hanson: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Premier may want to check the stats. In fact, the population is doing a slow decline.

Now, let's talk surplus or the great disappearing act. For 2012-13, the government forecast an almost \$80-million surplus. There was money in the bank. Fast-forward to 2016-17, this Yukon Party government has managed to reduce our surplus to a forecast \$1.3 million. That is down \$78 million in four years, even with record-breaking federal transfers.

Madam Speaker, we can speculate where some of that money has gone. The C.D. Howe Institute has stated that the Yukon is the second-worst jurisdiction in Canada for overspending. After three straight years of economic decline and \$187.5 million of debt buried in government corporations, how can the Premier pretend that Yukon's economy is on the right track under his leadership?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Thank you, Madam Speaker. For the record, I will repeat that this government has no net debt; the envy of the rest of the country. Of course, we've just talked recently about the new Alberta government, and at a time when their revenues have gone down, their approach has been to increase their spending.

We can look at the recent budgets in Ontario, with the Liberal government in Ontario and the new Liberal government in Newfoundland and Labrador as well. We can talk about the billions of dollars that are being budgeted every year just to service their debt.

We believe that government should live within its means — as Yukon families have to, as Yukon small businesses have to.

We're proud of the investments that we have made, as I have mentioned. Statistics Canada has said that we did have contraction in our economy last year in 2015, primarily because of the mining sector; however, all other major sectors of our economy grew last year, Madam Speaker — construction; retail trade; professional, scientific and technical services; real estate; transportation and warehousing; health care; education; finance; insurance; and utilities.

Madam Speaker, of course, we also know that we have received great marks and comments on our budget this year after 60 meetings across all communities. We've had the Yukon Chamber of Commerce give us a B-plus on our current budget.

Ms. Hanson: The minister can avoid, but he cannot deny the \$187.5-million debt carried by Yukon's corporations.

Madam Speaker, this government's mismanagement of our economy is by all accounts its biggest failure. The irony is Yukon has all the elements for success. Yukon citizens and businesses can no longer wait for this government to catch up to their lead. The renewable energy industry will create good, stable jobs and respect our environment. The tourism, knowledge and IT sectors have untapped potential.

Madam Speaker, First Nation development corporations are strong economic drivers that could be an even greater springboard for economic development and job creation here at home; yet this government prefers to sit and wait for commodity prices to bounce back. After 14 years of Yukon Party government, the only real growth in Yukon's economy has been government expenditures.

How does the Premier explain his failure to work with Yukoners to diversify Yukon's economy?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think we can let Yukoners ask — who they are going to believe, the Leader of the NDP or the Auditor General of Canada? That's what I have to say.

As it goes for tourism and IT — again, Madam Speaker, record levels of investment, highest level investment that we have seen as we continue to focus on how we can diversify our economy. The difference between this government though, Madam Speaker, and the two opposition parties is that when they speak of diversification, they talk about creating jobs to replace resource jobs. Madam Speaker, this is a government that, now more than ever, stands for the resource industry and our view of diversification is how we build on top of the resource sector because it is through the resource sector we will continue to see a growth in prosperity for this entire jurisdiction.

Question re: Mining sector development

Mr. Tredger: Thank you, Madam Speaker. This Yukon Party was elected on the slogan, "So goes mining, so goes Yukon." Five years later, and this government has overseen a decline in all aspects of the mining sector. They took credit for the success of Yukon's mining industry, but times have changed. Exploration is down, investment is down, and of the three mines that were operating, two are now closed and the other is closing. The Yukon Party blames commodity prices, blames Yukon First Nation governments, blames Yukon's environmental assessment system — they even blame the NDP — but they are unwilling to act like a government and take responsibility. It is clear that this government has not created the conditions for success in Yukon's mining sector.

When will this government acknowledge that they have a failing grade when it comes to supporting Yukon's mining industry?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Our government is very proud of the investments that we made in the mining industry over the past number of years, recognizing the decline in commodity prices and some of the other challenges that the industry has faced.

We increased the Yukon mineral exploration program at an enhanced level. We brought in double assessment credit for

prospectors. We continue to work with organizations like the Yukon Mining Alliance to promote the Yukon. I've spoken to a number of CEOs over the past couple of weeks, since the Goldcorp announcement, and one of them said to me, point blank, that nobody out-promotes the Yukon. That's a testament to the work of the Department of Economic Development.

We participate in trade shows in Toronto and Vancouver, in Colorado, New York and in Europe, getting the word out about what the Yukon is all about; what opportunities are here. We're seeing a rebound in the industry. We see companies like Goldcorp taking an interest in Yukon projects and we're proud of the record that we have and we're proud of the future for the mining industry in the territory.

Mr. Tredger: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Over the last five years, this government has thrown money at mining companies left, right and centre. They have made ad hoc legislative amendments that they believed would attract investment. This attitude displays a fundamental misunderstanding of the needs of mining companies.

When a mining company is looking to invest hundreds of millions of dollars in a region, they do not care how big a cheerleader the Premier is, but rather they focus on security and certainty for their shareholders. Attracting mining investment is about creating certainty.

Unfortunately, this Yukon Party government has created the uncertainty that deepens the poor investment climate already weakened by low mineral prices. Will the Premier admit that his government's confrontational attitude toward First Nation governments has damaged Yukon's investment climate?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Again, our government has been working very hard over the past number of years. I mentioned in my initial response some of the program investments that we've made to assist the junior mining sector, as well as our prospectors. We see record production in our placer sector — again, that has been a long and steady contributor to the Yukon economy. We're very proud of the contributions of those placer mines, essentially the family farms of the north. They employ many Yukoners, particularly in rural Yukon.

When it comes to attracting investment, one only has to look at the Goldcorp investment in the Yukon. They saw an opportunity here; they see a politically stable environment that they can invest in. They're the fourth-largest gold producer in the world. As we've said a number of times, their dollars could go to projects anywhere in the world, but they chose the Yukon. They chose us for a number of reasons. We should all be proud of that fact and we should all look to the other projects that are moving through the system as well, working toward production.

Our mining future is bright, and a lot of that is owed to the policy decisions and the actions of this Yukon Party government.

Mr. Tredger: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Yukon NDP and Yukoners welcome mining in the Yukon, with some

simple expectations: follow the rules, employ Yukoners, benefit Yukon businesses and clean up when they leave.

The Yukon has the tools to create a strong mining industry that can avoid the boom-bust cycle we are currently trapped in. We have the opportunity and the obligation to develop successor resource legislation that would create a clear framework for resource development.

We have the opportunity to conduct land use planning that would provide clear goals and establish the certainty that Yukon desperately needs. Yet the Premier has chosen to ignore this opportunity required in the final agreements.

Madam Speaker, when will this government recognize that his actions have harmed rather than helped Yukon's mining industry and that only through working with our partners can we get things back on track?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Had the member opposite read the Yukon Minerals Advisory Board's report that I tabled yesterday, he would have recognized the compliments from the board in our evolving relations and our improved relationships with First Nation governments, something that each and every one of us in Cabinet on this side — indeed on this side of the House — work on every day.

I have to take issue with the member opposite's assertion that the New Democrats understand anything about mining. One thing you have to look at is their last platform. Of course, they would get rid of the free-entry system. They wanted to create a resource royalty slush fund that they could spend, increasing royalties on mining companies at a time when we are middle of the pack in the country and we should stay there — that's what I've heard from investors.

Of course, one only has to remember the Leader of the New Democrats and her now infamous comment on "lettuce and toilet paper" and that none of that was procured locally by mining companies. That certainly shows a fundamental lack of understanding of what the mining industry contributes across the economy here in the Yukon. We certainly understand that — the NDP do not.

Question re: Liquefied natural gas

Mr. Laxton: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to commend the Yukon Chamber of Commerce and its president, Peter Turner, for taking — in my view — a realistic and open-minded approach to find both short- and long-term solutions for building a sustainable Yukon economy that speaks to the present, while setting a responsible tone for the future. Others are quick to criticize an economy based on traditional fuels, while offering little more than platitudes and exorbitant possibilities about cleaner horizons. It's one thing to wax eloquent about optimal solutions, but the only way to get there is to bridge the gap over a reasonable period of time.

Is this government willing to support the transportation of liquefied natural gas for the Northern Cross drilling project in the Eagle Plains Basin, north to Eagle Plains and Inuvik and to other communities in the opposite direction?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Our government and our party is the only party in this Legislature

that believes in responsible oil and gas development as part of our economy. As the Premier mentioned in a previous response here today, the New Democrats and the Liberals — their idea of diversifying the economy is to replace the natural resource jobs with other jobs. Our idea for diversifying the economy is to build upon those jobs that already exist. We don't want to be the ones who are picking winners and losers.

When it comes to liquefied natural gas, of course, our government led the way, trail-blazing with the LNG facility that is now located at the Whitehorse Rapids plant. The Silvertip mine in northern BC, which is accessed through Yukon, I believe, will become Canada's first remote mine powered by LNG when they go into production later this year.

Again, to respond to the member opposite's question, we already have oil and gas used domestically in our economy. If we can eliminate the need to transport that from other markets and produce it domestically, that's something that we're obviously very interested in and will continue to pursue responsible oil and gas development in the Yukon.

Mr. Laxton: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I mention LNG because it's a practical interim solution, but the trucks needed to transport this product run on diesel and leave a carbon footprint. Does the government support the construction of small-diameter natural gas pipelines to those same destinations?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. When it comes to liquefied natural gas, the option that we're pursuing right now obviously is trucked gas from the lower mainland in Vancouver. That's coming into the Whitehorse Rapids facility as well as carrying on to Inuvik. The Northwest Territories as well uses LNG in Inuvik to generate electricity.

The other opportunities that are emerging in the mining sector of course with the Silvertip mine that I mentioned — I believe they're looking to potentially source gas from northeastern British Columbia or northern Alberta, so once those supply lines are shortened, that will also be helpful.

Again, we have not seen proposals put forward by companies that are active in the oil and gas industry — whether or not that gas would be liquefied and transported that way or by pipeline. We're interested in having those conversations when they do arise. We want to make sure we're responsible when it comes to oil and gas development in the territory and again we see opportunities with the resource sector going forward.

Mr. Laxton: I trust the government is supportive of the Yukon Chamber of Commerce's realistic approach to developing a sustainable economy here. Can the Premier tell us what he proposes to do in the time he has remaining to support them?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I guess what I will do is I will refer to the report card produced by the Yukon Chamber of Commerce after we tabled the budget that this party will be proud to pass later today.

They had a number of categories. The overall grade was a B-plus. For investments in infrastructure they gave us an A, saying that improvements to roads, airfields, fibre optic and

cellular infrastructure are excellent investments and are all beneficial to the economy; also, that the prudence of the government in both identifying and investigating capital expenditures should be commended. Under investments in communities, we received an A. Under taxation, we received an A — no tax increases for families or businesses. The Yukon currently has some of the lowest corporate rates in the country, which is positive for attracting and retaining business.

Under procurement was our lowest grade and they gave us a C — but they said that the government has recognized it has a problem here and is undertaking to do something about it. Of course we have other categories as well: under training funds, they gave us a B; under housing they gave us a B; and under balanced budget they gave us an A-minus. The chamber is pleased with a budget that does not raise taxes, does not assume any debt, delivers a surplus and includes significant capital expenditures.

Also under developing a private economy, they gave us a B as well, as they said the government explicitly stated the value they see in a vibrant, competitive, local economy. This government is focused on jobs, focused on economy and as I have said —

Speaker: The member's time has elapsed.

Question re: Social inclusion and poverty reduction

Ms. Stick: Thank you, Madam Speaker. In 2012, this government produced their *Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Strategy*. To develop this strategy the government asked representatives of community organizations to serve on its advisory committee. These committee members took time away from their community work to contribute their hard work and expertise to this strategy, hoping it might create positive change for Yukon's marginalized and vulnerable populations. The advisory committee and Yukon community members expected action by this government on the objectives of this strategy.

Madam Speaker, what measurable reductions in poverty and improvements in social inclusion can this government report four years after releasing their strategy?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the member opposite for her question. I certainly thank the former Minister of Health and Social Services for his role in this inclusion report. I would also like to thank those who have participated on the committee and got us to the point in time where we are today.

The *Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Strategy* set a long-term vision for Yukon that focuses on improving the lives of people experiencing social exclusion and poverty today through social policy under a common framework. The strategy goals are to create a social inclusion lens for all policy work in government to reduce the barriers for people, improve access to services, reduce inequities and ensure inclusion. I believe that there has been good work to date. I know that, through several meetings within government and

all departments, certainly this lens is looked through, and I commend the people who are doing the work on the ground.

Ms. Stick: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I still don't hear any results of that. In fact, we have not seen a reduction in poverty; we see increased numbers at the food bank and increased numbers on social assistance. Madam Speaker, time and again this government has asked community organizations to contribute their energy and expertise to the production of strategies and then fail to provide resources necessary to produce the results. The same can be said of the government's long-awaited mental health strategy. Yukoners are asking for a mental health strategy that will recognize the immediate need to fund front-line workers to address mental health issues in communities and increase the number of counsellors available in Whitehorse and communities to address addictions.

Madam Speaker, when will this government deliver mental health services Yukoners have been asking and waiting for?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Thank you, Madam Speaker. This government is particularly proud of the work that has been done over the last several years in the area of mental health. We are proud of the investments we make, not only here in Whitehorse but across the territory. We are also very proud of the relationship that we have forged with the Mental Health Association of Yukon, with Kwanlin Dün, with Council of Yukon First Nations and other First Nations with respect to the mental wellness strategy. I am certainly excited to see the results over the coming year as our partners continue to work together to assess the strategy as it was tabled, understanding that it is a living document and has the ability to change over time as needed.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all of those who worked so many hours to make that mental wellness strategy a reality; we are certainly very much looking forward to the next 10 years seeing that strategy develop and the impacts that it will have on all Yukon communities.

Ms. Stick: Madam Speaker, this government has failed to make the tangible improvements to health and social services that improve people's lives. Our mental health system is in crisis, with patients waiting up to eight months for an assessment. Too many Yukon families and children continue to live below the poverty line, relying on food banks to supplement the food on their table.

Many are the working poor. Too many Yukoners have been left to fall further and further behind. Madam Speaker, this is not good work. Why has this government failed to address these long-standing health and social needs of Yukoners? There have been ways pointed out, but it doesn't seem that this government can act.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the member opposite for her question, although the assertions that she makes are simply incorrect. This government has invested significant dollars — in fact, an additional \$1 million this year — to help with the release of the mental wellness strategy. This government has invested a significant amount

of dollars over the last 10 years for services to persons with disabilities.

Our critics will say that it has been a long time coming, but we had one chance to release this mental wellness strategy; we had one chance to do it right. When you speak to our partners — the Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Council of Yukon First Nations, the Mental Health Association of Yukon — they say that we got it right.

Question re: Hydraulic fracturing

Ms. Moorcroft: Madam Speaker, in 2011, in the very first Sitting of this Legislature, the Yukon NDP raised concerns about this Yukon Party government pursuing an agenda to develop fracking in Yukon. In response to a question, the minister said — and I quote: “The member is absolutely mistaken that the government is entertaining options right now on fracking. It is something that is certainly not a priority action for the government.”

The government hid their agenda then, and they are still hiding it today. They say they will engage openly and honestly with Yukoners, but their refusal to release their oil and gas action plan says otherwise.

When will this government be honest with Yukoners and admit that they are pursuing a fracking industry against the public’s wishes?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I have to take exception with what the member opposite has said. She will recall, obviously, that our government put together a select committee of the Legislature, with equal representation from the government side as well as the opposition side. The Member for Copperbelt South was a member of that committee.

When we responded to the 21 recommendations of the select committee, we announced at that time that we were going to accept all 21 recommendations. We also identified potential actions with each of them. We’re making progress on a number of them, including baseline studies, doing an economic analysis of the shale gas industry, and engaging in further public dialogue.

Madam Speaker, in the April 9, 2015 press release, we also stated that we would be in favour of shale gas development in the Liard Basin. It’s an area that comprises less than two percent of Yukon’s land mass. Of course, the other important caveat to that is that we will not proceed without the support of the affected First Nations.

Ms. Moorcroft: Madam Speaker, the government claims that they are following the recommendations of the select committee on hydraulic fracturing, but a quick review of the facts shows otherwise. The first set of select committee recommendations states that government should be open and engage with Yukoners, have support of Yukon First Nation governments, make all relevant information open and available, and respect the First Nation final agreements.

This government has demonstrated in the past its inability to do any of these things, and it’s no different when it comes to fracking. This government cannot seem to realize that Yukon people don’t want fracking — plain and simple.

Madam Speaker, will this government for once respect the wishes of Yukoners and Yukon First Nation governments, respect the health and integrity of our economy and environment, and drop their ideological pursuit of a fracking industry in Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. In my initial response to the member opposite, I mentioned that we are moving on a number of the select committee recommendations. We have contracted for the economic analysis. There’s advertising right now for a contractor to help us engage in public dialogue. As I mentioned in my initial response, we will of course not proceed with shale gas development without the support of affected First Nations. I certainly believe I answered that in the initial question, yet the member opposite came back with questions to the answers I already provided.

Ms. Moorcroft: Madam Speaker, the Yukon NDP supports the select committee recommendations. For the minister to insinuate his government does too is laughable.

A clear majority of First Nation governments and Yukon citizens who participated in the committee’s activities were opposed to hydraulic fracturing. The minister would know that if he had taken the time to read the report. Yukoners don’t want fracking; Yukon First Nation governments don’t want it; it can’t be proven safe; and even with the Yukon Party government subsidizing the industry, it wouldn’t benefit Yukon financially.

An unwanted, unsafe and uneconomical practice like fracking should not occur here. The Yukon NDP has been clear in our support of a moratorium on fracking in Yukon, and Yukoners want to know where their elected representatives stand. I’ll end with a simple yes-or-no question: Does this Yukon Party government support a moratorium on fracking in Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I’ve referenced on a couple of occasions the April 9, 2015 press release. We clearly stated our position on shale gas development as well as the fact that we’re accepting all 21 recommendations of the Select Committee Regarding the Risks and Benefits of Hydraulic Fracturing.

The member opposite can shout off-mic all she wants. When it comes to whether it’s mining resources or energy, the Yukon NDP are very clear: they support mining and energy development as long as those resources come from somewhere else.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Mr. Elias): Order, please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, in Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*.

Do members wish 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. 23: *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, in Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*. The Chair recognizes the Hon. Ms. Taylor, Member for Whitehorse West. You have nine minutes and 19 seconds remaining.

Department of Tourism and Culture — *continued*

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Mr. Chair, I'm really pleased to be able to stand here in the Assembly once again to speak to this fiscal year's main estimates for the Department of Tourism and Culture. I know there was a lot of great discussion and good debate last time around, and I look forward to fielding any additional questions the members opposite have to provide.

I suppose I would just like to build upon my remarks earlier about the department's mandate, which is to increase tourism revenues and the sustainability of the arts, culture, heritage and tourism sectors. Starting with the Yukon Now marketing program, we were very pleased to be able to contribute to that campaign with the renewal of a three-year funding agreement. We have seen all the six locally filmed television commercials that have gone to market — to national television audiences. The winter commercials aired almost 3,000 times, with some 207 million views. The summer commercials aired over 1,100 times, with some 112 million views.

As I referenced before, there was a pre-survey that was posted prior to placing the respective commercials on the air, in terms of determining what was Canadians' awareness overall of the Yukon as a travel destination. We just concluded a post-survey analysis. I know we are busy compiling that information together, as we speak.

That will also help determine the effect of the placement of those commercials. In addition to the commercials, it also

builds on a number of other initiatives — the user content generated project as well a digital storytelling project.

All three components of this very large marketing initiative are really well-received by industry. We have received accolades from industry time and time again and certainly when we were able to renew the dollars — \$2.7 million over the next three years — we were able to generate continued support by the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon, as well as the Yukon Chamber of Commerce in terms of not only raising the debate, or raising the bar in terms of overall awareness of Yukon as a travel destination, but also boosting visitation to the territory.

We know that from anecdotal evidence in terms of hearing from industry itself. I was very pleased to take part in the recent meeting of the Tourism Marketing Committee and it was very interesting to go around the room, hearing operator after operator in different organizations speaking to how great a season and how great a year it was, in terms of revenue, in terms of visitation last year alone and how the early forecast for this year, 2016, going into 2017, is also looking very positive. In one instance — the Northern Vision Development also attributed that last year was the best year ever in spite of the downturn in the mining industry, really attributing those additional dollars in support of additional marketing awareness of Yukon and how they are so very pleased with the initial results and certainly the people who are coming to the territory.

In terms of museums and the heritage sites — the heritage sector — there is so much to talk about in that sector alone. I just want to say that recently we just celebrated — May 18 was International Museums Day and it was a great opportunity to really celebrate and to recognize the importance that these attractions play in our territory. This year's budget also speaks to another 10-percent increase to the operations budgets for museums and First Nation cultural centres as well as community interpretive centres. This is the second 10-percent increase, making for a total increase of 20 percent over the last two years.

We've seen that budget for museums over the years in terms of boosting overall expenditures in support of museums go up about 300 percent since 2002. This budget, again, speaks to the continued commitment of our government in support of the growth and in support of the sustainability of these living institutions to continue to tell the many stories of our territory.

This budget also speaks to the very important role of the arts. Of course, I would be really remiss — I don't think I had an opportunity to speak to it, but Canada's Magnetic North Theatre Festival coming to the Yukon next month is a great, huge opportunity for the territory to be able to shine and of course we always shine, but the spotlight, literally — we will be on the national and international stage in so many different ways coming up toward the end of June.

I'm really proud of the many productions that continue to be made here in the territory and continue to be toured through the touring artist fund and other arts funding programs that take their works, these important valued works,

nation-wide, but also internationally as well. Canada's Magnetic North, of course, is going to bring all kinds of other productions to the territory for the first time ever to be held north of 60 and we could not be more thrilled to host this very nationally acclaimed festival in our territory.

Likewise, we just recently hosted the annual general meeting of the Canadian Archaeological Association and it was a huge, overwhelming success. I think we had around 350 delegates who were signed up at that particular conference and it was a great opportunity again to speak to the very innovative and award-winning work of our archaeologists, but also those who work overall in the heritage sector, either within First Nation governments or within the Government of Yukon, and other levels and orders of government throughout the country. There was great emphasis on all that we have here in terms of the artifacts that continue to be uncovered, found, promoted and preserved, and to be able to showcase that as part of another attraction that makes our tourism industry robust.

I know that there is a lot to speak to in terms of our government support of these very important and critical sectors in our economy and the many programs and services that we offer, not just within the government or within the Department of Tourism and Culture, but really shared by many of the other departments and agencies housed within the Government of Yukon.

With that said, I look forward to the debate. I want to welcome our officials to the Assembly here today and I thank our department for their continued work and the collaborations and the great partnerships that continue to work with the tourism industry and all sectors at that.

Ms. Hanson: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In an attempt to try to move this forward — and realizing that there are a number of areas — I just have a couple of questions and hopefully we can deal with those questions. I think, by now the House is pretty familiar with the overarching statements by the minister on the Department of Tourism.

I just want to ask a question. The minister referred to the renewal of Yukon Now. I just want to confirm a couple of things. The original ask by the Tourism Industry Association, as I recall, was \$2.5 million a year for two years, at which time — they had asked at the outset — there would be a built-in evaluation of what the ask was for a domestic marketing program of \$2.5 million per year — the response was \$1.8 million. Now we have \$900,000. So we started off with two-thirds of what was originally requested and now we are down to 50 percent of that two-thirds, and the original request was for domestic marketing.

Can the minister tell us — through this incremental whittling away of the domestic marketing program — as it was intended to be domestic marketing — what proportion of the current Yukon Now program is domestic in focus? What evaluation was conducted for the first two years of the program? The announcements that were made with respect to the current year indicate that it is not just domestic in focus. If that is so, why has there been a change, and what would replace it in terms of domestic marketing?

A secondary question I would have — there will be about two questions and that will be it for me for the afternoon for Tourism. In the 2016-17 budget under Tourism and Culture, we see, under Marketing Operations, a budget item of \$6,627,000. That's down from last year by about \$1 million. Could the minister break that spending down? How much of this is for salaries? How much are we actually spending on marketing operations? How much of the \$6 million is directed toward marketing?

As well, it is my understanding — from the material that is provided to the Official Opposition — that Tourism accounts for almost four percent of our total gross domestic product and, we are told, approximately 11 percent of the total number of jobs in the territory. Does the Department of Tourism and Culture independently — or in collaboration with the Department of Economic Development — conduct studies on the economic multiplier effects of the tourism industry? Are those studies available? If we are not doing them, why isn't the Department of Tourism and Culture doing some assessment of the economic multiplier effect of the tourism dollar in the Yukon so that we can then begin to target where we would like to see those expenditures?

I just want to see, Mr. Chair, if there are any other elements. I am mindful that there are other members with questions and we have a very short time to move through the balance of the budget areas. I think that will do it.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I would like to thank the member opposite for the questions. Getting back to Yukon Now — we were pleased to be able to carry forward with our share of the investments made for Yukon Now. It really builds on the momentum of the successful first investment made in support of the Yukon Now marketing campaign.

On March 29 of this year, we issued a news release and held a press event — actually over at the visitor information centre here in Whitehorse — in which we announced that we are committing a further \$2.7 million over the next three years to continue to promote Yukon as a year-round travel destination. When you break that down, it makes \$900,000 annually, as the member opposite referred to, and is part of the budget that we are currently debating.

As I mentioned the other day during budget debate on this department, we are also actively and avidly seeking a continued equal investment from the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, otherwise known as CanNor. CanNor and Yukon government each invested \$1.8 million over two years, back in 2014, for a total of \$3.6 million. That joint initiative marked the largest investment in tourism in the history of our department.

As I referred to earlier, the investments of the \$3.6 million all told were primarily in support of the domestic market because we have seen the significant growth in that particular market over the years. I attribute that directly to a number of different factors, but Air North, Yukon's airline — we paid tribute to it the other day — has really opened up many of our key gateway markets — the cities of Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton and now into Ottawa, in the greater Toronto region, and even areas of Kelowna, not to mention

the rest of the territory. Air North, through a number of different tourism cooperative marketing activities and being a great partner with Yukon government on many different fronts, we have been able to really grow that market share.

When the original ask came from the tourism sector, it was really to dedicate dollars in support of the domestic market. There was, however, impetus to not only invest in the Canadian market but also to enhance other markets. I referenced other investments, whether it was overseas in Asia in terms of the tourism mission through which we were able to bring over some 12 different tourism-related businesses, including Air North, Yukon's airline, and Driving Force, the Westmark, Northern Vision Development and many others. It was a great opportunity for us to be able to really again enhance that awareness in Asia, specifically in China and in Japan. We've seen increase in air access because of that additional connectivity with additional flights coming in — one of which was a direct flight from Osaka coming into Vancouver. That was a direct flight, which enabled us to get into the Yukon for the first time in many years — same-day travel from Japan into the Yukon without having to overnight anywhere. All of this makes Yukon a very attractive destination — relatively accessible, relatively affordable and obviously a very high-quality, high-end, high-yield destination for many overseas visitors.

Dollars have gone into a number of other international markets in addition to the domestic market, but the lion's share of the dollars that were allocated to the initial portion of Yukon Now is toward the development of the television commercials that were locally designed and developed in the territory. The six commercials that we've seen playing out on specialty and national networks, as I've mentioned, have been really key in raising awareness of the territory as a great tourism destination. I think all of us, as Yukoners, can agree that these are quality products and that they will be used in play for many years to come.

I cannot say enough about the 165 Yukoners who contributed to the development of those commercials and the 50-plus different local businesses that also played a role in ensuring that these commercials were also great quality products for use. But it wasn't only the commercials themselves — it was the photography; the B-roll; the many different products that we were able to glean from the making of those commercials — and to build that into the travelyukon.com website and into all of our print materials and into a whole suite of different materials that we use to market Yukon. To be able to integrate the same look and feel, and sharing that with the tourism industry, the business community here in the territory — again, so that the more that we market, the more look and feel that we have.

I also wanted to just mention that we know that when we issued that news announcement back in March — according to the chair of the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon, his quote was that Yukon Now is taking Yukon to a new level of promotion as a destination for Canadians.

We're pleased the Yukon government is continuing to invest in this precedent-setting marketing program for the

benefit of the tourism industry and all Yukoners. Likewise, the Yukon Chamber of Commerce chair, at the same time, also said this is great news for tourism businesses and for Yukon's economy. We believe the enhanced funding has been important in supporting the tourism industry at a critical time for the Yukon economy and hope to see these levels of marketing support continue for many years to come.

Since that announcement, we also have received accolades from the Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon. They issued a news release back on April 5: "The Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon applauds the Government of Yukon for its announced financial support and commitment to the tourism industry as a whole with this additional funding for the "Yukon Now" campaign. Tourism is a key element of the Yukon economic engine and with the added funding; this important marketing campaign will continue to demonstrate its success."

We have also heard from the executive director of TIAY, who says the campaign has had a big impact on visitor travel from Canada. According to the executive director, there are a number of different indicators that speak to this, from the use of campgrounds by non-resident campers, visits to historic sites and visits to our national parks.

Looking to the future — to this year and into next year — we're really optimistic that this year will be a very strong year. With relatively low fuel prices at this time and the exchange rate the way it is — the low Canadian dollar — we see there is tremendous opportunity. We also see great opportunities with Canada's 150th anniversary coming up next year, as well as the Alaska Highway 75th anniversary next year.

In terms of other key markets, I mentioned the United States — which is very key for all of us, especially when Americans are looking our way for an affordable but also quality destination. That's why we continue to work with the State of Alaska, and we also continue to work on a number of different partnerships in support of the US market, attracting individuals to come here for longer and to stay, whether that's through working through the Tourism North partnership or working with the State of Alaska partnership.

Everything that we do is in partnership with the private and public sectors, with First Nations and organizations, to develop and implement our strategic tourism marketing product development, research strategies and programs that grow tourism revenues. We do have a marketing plan — a tourism plan — that is issued each and every year. I know we're just working on the final touches and we've been working with industry on that to finalize the marketing plan for this fiscal year coming up. We'll continue to work in partnership to determine those markets that are in play — whether or not the return on investment is sufficient to continue to invest in those markets — where there are great opportunities for growth — and whether there are weaker opportunities where we need to reallocate funds, and so forth.

Again, as I mentioned to the question of the Yukon Now funding and the leverage from the federal government, I know that the Premier, the Minister of Economic Development and I

have all raised at many different times with various federal ministers the importance of this continued investment in this marketing program called Yukon Now. We know the application is currently with CanNor. We are waiting optimistically, but as the Premier did state in his Budget Address on the very first day of this Spring Sitting had said, should the federal government not meet that need, we will. In fact, this initiative is too important to our economic future for us to ignore. So it is very clear that we will, in fact, do our part, but we also feel that there is great opportunity and certainly some of the initial signals coming from the Government of Canada look very positive in terms of the outcome of our application. We currently wait to hear the formal word about that.

In terms of going forward in terms of the actual marketing budget that I believe the member opposite had referred to, the marketing budget — when it comes to Yukon Now, I don't have the specific breakdown, but I can say that there are no additional FTEs that were hired or any project managers as I understand to administer the Yukon Now program. In fact, it has all been done in-house with existing personnel; that is to say that those dollars are now going to be put to use in terms of getting those commercials out into the marketplace earlier and for a longer period of time into the seasons, both getting ready for the winter market coming up as well as next year. These extra dollars are going to enable us — because we don't have to spend on new commercials there will be even more dollars allocated to the domestic market to get that message out and that is in fact what industry has told us all along.

Dollars will continue to be allocated primarily in the domestic market. Dollars will also continue to be allocated in the US, European and Asian markets as well — all key primary markets for the Yukon, as identified within our marketing plan or the tourism plan overall, and so we certainly look forward to the outcome.

Again, I just want to thank our many officials who work diligently each and every day of the year to really promote all that we have and the close working relationship that they're able to also garner with industry. I've often said that all of our efforts whether it has been implementing, developing or evaluating have to be with industry, in partnership with industry, and that is, in fact, what continues to guide our efforts and the work of the tourism industry.

Perhaps I'll just leave it at that and certainly thank the member opposite.

Ms. Hanson: Well, 14 years, you get a lot of habits — it's kind of hard to break. You ask a question and you get a riff for 15 minutes on one aspect. The questions that I asked — and I guess I'll leave them. For the record, there was no answer with respect to the request for the breakdown for spending on marketing operations. There was no answer as to how much we're actually spending on marketing of products or how much of the marketing budget was on salaries; nor was there an answer to the question with respect to the importance of understanding and studying the economic multiplier effects of the tourism industry.

Seeing that it's probably fruitless to pursue the questioning, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 54, the Department of Tourism and Culture, cleared or carried, as required.

Chair: Is there any further general debate on Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture?

Seeing none, we will move to line-by-line consideration of the department.

Ms. Hanson: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 54, the Department of Tourism and Culture, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 54, Tourism and Culture, cleared or carried

Chair: Ms. Hanson has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, 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 \$25,622,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$7,916,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$33,538,000

Department of Tourism and Culture agreed to

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 8, Department of Justice, in Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*.

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 Vote 8, Department of Justice, in Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*.

The Chair recognizes the Hon. Mr. Cathers. You have four minutes and 41 seconds remaining, sir.

Department of Justice — continued

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Thank you, Mr. Chair. First of all, in beginning, since we are currently on the last sitting day of this current Sitting of the Legislative Assembly and likely will not have another Sitting prior to the election, I would like to just take a moment to thank my constituents for the opportunity to serve as their MLA during the three terms that I have been elected. I would like to as well thank my caucus

colleagues, both in the current caucus and in the prior two terms, for their support and the opportunity to work with them. I would like to thank the staff of the Department of Justice for their assistance during my time as their minister as well as to thank the staff of all of the previous departments where I have served as minister for their service during that time and their continuing service on behalf of Yukoners. I would like to thank the corporations that I have been minister responsible for, both the staff and the boards of the corporations, including Yukon Development Corporation and Yukon Energy Corporation — the corporations for which I am currently responsible. I would be remiss if I did not thank the Legislative Assembly staff for all of their ongoing work in supporting us through the years, and acknowledge Rudy Couture on his announced retirement and thank him for his service as Sergeant-at-Arms. Last, but not least, I would like to thank all of the staff at Hansard for putting up with me over the time that I have been here in this Legislative Assembly.

With that, I would just note that the Member for Copperbelt South and I were debating Justice yesterday. I had answered a number of her questions. I may have missed something, but I am sure that she will remind me of that. I look forward to hearing further questions from the members opposite.

Ms. Moorcroft: I would like to welcome the officials and thank them for being here today to contribute to the deliberations this afternoon. Yesterday, I did put all of my remaining questions on the record for the minister to respond to, and I got a partial and incomplete response to a number of them.

One matter that I want to follow up on is the document that was tabled today in the Legislative Assembly. The Minister of Health and Social Services tabled what is called *Yukon FASD Diagnosis and Case Management in Adult Corrections Population Final Report*. The date is June 2015 — for the Public Health Agency of Canada. When we heard the minister tabling the report, I was anticipating that it might be a report on the preliminary findings from the Yukon FASD prevalence study, understanding the cognitive and mental health needs of adult offenders in Yukon. I was quite disappointed that the report tabled today is actually exactly the very same report that was released on the Government of Yukon website in June 2015. It is a 19-page report with very preliminary information. That report left out a key element of what should be an outcome of this research, and that is case management. The report is all about building teams to be able to do assessments. It's about assessments and prevalence, but what we are looking for is where the supports are for people who are in custody and for people who are leaving custody.

We know they need supports; we've known this for a long time. We know that, when people leave the correctional facility, they are returned to communities without planning, without proper support for housing and being able to thrive and succeed in their communities.

Mr. Chair, in April 7 to 9 of 2016, the 7th National Biennial Conference on Adolescents and Adults with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder was held in Vancouver. One of

the presentations at that conference is titled "Preliminary Findings from the Yukon FASD Prevalence Study". The syllabus for the conference reads — and I quote: "This session will present preliminary findings from research estimating the prevalence of FASD among offenders in Yukon Corrections. Rates of cognitive impairment, mental health, and substance abuse were also assessed. Additional objectives included the validation of FASD screening tools for adult offenders and local capacity development in Yukon. Ethical challenges encountered during the course of this project will be highlighted, along with solutions developed to minimize risk of harm to participants and their families, and maximize individual and community benefit from participation in the study."

One of the learning objectives, aside from reviewing the prevalence of FASD, was to understand screening rates of mental health and substance abuse problems among the study participants. We have called before in this Assembly for the minister to provide us with those preliminary findings. The minister has not yet released that information.

Is the minister able to give us some information on what the prevalence of neurocognitive deficits and the screening rates of mental health and substance use problems are among the study participants?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: First of all — in speaking to the specific question asked by the Member for Copperbelt South — as far as the numbers from the FASD prevalence study that was done at Whitehorse Correctional Centre, the report that was tabled today by my colleague, the Minister of Health and Social Services, was one that I don't believe had been previously tabled in this Assembly. I did, I believe, mention to the Official Opposition House Leader this morning that I thought they would already have seen a copy of this report and that I believed I had actually provided that to them earlier. Perhaps — as I understand the last day is a busy day — that information may not have been passed to the Member for Copperbelt South, although obviously she has gleaned the same herself from looking at the document tabled. It was tabled just to have it as a House document on record.

But as far as the FASD prevalence study itself, the minister is not able to release preliminary results because the minister has also not seen the preliminary results. In fact, the information that has been discussed in this Assembly is the extent of my knowledge of the details of the content of that study.

It is true that during the recent biennial FASD conference for adults and youth the study team presented both the hard data on the prevalence, which was reported in the news release as being 17.5 percent and will not change — that is 17.5 percent of the study group at FASD were diagnosed with FASD. The team, I understand, also presented some related but qualified data, which is still subject to review and data confirmation. Statistics gathered as part of the FASD prevalence study must be carefully presented with the appropriate context so that they cannot be misconstrued and so that the data is not used to prove assumptions that may not be correct.

The Department of Justice, under direction from the Yukon government, conducted this study to the highest ethical standards and enlisted the support of the University of British Columbia to support it in that endeavour. Every detail of the study has to pass the highest ethical standards, pursuant to our agreement with UBC, including how the data was to be released. Even our recent press released had to be reviewed by the UBC representatives prior to release, pursuant to our agreement with the UBC researchers, in exchange for their participation and assistance with this report.

To put it into perspective, Correctional Service Canada also found in an FASD prevalent study that they conducted that 70 percent of their inmates had central nervous system deficits. What it should be noted, again, is that the numbers from the prevalence study are 17.5 percent. While that does not mean that other people who have cognitive deficits might not have FASD, as members should be aware, the diagnosis cannot be made unless there is confirmation that alcohol was consumed by the mother during pregnancy, but it would also be incorrect and irresponsible to conclude that everyone who had a cognitive deficit must have FASD in the absence of the information that alcohol was present.

Again, that is why, in the supports that are provided to inmates at Whitehorse Correctional Centre and afterwards, there is a focus not just on whether they have FASD, but also on what the appropriate and required care is for those specific inmates and work done on identifying the specific needs of those offenders and their care both at WCC and post-WCC. As I alluded to, there is a client-centred model of case management for inmates with cognitive and mental health issues in place at WCC. All inmates are provided with medical and mental health assessments upon intake. When the assessments are completed by medical staff, referrals are made to manage the needs of that particular inmate. Any identification of mental health problems is then referred to the manager of Health Services and the physician who we have on contract at WCC to make their professional judgment about what specific care is required.

Services for inmates with complex needs include physician assessments, psychiatric assessments and care, psychological assessments and care, one-on-one counselling, and integrated case management practices target interventions based on individual's needs, including referrals to and collaboration with other services, including after-care at Whitehorse Correctional Centre — for example, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Society Yukon and Health and Social Services.

As fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and cognitive impairments are lifelong problems, Whitehorse Correctional Centre's focus is to understand the needs of the inmates, provide them with the services that are available as needed; ensure their safety and work collaboratively with other service providers to facilitate a successful transition to the community where they can get the care they need.

Corrections are also working toward a stronger protocol with Health and Social Services for collaborative planning and coordinated transition of clients with complex needs from the corrections system to voluntary community-based social

services; but it should also be noted that for after-care — when members bring up concerns about after-care, one of the things that will probably always be a challenge for offenders post-incarceration is that unless they have court-ordered treatment, the services that are provided are voluntary. If they choose not to access those services, or choose not to participate in programs — whether it be mental health supports or addictions programming or voluntary services, such as supports from Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon — if they choose not to use the resources that are available to them — which can be a challenge — then it is difficult to ensure that they receive the support and the chances of re-offending, unfortunately, are also increased because we can't force someone to take a program unless they've been court-ordered to do so.

While I would acknowledge that there is room for improvement, which we are focused on doing in the supports we provide — both in Whitehorse Correctional Centre and after-care — the significant improvements that have been made within the past several years in enhancing services for persons with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder should be noted. That includes support for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon provided by the Yukon government now in — I don't recall the exact number, but I know it's in the six figures and it was substantially increased from what we previously provided. I know that in one year alone, we announced a \$200,000 increase to make up for federal funding that had been removed from that program.

We've also pioneered in cooperation with other NGOs, such as Options for Independence, for increased supports for persons who have fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. Again, while recognizing that there is more that can be done, it should be noted that there have been substantial steps taken in these areas. The implementation of our five-step FASD action plan in cooperation with our partners — including those that I mentioned and others such as the Child Development Centre — have gone a long way to improving the services that are available to Yukoners compared to what they were 14 years ago.

Again, Mr. Chair, I hope that has provided information for the member opposite. I should note once again that in the area of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, the Yukon, as part of the Canada Northwest FASD Partnership, is recognized and acknowledged by the other members of that partnership, which includes the three territories and the provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. We are recognized within that group and outside it for the leadership that the Yukon government has taken.

While noting that other partners within that are also doing a great job in improving the supports and sharing information from studies with the seven partners in the Canada Northwest FASD Partnership, I should add the fact that the work that all seven jurisdictions are doing is being noted within Canada, within North America and around the world. In the area of our Community Wellness Court, as I believe I have previously mentioned, the success of that model and the good work that is being done by staff there has led to not only other Canadian

jurisdictions coming here to learn more about the success of that program, but has led to jurisdictions from outside Canada coming to learn from the success of that program and to consider implementing it in their jurisdictions.

I would like to thank the officials — I realized now I did not actually introduce them. I would like to thank Tom Ullyett and Dan Cable for joining me here today and also for providing me with the information that I did not have off of the top of my head regarding the funding for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon. The Department of Health and Social Services provides over half a million dollars to Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon, \$520,000 in annual funding to provide client outreach and support — that is growing. If memory serves, I believe the funding in the 2005-06 fiscal year — before we provided the increase I referred to — was \$168,000 from the Yukon government — so a dramatic increase in the funding provided since that time.

Health and Social Services also funds housing for persons with FASD through the non-government organization of Options for Independence. They are supported with a contribution that was \$554,000 in the 2014-15 fiscal year and was increased in the 2015-16 fiscal year to \$628,000. Additionally \$3 million was awarded to Options for Independence Society by Yukon Housing Corporation and Canada's affordable housing initiative to provide 14 new housing units for clients with FASD. In Whitehorse, that facility opened in February 2014.

I missed mentioning one of our partners in addressing needs of persons with FASD. I apologize to them for missing them earlier — the work that is done by Challenge Community Vocational Alternatives. They are provided with \$596,000 annually to provide employment services for people with disabilities, including adults with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. I am sure the Member for Copperbelt South and other members would join me in recognizing and acknowledging the great job that they do in helping to develop life skills and work skills for clients, including Yukoners who have fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. They do a really good job, in my opinion, of helping people to get the opportunity to develop those skills that can lead them to future employment opportunities.

I should also note that Health and Social Services, Justice, Education and the Child Development Centre participate in staff training on fetal alcohol spectrum disorder that is provided by Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon and Yukon College. Health and Social Services has also sponsored integrated case management training. There is funding that the Department of Health and Social Services is receiving this year in the amount \$260,000 from Health Canada for staff training related to FASD over a three-year period starting in the 2015-16 fiscal year and ending in 2017-18. Training this fiscal year will support the adult diagnostic team.

I hope that has provided some information for the member that helps provide a clearer picture of the supports that are provided to Yukoners who have fetal spectrum disorder in Whitehorse Correctional Centre as well as the supports that are available to them and to other Yukoners who

have FASD when they are within the Yukon community and are not under a court order or under any court sentence to engage in any manner in any treatment, community participation and so on.

I think that should be a quick summary of the supports for persons with FASD. I'm sure I've missed something because truly there has been great work done by the departments involved in this, primarily led by the Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Justice, but also with involvement from other departments including the Department of Education.

I missed mentioning as well the work done by the Northern Institute of Social Justice at Yukon College for training with front-line service providers.

Certainly there are many across the community that provide the support and also include — I missed mentioning earlier — the work that is done by Many Rivers Counselling and Support Services to provide those services to Yukoners.

Chair: Is there any further general debate in Vote 8, Department of Justice?

We'll move to line-by-line debate.

Ms. Moorcroft: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 8, Department of Justice, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 8, Department of Justice, cleared or carried

Chair: Ms. Moorcroft has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 8, Department of Justice, cleared or carried, as required. Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures
Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$68,012,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$1,852,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$69,864,000 agreed to

Department of Justice agreed to

Chair: Order, please. The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 53, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, in Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*.

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. The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Vote 53, Department of

Energy, Mines and Resources, in Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*.

The Chair recognizes Mr. Tredger, Member for Mayo-Tatchun. You have 13 minutes and 11 seconds remaining, sir.

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources — continued

Mr. Tredger: I welcome back the officials. I thank them for coming in today and helping us to get through the last day. I would like to thank them. I appreciated the briefings and the input they've had and the work they've done for the department. Thank you very much. It has been a pleasure working with you.

When we were last in debate, I was asking questions about the proposed Mayo subdivision. I know that there was a meeting last night with YESAB. In addition to what I had asked at that time, I would say that I appreciate the efforts to put this subdivision forward. There is a need for land development in the community, or within the area. The agricultural land, in particular, is known to be good agricultural land, and one of the purposes of making land available is for new farmers and for people to get a chance.

I am wondering what the anticipated costs for each of the lots would be? Are there any caveats or expectations put on agricultural land? I know we have seen some agricultural land being developed for a year a two and then it sits fallow or it is subdivided and used otherwise. Is there any expectation that the land is to be used for agricultural purposes over the next 10 years? What is the anticipated cost of that? Have there been any new developments — I assume that the ministry has been working with local citizens, the village and the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun. There was concern about the ski trails, and I know a couple of proposals were going around. Can the minister give us an update on that — whether or not the YESAA application has been modified to accommodate the ski trails and the recreational areas or where we are at?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Just before I answer the member's questions with respect to the Mayo rural residential and agricultural land developments, I would like to also welcome Shirley Abercrombie and Lyle Henderson, who are here from Energy, Mines and Resources to provide support to me here on the last day of this Spring Sitting and the last day of the 33rd Legislative Assembly.

With that in mind, I would also like to thank my constituents in Riverdale North for their advice and support over the past five years. It has been a pleasure representing them and their interests in the Legislature. It is a fantastic neighbourhood and riding, and I have very much enjoyed my time, not only representing the constituents there, but living there. Not only is it our last day of the Sitting, but it is my last day of living in Riverdale as well. My family and I are relocating to a different part of the Yukon — a great spot out at Marsh Lake — and we are looking forward to that. Riverdale has been my home for most of my life in the Yukon, and I have enjoyed it very much. I know that Shirley and Lyle both live there as well and they can attest to what a

great neighbourhood Riverdale is and what a great part of the City of Whitehorse it is.

I would also like to take some time to thank officials in the departments that I have been Cabinet minister for over the past five years, starting out with Education and the Yukon Housing Corporation. I appreciated all the help and support from the officials of those two departments.

Moving on to the Yukon Development Corporation and the Yukon Energy Corporation for a while as well — again some exciting times and initiatives in all three of those portfolios that I used to have.

Current portfolios I hold — Energy, Mines and Resources, and Highways and Public Works. I would like to thank both deputies — the current deputies and past deputies whom I have worked with — as well as senior officials in those departments — for all of their help, support, advice and counsel over the past number of years. It has been much appreciated and I certainly wouldn't have been able to do this job without all the help from everybody who works in both of those department — so a big "thank you" to all the officials I have had the privilege and pleasure and honour of working with over the past number of years.

I would also like to thank the folks who work around the legislative chambers as well — the individuals in Hansard, the security personnel who keep us safe in this Chamber, the Table Officers who provide assistance to you as Chair and the Speaker, the staff in the Legislative Assembly Office, and, of course, Rudy Couture, the Sergeant-at-Arms who we know is retiring after today's Sitting.

I get to sit closest to Rudy every day here for the last five years. We've had some good conversations and some good times in the Legislature here, so I would like to thank Rudy for his years of service and I wish him well in his future endeavours. He too is a resident of Riverdale, so there are lots of Riverdale connections in here. Congratulations Rudy and good luck.

To the Mayo residential issue that the member opposite raised, I will just provide a little bit of background and then a bit of an update on what has happened. This joint land development project between the Land Management and Agriculture branches will create five agriculture — initially, it was set to create five agriculture and 19 rural residential parcels on land that is about five kilometres beyond the Village of Mayo municipal boundary. A large portion of the project area is located on former private land purchased by the Yukon government as part of the Mayo B hydro project.

In accordance with the Energy, Mines and Resources and the Village of Mayo *Land Development Protocol*, we have worked closely with the village administration and mayor and council to come to an agreement on a final design concept for the development. There were, for the member opposite, three public meetings that were hosted by the Village of Mayo prior to this submission in council chambers with EMR officials in attendance at the time. I believe one of the councillors was at the public meeting last night and referenced those public meetings that were advertised on the Village of Mayo website as part of the process that they undergo.

The First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun continues to be offered opportunities for input and has been kept updated on the progress of the project. It was submitted to the YESAB Mayo designated office, or DO, on April 18, 2016 for assessment. The project submission was deemed adequate and I believe it is currently in the seeking-views phase.

As the member opposite referenced, the YESAB Mayo district designated office held a public information session last evening, on May 25, which enabled YG to commit to relocating a portion of the ski trails impacted by the development. I understand that officials from EMR and representatives of the local cross-country ski group were able to do a site visit as well. A map will be produced by EMR for YESAB that will show the new routing based on the input received. We will be sending in an amended plan to YESAB tomorrow. The procurement to support construction is currently scheduled for July 2016. Of course, that is contingent on the successful completion of the environmental assessment process. Costs for the lots — they will be market value for the rural residential lots so estimates at this time will be in the high-\$20,000 range. With respect to the agricultural lots, there is a normal process that the pricing for those lots will go through. I think it's set by a third party. There's an independent third party that sets the prices for the agricultural lots.

I thank the member opposite for raising this and thank officials for providing the response, as well as hopefully reaching a solution with the cross-country skiers in Mayo that will allow the project to proceed with minimal or no impact on their ski trails.

Mr. Tredger: I thank the officials and the minister for responding to the concerns of the Mayo residents. I just had a couple of parts around the agricultural land cost. Is there going to be consideration given to first-time farmers or new farmers? The price will be set, if I understand what the minister said, by an independent party, but one of the goals of the Yukon Agricultural Association and of Energy, Mines and Resources' Agriculture Branch is to involve first-time farmers. Is there some type of financial assistance or ability for people who do not have the required amount to enter into that?

The second part of my question was: Are there any caveats or expectations on the use of the land? As we have seen in some other instances, land has been subdivided after it has been purchased as agricultural land. The other aspect of that is that sometimes land sits fallow and essentially becomes a large country-residential package rather than a place that is used for farming. I know of lots that have been used for one, two or three years and then are allowed to go back to fallow — and I am not sure how. I think the Agriculture branch has looked at how to police that, or how to ensure that it is used. I am wondering if the minister can give us an update on that.

Hon. Mr. Kent: I know my colleague, the Member for Lake Laberge and the Minister of Justice tabled the local food strategy here for us in this Legislature a couple of weeks ago, and members who have had the opportunity to review it will see in there that there are opportunities to look at different

ways to offer land to, especially, young farmers. There are opportunities, of course, to lease — that is one of the options that we are taking a look at in broad terms with respect to the local food strategy — but also opportunities — we will be applying to this particular land. While no decisions have been made yet, that is something that has been raised by the agricultural community here for the past number of years — the affordability of agricultural land. I know that at a North of 60 Agriculture Conference — I don't believe it was this past year, and it might have been the year before — there was a gentleman here from Alberta Agriculture who spoke of leasing options and how they structure their land tenure in Alberta. We are borrowing from best practices in other jurisdictions and we will try to find something that works here in the Yukon. While no determination has been made yet, we are looking at this as a potential to have some of the agricultural property there leased.

As far as restrictions, there will be a prohibition on subdivision. The land will be subject to the terms and conditions of our agricultural policy. There is, as part of that, a seven-year farm development agreement, so the farm will have to be developed to its full extent — that is my understanding — within seven years of purchase. Those are the restrictions that we are looking at for this property.

Mr. Tredger: While we're talking agriculture, could the minister give us an update on where the regulations for genetically modified organisms are? A number of years ago, they undertook to come up with regulations. Have those regulations been brought out? Are they in effect now?

Hon. Mr. Kent: In previous times discussing this, I used to note that genetically modified alfalfa, which is the crop that would potentially be used up here, was not available for sale in Canada. However, that has changed recently with the news of GMO alfalfa seed sales in eastern Canada. This is something that's currently being discussed by provincial and territorial governments — to consider the potential impacts on alfalfa seed producers, as well as certified organic farmers in all parts of the country. It's those certified organic farmers here in the Yukon, the members of GOOFY, who are particularly interested in this file.

The Agriculture branch is participating in the dialogue with our provincial, territorial and federal counterparts to evaluate potential impacts and respond to input by organic farming organizations. The coexistence between genetically modified and non-genetically modified alfalfa is unrealistic. We're committed to evaluating the information that we receive from this research and working together with local stakeholders — I mentioned the Growers of Organic Food Yukon, or GOOFY, the Yukon Agricultural Association, as well as the Agriculture Industry Advisory Committee, which brings everyone together at a common table to discuss these types of issues and files.

There are upcoming meetings this summer — in July, I believe, in Calgary — of federal, provincial and territorial agriculture ministers, and I understand that this issue is on the agenda for discussion at those. We will have a better opportunity to report back to Yukoners and members of the

agriculture community on a path forward on completion of those meetings later this summer.

Mr. Tredger: As of now, what the minister is saying is there are no regulations for genetically modified organisms in the Yukon. At one point, I know they were developing some regulations. Are those regulations in effect or not? Or are we still waiting for some?

Hon. Mr. Kent: We are keeping the Agriculture Industry Advisory Committee updated on a regular basis on this and other issues. I attended a recent meeting of that group and this was one of the topics for discussion on the agenda.

There are no regulations over and above zoning regulations with respect to this type of activity, but again, it's my understanding from officials that there are no regulations anywhere in Canada. This was under federal jurisdiction, so we'll be having these discussions with the federal minister and provincial and territorial colleagues later on this summer in Calgary.

Mr. Tredger: One other piece of unfinished business — earlier in this Session, I asked the minister a question regarding off-road vehicles and he said that he was expediting the process because of the early spring to make a decision before summer — I assumed — from his question on the protection of sensitive areas. As the minister is aware, there have been a number of areas identified by both RRCs as well as the Trails Only Yukon Association that there is considerable environmental damage and potential for more in these sensitive areas.

When I asked the minister last year, he said he was looking into it. We did pass legislation that gave the minister authority to potentially protect sensitive areas by closing them. When I asked him, I believe it was April 12, a question about it, he said that his department was expediting a response and that something should be in place shortly.

Have any areas been closed to ORVs? Is the minister still thinking about it or contemplating it? What will it take for the minister to exercise his authority?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Certainly one of the things that has become increasingly apparent to me, while dealing with this particular file, is that there is certainly a large number of issues and concerns that we need to consider. To that end, we have been engaged in discussions with the Department of Environment and officials there on the areas that were identified — not only by Trails Only Yukon Association, but we've also had comments and discussions from the Yukon Outfitters Association as well as renewable resources councils.

There are a couple of things we need to be careful of. We need a solution that will apply to all Yukon citizens. We can't have a set of rules for First Nation citizens and a separate set of rules for non-First Nation residents. We need something that will work across the board. Again, to that end though, one of the areas that was identified — we did conduct a field inspection. I think it was last week — yes, last week — with Environment officials, so we're continuing to look for solutions on this and I appreciate the patience of individuals in the Legislature with respect to this.

As I said, it's something that we're taking very seriously, but we want to make sure that we get it right and, as I mentioned, have a solution that will apply and work for all Yukon residents when we come up with one.

Mr. Tredger: It was in March of 2011 that the select committee on off-road vehicles reported to the House. This has been an issue probably for 35 or 40 years. By not addressing it, the damage is easily seen from the air. It's certainly happening in many jurisdictions; in fact, just yesterday when I was in Minto talking to the Northern Tutchone people, they mentioned the incursion and the increasing amount of incursion into areas further and further off the main roads. The damage is happening and the damage continues to happen. We've had years — every Legislature here unanimously agreed with the select committee's report. We all answered a questionnaire saying we were going to do something. Another five years have passed.

I guess one of my concerns is that, by doing nothing, what is going to happen is what happened in Alberta where large areas of the land were closed because the damage was done and the only way to deal with it was to shut down many of those areas. Increasingly, I am seeing ORVs from Alberta coming up here because the areas down there are closed. The damage is happening. I am not sure what the minister needs to see to see that the damage is happening and a lot of it is irreversible. I know that there are a lot of sides to this story, but somewhere we need the leadership to make a decision that the land is of importance and move on it.

As the minister said last time, he has asked the department to expedite the work on whether or not we can proceed with these temporary closures. Is the minister saying that there is no need for the temporary closures? Is the minister saying that he is still looking at temporary closures? Is the minister saying he is going to wait for the next government to deal with the temporary closures?

Hon. Mr. Kent: I guess maybe we should just take a look back here at what has been accomplished, not only by this current Legislature, but the previous one. I will step back to the previous Legislative Assembly — the 32nd Legislature. The member opposite did reference the date that the select committee reported. It was March 2011, which was prior to the fall election of that year — so it was the previous members of this House — and some current members — who participated in this process.

The Select Committee on the Safe Operation and Use of Off-road Vehicles, or ORVs, released a report in March 2011, which contained 14 recommendations related to the safe operation of ORVs, the protection of the environment from damage caused by ORVs and the need for efficient and effective regulation and enforcement. The committee process involved extensive consultation from August to October in 2010. It included six public meetings in the communities, meetings upon request, over 2,000 opinion surveys and 25 written submissions. I believe it was my colleague, the Minister of Justice, the Member for Lake Laberge, who was on that committee, who mentioned to me that this was one of — if not the highest — response rates on any public

consultation or committee work that has been undertaken by this Legislative Assembly.

Since the tabling of the committee report, organizations and individuals have asked Yukon government to take action on the report's recommendations. Most significantly, the Trails Only Yukon Association is advocating for management of trail networks in sensitive areas to address concerns directly related to recommendation 14. I remember it well; we did make an amendment to the *Territorial Lands (Yukon) Act* in the fall of 2013. It was the first Sitting that I had as Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources during this current Legislature. Those amendments enabled development of regulations to specifically address recommendation 14. Other recommendations are being addressed through various program initiatives and policies as well as the potential for legislative changes.

Fast-forward to the spring of 2015 — the Yukon government completed a 60-day targeted engagement that ran from April 24, 2015 to June 22, 2015 on the policy elements that were considered in developing the act amendments. Letters and a background information document were sent to Yukon First Nations, renewable resources councils and conservation and industry organizations. Consultation was extended to September 30, 2015, at the request of and for First Nation renewable resources councils and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board.

The discussion paper proposed tools to manage ORV use on a complaint-driven basis, or through an area-specific planning process, and received a strong response from many of the respondents. Once the regulations are drafted, First Nations will have an opportunity to provide feedback on the regulations before they are finalized. I believe that offer has been extended to them for early in the fall — early September, I believe.

Renewable resources councils, along with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, have requested the opportunity to review the draft regulations as well.

That gives a bit of a history on how we got to where we are and what some of the immediate steps that will be taken are. To the member's question about temporary withdrawals, or interim withdrawals, as I mentioned in my earlier response, we're not saying no to interim withdrawals. In fact, we're working closely with colleagues at the Department of Environment. The Minister of Environment and I are very engaged on this file.

As I mentioned in my earlier response, we do need a solution that will apply to all Yukon citizens. We can't do temporary closures for non-First Nations while First Nations are still able to access that area with ORVs, so we're trying to come up with a balance that will work.

As I mentioned, we have received inquiries from TOYA and the Yukon Outfitters Association. There have been field inspections underway in some of the recommended closure areas that have been brought forward by these organizations, as well as the Lake Laberge RRC.

Of course we're not saying "no"; it's just taking more time than I had hoped and the member opposite had hoped it

would, but we want to make sure that we get this right so that, going forward, we can make sound decisions with respect to temporary closures and the broader trail management actions that we had contemplated through this work.

Again, perhaps the member opposite doesn't agree with me, but I think our current Legislative Assembly over the past number of years has made significant progress on this issue, more so than has been made in the past by past legislatures, as the member opposite referenced. As I mentioned, it's obviously not as quick as he would have liked, but again, we're working interdepartmentally and with the stakeholders to make sure that we get this right.

Mr. Tredger: I'm pleased that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources is working with the Minister of Environment on this. The damage being done is not to me, but to the land.

Just a quick question — seeing the time, I want to see if I can breeze through a few more — the minister said that he was going to look into the website from Faro on water quality data. It was down, last I checked. The minister was looking into it. Can he let us know the status of that website please?

Hon. Mr. Kent: I will have to look into that and I'll get back to the member opposite. I haven't been on the website recently. If it is down, I will find out why and make sure that the information that's presented there is current. I thank the member for bringing that to my attention and I will take action to rectify the situation.

Mr. Tredger: If I can just move quickly on to Keno — the effluent runoff from the Onek adit is still some of the most toxic in the Yukon — actually, in Canada. The plume is going underneath the community of Keno. It's going to ground, as the minister noted, but it isn't all flowing away from Keno. The testing on the last remaining public well has stopped. Can the minister update us on the efforts to remediate the Onek adit? I know the water quality issues are the purview of Community Services, but the minister is responsible for managing historic liabilities and Onek is one source of that contamination.

Hon. Mr. Kent: The community well is operated by YG's Department of Community Services. I know the Minister of CS — in Question Period and other debate — has talked about the trucked water from Mayo into the community, so I would leave it to him to respond specifically to questions surrounding the community well and the testing.

Onek 400 — so the Elsa Reclamation and Development Company, or ERDC, is currently licensed under water licence QZ12-057 to discharge untreated waste-water from the Onek 400 adit as long as all the discharges are to ground or to drainages that report to ground. This is in clause 22 of that water licence. Again, I will repeat the reference number for the water licence — QZ12-057.

That said, the Minister of Environment and the Member for Porter Creek Centre and I visited the Alexco and Keno operations — I believe it was last fall — in September of last year. We did a tour with the CEO and the COO of the company and we specifically asked those representatives to show us the Onek 400.

We did get a sense for where that discharge is coming from. It's my understanding as well that, in the project proposal that ERDC will be submitting to YESAB for overall remediation, they plan on treating that water as part of that project proposal. Although the current water licence does not require them to treat that water, again, it's my understanding that the project proposal going forward will include water treatment for that water at the source.

Mr. Tredger: Let's hope so. What's being done now isn't working. Let's hope that it eventually will get treated.

Seventy-five percent of Yukon residents live in the Whitehorse area — a lot of concern recently about the forest around and the fuel wood that is there. Is the Yukon government working to secure Government of Canada funding and working with the City of Whitehorse for a comprehensive firesmart plan for the area or is that a different department?

Hon. Mr. Kent: There are some aspects of the wildland fire piece that we're dealing with at the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes forestry planning stage. That said, Mr. Chair, any other inquiries on this would best be directed to the Minister of Community Services, as he has the responsibility for wildland fire.

Recently, though, I did attend a meeting of the Yukon Wood Products Association. It was right at the height of the crisis in Fort McMurray, when the initial evacuation was taking place and of course wildland fire was a big topic. The harvest piece with respect to the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes area did come up at that meeting and we had some discussions. I'm sure that there will be further discussions about wildland fires when the forestry ministers meet June 7 to 9 in the wonderful community of Dawson City. I'm excited about hosting forestry ministers from across Canada in Dawson City, but also looking forward to the dialogue on a number of issues, including wildland fire.

Let me just provide members of the House with a quick update on the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes Forest Management Plan. The planning area was established in February 2009 through written agreement by Energy, Mines and Resources, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än' Council and Carcross/Tagish First Nation. The purpose of the planning process is to provide direction for sustainable forest management in the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes region.

The next step for the planning committee is to finalize the draft plan and recommend it to the four governments. With support from the Aboriginal Relations branch and Justice, the Forest Management branch is engaging with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation in Atlin on the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes planning process, given their asserted traditional territory in south-central Yukon.

That is a quick update on what is happening in Whitehorse and the Southern Lakes. Recent public sessions have resulted in positive input. The plan is still on schedule and will be recommended to the governments later on this summer.

Mr. Tredger: I thank the minister for that answer. I know my colleague from Takhini-Kopper King asked a

question of Environment around mushrooms. I know that mushroom-picking in the Little Salmon Carmacks area became quite a concern and, hopefully, we have learned from that and, the expectation that this may become an annual event. I know that Coal River is seeing an influx of mushroom-pickers. It does have a considerable effect on the land. My question for the minister is: Who is overseeing that? Who is granting permits for it, and what permits are available? Are common facilities — like camping, outhouses or cooking areas — being provided? Is the First Nation involved?

Hon. Mr. Kent: With respect to the current morel mushroom harvest, commercial and personal harvesting of morel mushrooms is regulated under the *Forest Resources Act*. Morel mushroom-picking is a short-term opportunity, as individuals know. This year, the majority of mushroom-harvest activity is occurring at the Barney Lake fire site. It is approximately 80 kilometres east of Watson Lake. Many Yukoners — including a number of individuals from Watson Lake — are well-positioned and are participating in the harvest, given their local knowledge of the area coupled with their wilderness skills.

EMR has prepared information packages, including commercial permits, in response to this demand. Commercial permits for harvesting morel mushrooms are free of charge and available at all Compliance Monitoring and Inspections, or CMI, district offices throughout the territory. The commercial permit restricts harvesting to public land and prohibits the creation of new access and harvest of timber. There has been incredible uptake over the past couple of weeks on these permits for this harvesting area. Approximately 250 to 300 permits have been issued to both Yukoners and non-resident harvesters.

CMI district staff are conducting weekly site inspections to engage with both the buyers and harvesters to address permitting requirements, land use implications, and site integrity. The most recent inspection was conducted two days ago, on May 24. Discarded garbage is not a concern at this time; however, given the scale and potential site impacts, both EMR and the Department of Environment have agreed to provide a bear-resistant garbage bin to facilitate the recovery of garbage. The bin is anticipated to be placed at or near the entrance of the Coal River road by May 30 of this year — four days away.

CMI district staff have also engaged with both the RCMP and Conservation Officer Services to clarify the scope of activity and potential site impacts. Local CO Services and the regional biologists have lead roles with respect to potential deposits of waste and impacts to the local fishery. The regional biologist was scheduled to inspect the local fishery this week. Commercial permits help us track the number of people actively working in the industry and aid in monitoring for land use impacts and forest fire prevention. Natural resources officers are positioned to inspect field operations and utilize compliance and enforcement tools as necessary. People harvesting mushrooms for personal consumption do not require a permit. Energy, Mines and Resources encourages harvesters to respect private and First Nation lands, practise

no-trace camping, park vehicles well away from travelling portions of highways and, most importantly, be safe and enjoy the harvest of the morel mushrooms.

With respect to First Nation involvement, we are actively keeping the Kaska, through the Liard First Nation, informed of activities, the number of permits and other activities that are taking place within their traditional territory. Hopefully that provides an update for the member opposite and his colleague with respect to the morel mushroom harvest.

Before I sit down — at the start of my remarks I thanked a number of individuals, but I made a mistake in not thanking my family. I would like to thank my wife, Amanda, and our little guy, Eli, for all of their support over the past number of years as I have worked in the Legislature. I would also like to thank my mom, brothers and sisters and my extended family who all live here in the Yukon. I will just leave it with something my mom told me yesterday. She said: “Sometimes it must not be very fun for you to be a politician, but I can tell you it’s not very fun to be the mom of a politician sometimes either.” I will put that shout-out there for mom and tell her to quit reading the newspapers and to stay off of Facebook.

Mr. Tredger: Can the minister give us a quick update as to the status of the class 1 notification guidelines? What consultation has taken place on establishing the modified rules? When is the government going to release to the public any information regarding class 1? Will there be a report or new guidelines? It has created quite a bit of uncertainty in the prospecting community. The sooner a report can be issued, the better.

Hon. Mr. Kent: By way of an update for members on the class 1 regulatory amendment, it is worthwhile taking a bit of a step back on what brought us to this. This was a 2013 court decision regarding mineral tenure and mineral exploration activity in the Ross River area. The RRDC had obtained a declaration that class 1 activities, despite being characterized as low level, could nonetheless have an impact on First Nations’ asserted aboriginal rights and title. The RRDC settled, and non-settled Yukon First Nations generally consider that the statutory changes made in response to the declaration were a bit of a challenge and perhaps fell short of meeting the requirements for what they were looking for.

We have been pursuing a solution on class 1 thresholds with First Nations and industry for the past two years. What is currently at play is that class 1 notification is required on all category A and category B lands for settled First Nations, and it’s required within the traditional territories of the Ross River Dena Council, the Liard First Nation and the asserted traditional territory of the Taku River Tlingit and other transboundary First Nations. That’s where this class 1 notification is required.

On April 18, 2015, the Yukon Prospectors Association, supported by the Yukon Chamber of Mines, forwarded a proposal to YG on new thresholds for class 1 notification. Essentially, Mr. Chair, they wanted to ensure that the use of hand tools or new technology — such as drones or some of the unmanned vehicles that were being used, perhaps with a

very low level of disturbance or environmental disturbance — could be exempted from notification.

As I mentioned in an earlier Question Period, the prospectors in particular view this as their bread and butter. They will fly in, often conduct soil samples on claims or do some very low-level activity, and then bring their results out. This is often how they determine whether or not a property is worth keeping and moving to the next phase of class 2 or higher, which requires YESAB assessment and full notification and First Nation public engagement on those types of projects.

What industry proposed is that notification review requirements for class 1 activities be extended once the thresholds were modified, if there was an opportunity to do that. We’ve been working through the devolution transfer agreement protocol working group to discuss the industry proposal. It was done in November and December 2015. Industry representatives attended the December meeting to present the details of their proposal.

The working group’s objective was to develop a joint recommendation regarding new thresholds so as to enable these to be in place by the 2016 exploration season. However, we did not reach an agreement in time for that to be implemented for this season. The member opposite referenced certainty for industry, and that’s something that we wanted to make sure that the rules didn’t change halfway through this exploration season, so we’ll target the 2017 exploration season to bring this notification process into place.

Maybe what I’ll do is just give members a quick idea of how the notification process works in those areas that are covered right now. The other area that is covered for class 1 notification is the existing claims in the Peel watershed region. I failed to mention that earlier.

Once notice is provided of class 1 work to be carried out by the proponent to EMR and the First Nation, there is up to a 25-day review period. The chief of mining land use has the discretion to extend the review period if necessary or the First Nation has the opportunity to request an extension. The proponent must await a response by EMR to the class 1 notice prior to commencing their work program. Notifications may —

Chair: Order, please.

Termination of Sitting as per Standing Order 76(1)

Chair: The time has reached 5:00 p.m. on this, the 28th sitting day of the 2016 Spring 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 would now ask the Government House Leader to indicate whether Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*, and Bill No. 201, entitled *Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act*, should now be called.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Mr. Chair, the government directs that Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*, and Bill No. 201, entitled *Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act*, be called at this time.

Bill No. 23: First Appropriation Act, 2016-17 — continued

Chair: The Committee will now deal with Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*. The Chair will now recognize Mr. Pasloski, as the sponsor of Bill No. 23, for the purpose of moving a motion pursuant to Standing Order 76(1)(b).

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Mr. Chair, I move that all clauses, schedules and the title of Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*, be deemed to be read and carried.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Pasloski that all clauses, schedules and the title of Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*, 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 \$1,085,029,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$306,620,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$1,391,649,000 agreed to

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to

Schedules A, B and C agreed to

Title agreed to

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that you report Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*, without amendment.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Pasloski that Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*, be reported without amendment. As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall now put the question. Are you agreed?

Motion agreed to

Bill No. 201: Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act — continued

Chair: The Committee will now deal with Bill No. 201, entitled *Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act*. The Chair will now recognize Mr. Kent, as the sponsor of Bill No. 201, for the purpose of moving a motion pursuant to Standing Order 76(1)(b).

Hon. Mr. Kent: Mr. Chair, I move that all clauses and the title of Bill No. 201, entitled *Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act*, be deemed to be read and carried.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Kent that all clauses and the title of Bill No. 201, entitled *Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act*, 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

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to

Title agreed to

Hon. Mr. Kent: Mr. Chair, I move that you report Bill No. 201, entitled *Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act*, without amendment.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Kent that Bill No. 201, entitled *Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act*, be reported without amendment. As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall now put the question. Are you agreed?

Motion agreed to

Chair: As all government bills identified by the Government House Leader have 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. Elias: Madam Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*, and directed me to report the bill without amendment.

Committee of the Whole has also considered Bill No. 201, entitled *Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act*, 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 Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*, and Bill No. 201, entitled *Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act*, should be called.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Madam Speaker, the government directs that Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*, and Bill No. 201, entitled *Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act*, be called for third reading at this time.

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 23: *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17* — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 23, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Pasloski.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I move that Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*, 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. Pasloski: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Graham: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Disagree.

Ms. Stick: Disagree.

Ms. Moorcroft: Disagree.

Ms. White: Disagree.

Mr. Tredger: Disagree.

Mr. Laxton: Agree.

Clerk: Madam Speaker, the results are 11 yea, five nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion for third reading of Bill No. 23 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 23 has passed this House.

Bill No. 201: *Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act* — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 201, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Kent.

Hon. Mr. Kent: I move that Bill No. 201, entitled *Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources that Bill No. 201, entitled *Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act*, 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. Pasloski: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Graham: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Disagree.

Ms. Stick: Disagree.

Ms. Moorcroft: Disagree.

Ms. White: Disagree.

Mr. Tredger: Disagree.

Mr. Laxton: Agree.

Clerk: Madam Speaker, the results are 10 yea, five nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion for third reading of Bill No. 201 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 201 has passed this House.

We are now prepared to receive the Commissioner of Yukon, in his capacity as Lieutenant Governor, to grant assent to bills which have passed this House.

Commissioner Phillips enters the Chamber, announced by the Sergeant-at-Arms

ASSENT TO BILLS

Commissioner: Please be seated.

Speaker: Mr. 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: *Child and Youth Advocate Staff Benefits Amendments Act; First Appropriation Act, 2016-17; Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act.*

Commissioner: I hereby assent to the bills as enumerated by the Clerk.

Before I leave today, there are a couple of words I would like to say. I would, first of all, like to say a few words to your Sergeant-at-Arms, Rudy Couture. Rudy, thank you for your service here.

As you may know, or others here may know, I have had some experiences with the Sergeant-at-Arms in the past. He actually helped me out of the House one day when I was a member of this House. Fortunately, I haven't had to deal with Rudy that way. I have been a good boy since I have been back in this House. I do want to thank Rudy for his service to the people of the Yukon and the Legislative Assembly. Rudy, I wish you good health and good times in your retirement, and thank you for your service to the people of the Yukon.

This may be the last time that I have an opportunity to address some of you in this House. Some may choose other paths and others are going to possibly seek re-election. I know that there is a possibility that we could be back here in the fall, but I know that those decisions are yet to be made.

Either way, I just want to wish you all the very best in the careers that you choose and in what you do. Good luck in whatever you do; good health and have a wonderful relaxing summer.

For those of you who might be interested and want to share a beer with me on my beach this summer, I will be out there. I know that some of you may have some other things that you wish to do, but I will be there enjoying the summer. I wish all of you the very best in the next few months.

Thank you.

Commissioner leaves the Chamber

Speaker: I will now call the House to order. Please be seated.

As the House has reached the maximum number of days permitted for this Spring Sitting and the House has completed consideration of the designated legislation, it is the duty of the Chair to declare that this House now stands adjourned.

The House adjourned at 5:19 p.m.

The following sessional papers were tabled May 26, 2016:

33-1-208

Yukon Department of Education Annual Report 2015 (Graham)

33-1-209

Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues — YACWI Annual Report — 2015-16 (Taylor)

33-1-210

Yukon Arts Centre 2014/15 Annual Report (Taylor)

The following documents were filed May 26, 2016:

33-1-140

Yukon State of the Environment: reporting on environmental indicators — 2016 — Highlights (Istchenko)

33-1-141

Yukon FASD Diagnosis and Case Management in Adult Corrections Population — Final Report — June 2015 — For Public Health Agency of Canada (Nixon)

33-1-142

Queen's Printer Agency 2016/2017 Business Plan (Kent)

33-1-143

Fleet Vehicle Agency 2016-2017 Business Plan (Kent)