



Yukon Legislative Assembly

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HANSARD

Wednesday, October 31, 2018 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2018 Fall Sitting

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

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

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Yukon Liberal Party

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Brad Cathers	Lake Laberge	Patti McLeod	Watson Lake
Wade Istchenko	Kluane	Geraldine Van Bibber	Porter Creek North

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Liz Hanson	Leader of the Third Party Whitehorse Centre
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**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, October 31, 2018 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Prior to proceeding with the Order Paper, the Chair will, on behalf of the House, make a statement in light of the killing of 11 persons at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh on Saturday, October 27.

Mass killings have become all too common. No matter where they occur, they make us all feel less secure. What is particularly disturbing about this attack is that the victims were not chosen at random. The alleged perpetrator admitted to making a targeted attack on people of the Jewish faith. While unexpected acts of violence make us feel less secure, some of us have reason to feel less secure than others.

We must, at this time, denounce anti-Semitism, whether it manifests itself in acts of violence or not. In fact, we must express solidarity with all persons who are targets of violence by other individuals or groups. What is also worrying is a growing concern that the targeting of identifiable individuals or groups of individuals is a by-product of increasingly polarized views.

This event occurred in the United States; however, Canadians and Yukoners cannot rest easy. It may be difficult, if not impossible, in a given situation to establish a direct causal connection between the words spoken by one person and the violent actions of another. However, this is not a risk that we should be willing to take. All of us who participate in the public life of our community need to remember that our words matter. This is not just a matter of avoiding saying things that we should not say; it is also a matter of saying the things that need to be said, expressing support for and solidarity with those who need our support.

Thank you.

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would like to ask the indulgence of the Legislative Assembly to help me welcome some folks who are here from Finance who are attending today, as I will be tabling the Public Accounts. We have Donna Sibley, Nicole Bouvier and Daniel Jirousek. I think those are all who are there in the gallery.

Yes, there is also Tina Frisch who is with us. I'm teasing Tina right now, but I wanted to have a special recognition for Tina for this will be her final Public Accounts. She will be retiring after this. We just wanted to wish her the best. Thank

you very much for your service. We are definitely going to miss your humour, your guidance, your intelligence and your direction.

Thank you very much, Tina, for all that you have done for the Yukon government.

Applause

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Please help me in welcoming some very special guests here today in the Legislative Assembly who are here for a tribute that we're going to do a little bit later.

Here are: Michele Genest from the Boreal Gourmet; Hector MacKenzie; Chris Irving, who is actually a born-and-raised Yukoner and was one of our Yukon chefs — but also a celebrity chef, so I think it's very special that you were able to come today; Blake Rogers from TIAY; Dylan Soo from Northern Vision Development; Jennifer Hall from the Yukon Agricultural Association; and Jennifer Tyldesley from Free Pour Jenny's. I would also like to do a special shout-out to my executive assistant Jessie Stephen, who supports me so well. Thank you for everything that you do.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Pillai: On sort of the same theme as my colleague — also the tribute today coming on the tribute to the North of 60 Agricultural Conference and also some guests who, in many ways, worked together with the other guests who are here — I would like to welcome Deputy Minister Stephen Mills, here in his professional role. Many of us missed today that he was dressed as the local food strategy for Halloween. For those who saw it, it was quite a pleasure. Mr. Matt Ball is here from the Agriculture branch, and Mr. Brad Barton, of course, who is key to the work that is going to happen this week. I absolutely appreciate his work. Matt Larsen, Shannon Gladwin, Rod Jacob, Collin Remillard — Collin works in government, but also is an amazing farmer. When you walk into grocery stores throughout the Yukon, you might be buying his pork.

Jennifer Hall — as well, of course, through the Yukon Agricultural Association — is here with our other group, and Anne Savoie — I think I have that right. I know that Barb and Bill Drury are here. They hosted events for the culinary festival but also are long-time, well-known farmers in the Yukon. I just want to welcome everybody here today for our tribute.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors?

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of the North of 60 Agriculture Conference

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Today I rise to pay tribute to northern agriculture and to the farm families and hard-working folks in the long-established Yukon farming industry.

This coming weekend, farmers, gardeners and ranchers will be gathering with experts and the interested public for the 31st North of 60 Agriculture Conference. The conference this year will focus on permaculture, pig production and biosecurity. On Saturday night, Yukon farmers and lovers of local food will celebrate at the North of 60 banquet. The banquet features produce from Yukon farms matched with the creativity of chefs and restaurants to create a delicious meal.

In the past few years, Yukon had seen increases in many agricultural products, including vegetables, pork, beef, chicken and eggs. These products are available at grocery stores, community markets, restaurants and through farm-gate sales.

The Government of Yukon is committed to diversifying and growing Yukon's economy and sees the agriculture industry as a key component of that growth. We are encouraged by the increase that we are seeing with our producers looking to export markets, whether they are our neighbours in Northwest Territories, over to Alaska or overseas.

Yukon's 142 farms reported \$3.9 million in gross receipts in 2016, and economic statistics show that we have \$108 million in investments in agricultural land, buildings and equipment. Our farms are producing and selling a wide variety of products. Over the years, hay production has been the largest portion of Yukon's agricultural industry in terms of the number of farms, acres and revenue. Yukon farms provide fresh, healthy products for human consumption. These include vegetables, preserves, dairy, eggs, honey, jams, meats, fresh produce, sod and bedding plants. The production and economic viability of farming in Yukon has been improving through the use of new equipment, new farming techniques and available business planning and funding. This has helped to reduce our dependency on food imports. It also helps grow the economy and adds diverse options in our communities.

Working in the agricultural industry is full of challenges, from unpredictable weather to our small markets and limited infrastructure. Yet despite the challenges, our producers go to work every day to create great products and to meet the needs of Yukoners. There are good reasons to choose local. When it comes to growing our food, we can provide health benefits by providing fresh and healthy food to people in our communities. It can create business opportunities and create new jobs, and it can reduce our climate footprint by reducing our reliance on food that is trucked and flown into the north.

That is why the implementation of the local food strategy for Yukon is so important. The Canadian agricultural partnership with the Government of Canada and Yukon government will help further develop the agricultural economy. Slowly, with a steady hand on the plow, the infrastructure, skills and distribution network to encourage farming, ranching and market gardening for the benefit of Yukoners is being built.

I would like to say thank you to the farmers and to all those who work in the agricultural industry and all those who support Yukon agriculture.

Applause

Mr. Cathers: I am pleased to rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to Yukon farmers, market gardeners, ranchers, producers and processors — everyone who participates in the agricultural and agri-food sector here in the territory. I would also like to specifically welcome those here in the gallery today who are part of this sector of our economy.

Yukoners are fortunate to have access to a variety of fresh, healthy, local foods that are accessible through the growing season and beyond. We have seen significant progress in recent years growing the Yukon's ability to meet our own needs here through locally produced food. Local food supply, through partnerships with grocery stores and local markets, is also making produce more readily available to Yukon individuals and families.

The *Local Food Strategy for Yukon*, which was released in 2016, was the result of government's commitment to developing a local food policy aimed specifically at increasing the local production and use of locally grown vegetables, meats and food products. It, of course, built on the 2016 agriculture policy. The aim of the strategy was to support not only the commercial sector, but also community and backyard food production. My riding of Lake Laberge is, of course, home to most of the farming in the territory as well as a number of larger producers. They range in scale from commercial operations to small-scale producers and gardeners. There are some who have just recently entered this area, and there are others with long roots in the agricultural area, including my constituents Bill and Barbara Drury, who have multiple generations of their family involved in the farming sector. I would also like to acknowledge two of the other farmers from my riding here today, Collin Remillard and Matt Ball, for the work that they do in this area.

I would also like to thank everyone who is not here today and who is in this sector for turning their love of farming into something more — to enable us, as a community and a territory, to benefit from their food production and farm-to-table operations.

I encourage all Yukoners to support the local agriculture sector and our food producers. Making personal local food choices when they are available helps to contribute to the ability of farmers to sustain and build their operations and increase the share of our food supply that is produced right here locally in the Yukon.

Again, thank you to everyone who is a part of the Yukon agriculture sector, to local food producers and to everyone who, through their own choices, supports the local production of food. All of your efforts contribute to a vibrant and healthy Yukon and will help us see this sector of the economy grow in the years to come.

Applause

Ms. White: I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP to pay tribute to all of Yukon's farmers — from the very small to the very large — the people who both produce local food and the products themselves and those who promote and facilitate the

industry. We offer our congratulations to the Yukon agricultural community as a whole for working together to establish a vibrant, innovative, entrepreneurial and supportive industry. Yukon is fortunate to have a growing community of producers and consumers working together to produce locally sustainable and healthy products.

A few weeks ago, I, along with others, was able to go on a farm tour, and what an eye-opening experience it was: problem solving, trail blazing, growing stuff, fixing stuff, watering stuff, harvesting stuff, and all the while, bringing that stuff to local markets. We were able to see how the Yukon Agriculture branch of EMR supports local farmers, from test plots to day-to-day problem solving. It was incredible how the entire agricultural machine works together toward supporting the vision of local food security for Yukon. We thank individual farmers and gardeners for their outstanding work and perseverance — who are producing quality Yukon food. We thank blanket organizations like Growers of Organic Food Yukon and the Yukon Agricultural Association for supporting their members and advocating on their behalf.

We acknowledge the importance of farmers' markets and grocery stores throughout Yukon who make local food and the people who grow it more accessible. We salute the efforts of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation, who through their teaching and working farm have, over the past several years, inspired other First Nations and local governments to focus on local food production as part of a sustainable economy. Through all of their individual actions and their collective efforts, "grown in Yukon" has become synonymous with excellent, healthy and sustainable food.

I am looking forward to this year's annual agricultural banquet and the announcement of the farmer of the year — the most incredible banquet celebrating locally grown foods and celebrating this year's jewel in the crown of the agricultural industry. But most importantly, Mr. Speaker, I am looking forward to witnessing the gathering and the celebration of Yukon's agricultural community.

Applause

In recognition of Yukon Culinary Festival

Hon. Ms. Dendys: It is my honour to rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to the Yukon Culinary Festival.

More often than not, when people hear about the Yukon, our culinary skills and specialties are not generally the first things that come to mind. However, Yukon's reputation as a culinary destination is beginning to grow.

This year, the Yukon Culinary Festival took place August 22 to 26, and it was a fantastic event, once again featuring chefs from Yukon and across Canada. Established in 2013, by the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon, TIAY, this annual event continues to up its game, and it gets even better and more delicious every year. The festival highlights ingredients sourced from local farms and producers in Whitehorse and Dawson City and features Yukon culinary talent in collaboration with celebrity chefs from across Canada.

Over the four-day festival this summer, six separate events were held in a range of locations around Whitehorse. Each event was unique and focused on different local ingredients and products as well as different aspects of food preparation and presentation. Just to give my colleagues in the House an idea of some of the gourmet offerings that were being served during the Cooking with Fire event — this is going to make everyone a little bit hungry, but if you didn't eat lunch, too bad — it featured fire-grilled oysters with garlic butter, spice-rubbed fire-roasted bison, slow-braised elk and Morel mushrooms, planked arctic char with whiskey birch syrup glaze and many other delicious dishes.

A few other notable events took place for the first time this past year in the culinary scene. In January, TIAY and Yukon Agricultural Association co-hosted Meet Your Maker. This was an event where we had local food promoters and producers come together to identify opportunities to collaborate.

Additionally, in April this year, the first-ever First Nations Fire Feast was held in Carcross at the Carcross/Tagish longhouse. Notably, much of the food was prepared on the outdoor fire pit. This was co-hosted by TIAY and Northern Vision Development. The event featured celebrity indigenous chefs from across Canada and local chefs working together to produce an impressive experience involving food, drink, storytelling and traditional cultural performances.

Culinary tourism is a promising area in both Yukon and Canada that is gathering momentum. Visiting different venues and locations to taste foods visitors can't experience elsewhere is a new and different way to explore our territory. We have some really amazing local producers, growers and chefs here in Yukon. I would like to recognize the culinary festival organizers, sponsors, chefs, food producers, growers and all of the venues that hosted the fantastic events. Some are here today and I thank you again. Your efforts are really paying off. I am so proud that, earlier this month, the Yukon Culinary Festival was mentioned in the *Forbes Travel Guide*. It was such a great shout-out to the fantastic collaboration happening in Yukon. It's exciting to see the emerging importance and focus placed on culinary tourism and eating local.

One example of this is that culinary tourism has been identified in the draft Yukon Tourism Development Strategy — it has been identified as an area to pursue and support outstanding visitor experiences. I just want to say that what is good for tourism is good for our community. I think that's what we are seeing emerge here. I look forward to future festivals and the evolution of the Yukon culinary industry.

Applause

Ms. Van Bibber: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition and the New Democratic Party to recognize the Yukon Culinary Festival held this past August 22 to 26, 2018. Hosted by the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon since 2013, the festival brings together culture, local food and culinary chefs. Together, magic happens.

Catering to the palates and appetites of many who participate, this year the Yukon Culinary Festival took place over the week, as I said, of August 22 to 26, beginning August 22 with chocolate, cocktails and more, featuring chocolate makers Glenys Baltimore and Yukon Brewing's Heather Gillespie. Imagine an evening of sweet and savoury, local elk brochettes with Mexican chocolate sauce and Yukon whiskey chocolate truffles, along with chocolate martinis — just a few items listed.

August 23 takes us to a kickoff party at Woodcutter's Blanket featuring Yukon Brewing — also on this day, a free event at the Fireweed Market. There was a showcase of Yukon producers with cooking demonstrations taking place. Attendees could learn fun and easy dishes and speak with the celebrity chefs.

August 24 — Friday's event featured amazing cooking skills using open-pit fire inspired by Argentinian methods. Fire-cooking master Jason Pley from Two Rivers Meats in Vancouver was joined by guest chef Eric Pateman and Yukon born-and-raised chef Chris Irving, who has graced kitchens across Canada and around the world. Think local protein: elk, rabbit, pork, bison, a roasted pig and Icy Waters Arctic char were highlighted with Yukon produce and, from our neighbours, Alaskan seafood.

The sold-out event was a hit, and guests were able to get a close view of the chefs and local culinary talent in action as they prepared an incredible feast.

August 25, "Cocktails, Costumes and Canapés" was the theme of Saturday's cocktail party, which took place on the *SS Klondike* site by the Yukon River. Guests were encouraged to dress in Klondike style. Local chefs Carson Schiffkorn and Troy King, along with their team from Inn on the Lake, inspired an appetizer menu from local foods.

Finally, August 26 — Sunday featured a tractor tailgate farm lunch at Circle D Ranch, which featured elk from the ranch along with beef prepared by Chef Jason from Two Rivers and, of course, local produce.

I too would like to thank all the organizers, staff and volunteers for an incredible Yukon blend of cuisine, talent and fun for all. Also, thanks to the many sponsors who give so much to community events and make us truly fortunate to be able to host such a multi-day event. Congratulations to all, and I know Yukoners are already looking forward to and planning next year's attendance.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Silver: Now that we're all salivating, I have something we can all sink our teeth into. I have the Yukon Public Accounts for 2017-18.

Ms. McLeod: I have for tabling a letter dated October 24, 2018, to the Minister of Health and Social Services.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I have a legislative return on a couple of items that arose during general debate on October 22 — just a couple of outstanding questions — that I would like to table.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Today, I have for tabling a letter from Providence Health Care and St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver regarding microbiology testing.

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

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to review the *Agriculture Development Act* with a view to, among other matters, modernizing the scope of the Agriculture Development Council and ensuring that Yukon establishes an agriculture land reserve.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to cover the cost of shingles immunization for senior citizens and people with compromised immune systems, as requested by the Member for Watson Lake in a letter to the Minister of Health and Social Services, dated October 24, 2018.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Universal coverage for Mifegymiso medication

Hon. Ms. Frost: I am very pleased to rise today to announce that the Government of Yukon will now offer universal coverage for mifegymiso, the medication used for medical abortions. Through a partnership with Yukon Hospital Corporation and in collaboration with Yukon physicians, universal coverage of mifegymiso will reduce barriers and provide more unique and equal access to those seeking abortion services.

Mifegymiso is often preferable to surgical abortions, but the high cost of the drug makes it inaccessible for many patients. Yukon is now joining other Canadian jurisdictions in covering the cost of the medication, providing a safe and accessible alternative to surgical abortion.

Mifegymiso is a combination of two medications that are prescribed to medically terminate a pregnancy up to 63 days or nine weeks gestation. Mifegymiso is recognized as the gold standard for medical abortion. It is on the World Health Organization list of essential drugs.

It is available in 60 countries and has been used for over 30 years. Throughout this time, it has maintained an outstanding safety record worldwide and provides a safe and accessible alternative to surgical abortion. We are providing universal coverage to ensure that Yukoners have more options and increased access to abortion services. In Canada, there are two options for abortions: surgical and medical. The cost of a surgical abortion is already covered. By providing coverage of the medication, we are allowing Yukoners to make the choice that is right for them, regardless of the cost. Offering mifegymiso at no cost is one way to ensure that Yukoners are able to access the best possible care for their sexual and reproductive health.

With a written prescription for mifegymiso, patients will have a choice to fill the prescription at a pharmacy at retail cost or through our partnership with the hospital, free of charge. The use of mifegymiso requires a follow-up appointment with the prescribing physician. To ensure patient safety, coverage will be based out of communities with full-time resident physicians in Whitehorse, Watson Lake, Haines Junction and Dawson City. Residents of other communities can access mifegymiso at no cost through a physician in the closest community hub.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that providing safe, low-barrier access to this medication is an important step toward health service equality in the territory. It is the right thing to do, and I am very proud to make this announcement today.

Ms. McLeod: I want to thank the House for the opportunity to rise today in response to this ministerial statement. First off, I would like to say that the minister makes some good points in her statement. As she pointed out, there are currently two options available for abortions, and one is fully covered. This is making the other fully covered, and I think this will reduce barriers and costs for rural Yukoners, and it is a goal that we support. As we have said many times in this House, we think that access to medical care can be financially prohibitive in the communities; therefore, we are in support of announcements such as this that are aimed at reducing those burdens.

When preparing for this statement, I did some quick research and, as the minister notes, several jurisdictions in Canada already cover this. In response to the recent announcement in Newfoundland that they would cover this, the St. John's Status of Women Council actually raised some interesting questions around implementation. I would like to pose some of those questions to our minister as well.

Will ultrasounds be required prior to administering this? Wait times for ultrasounds can be problematic in rural areas, and as you know, most communities do not have ultrasound equipment or capabilities.

How will the prescribing work? Can only certain physicians prescribe? Will there be mandatory training for physicians? I look forward to the answers in the minister's response.

I also have other questions regarding other pharmaceuticals and actions that the government is taking

with respect to health care. Any time we have asked for the government to take action to cover new medications or take action to better support Yukoners who need to travel for medical purposes, the answer from the minister has always been: "We don't do one-offs. We will consider it as part of the health care review." Well, today's announcement makes it clear that where there's a will, there's a way, and one-offs can be done.

So will the minister also consider covering flu shots for Yukon students who are away at university? As you will remember, this is an issue I raised last year with the minister, who said no.

Will the minister consider covering the shingles vaccine? Will the minister consider covering the EpiPen?

Will the minister consider increasing the reimbursement rate for medical travel to further reduce barriers and costs for rural Yukoners? We know that their current rates are way out of line with what the government travel rates are and that the government just recently increased the government travel rates even further.

As we said, since the government has now made it clear that it is possible to do one-offs, we would like them to take action in these areas. Doing so would help to reduce costs for all Yukoners, especially those living in the communities.

Ms. White: We thank the minister and her department for the decision to offer universal coverage for the medication used for medical abortions. This is something that the Yukon NDP has asked about and talked about for quite a while now. A year and a half ago, on May 10, 2017, we tabled a motion urging the government to approve access to abortion services by making this medication available to women at no cost. Again, in March of this year, during budget debate, we highlighted the importance of women having control over their own reproductive health and specifically about offering this medication at no cost.

I also want to note that this measure is something that many women's organizations in town have been asking the government to do for a few years. We thank the government for responding positively to this request from these women's groups which we have echoed in the Assembly. We're happy to see this action.

Making sure that all women have equitable access to abortion in rural communities is critical and this is a good first step. I would appreciate it if the minister could explain further what the exact process is for people who don't live in the four communities where the physician will be. We understand that they have to go to one of the community hubs to receive the prescription, but do they need to stay in that community between the prescription and the follow-up appointment, or can they go back home?

We're pleased to note that, as of today, we are getting closer to the goal of equitable access for abortion for Yukon women. Hopefully, the next big announcement to come out of the Health and Social Services department in regard to women's reproductive health will be the ability of any Yukon

woman, anywhere in the territory, to choose the birth control that is right for her without cost being a barrier.

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to thank my colleagues for the great feedback. I think that as we roll this new initiative out, it's a very positive step for women in our territory with respect to access to health care, taking into consideration that there will be many questions. As we work with our partners, we will ensure that we address the questions that have been raised. I don't want us to deter from the fact that this has been a long time coming. It's a great news story, and it's one that I'm very pleased to stand up and present to the House today.

Knowing that today is the last day of Women's History Month, I'm proud to be announcing this new initiative providing universal coverage of mifegymiso. Mifegymiso increases access to abortion services for Yukon women, reducing barriers, and giving them more choices when it comes to their reproductive health. It also provides more equal access for women across the territory. As I mentioned, the used of mifegymiso requires a follow-up appointment with the prescribing physician. This service will therefore be available only in communities with full-time resident physicians — Whitehorse, Haines Junction, Dawson and Watson Lake — to ensure patient safety, but residents in all Yukon communities can have access to this prescribed drug at no cost through a physician in one of the four communities. By providing coverage of medication, we are allowing Yukoners to make the choice that is right for them, regardless of cost.

The decision to provide coverage is about providing better service for Yukon women. That is why we are doing this. We anticipate that providing this service will reduce overall health costs. The costs of surgical abortions are already fully covered. A medical abortion with this medication will cost less than a surgical abortion. This is more about improving health care for Yukoners and providing women with the best possible care for their sexual and reproductive health.

I am going to speak ever so briefly about the mandatory training, ultrasounds and all of the other questions. Those are things that we will work out with the physicians and the hospitals to ensure that every patient and every client who comes into our care or approaches the health care professionals will be provided with the best possible support services during this very difficult time as they make their decision to proceed with accessing this medication or not. It is a very trying time.

I want to just note that it is a choice that individuals make, and we want to ensure that it is done in a very healthy way, that they are given the supports that they require and that we don't detract from that choice by putting other negativities around it — but recognizing that we will ensure that health care costs are covered and that medical options are provided.

Speaker: This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Carbon tax

Mr. Kent: For almost two years, the Premier has been telling us that he is waiting for more information from Ottawa on the carbon tax. On Monday of this week, he was back in Ottawa talking carbon tax with the federal government.

Can the Premier tell us what new information he brought back about how the carbon tax will work in Yukon? Did he get any new exemptions, and can he tell us how the rebates will work?

Hon. Mr. Silver: The Yukon government is committed to ensuring that all carbon-pricing revenues that we receive from Canada are returned to Yukoners through those rebates and that Yukon industries are not disadvantaged when compared to industries in other jurisdictions. We furthered that commitment in our most recent trip to Ottawa. Yukoners will be rebated revenues — to individuals, businesses, First Nations and municipalities — based upon a formula. Yukoners will receive favourable rebates that will make up more than 100 percent of the amount collected from individuals, governments and businesses, as the Yukon government will also be rebating significant shares to Yukoners.

We have been giving updates as they come in. For example, on October 23, the Government of Yukon was notified that carbon pricing would not come into effect in the territory until July 1, 2019. We are pleased to see the Government of Canada reaffirming its commitment to return the revenues to the territory. Great conversations about how the cheques are going to get back into the pockets of Yukoners — more to come on that. We are going to wait until we have all of that information, and we will be making an announcement as soon as possible.

Again, Mr. Speaker, no one wants to make these announcements as soon as possible more than I do. We recognize that Yukoners have been waiting to know when they are going to get the money back from the Yukon government, and we will make that information available as soon as possible. Thank you for the question.

Mr. Kent: Unfortunately, this is the same answer we have gotten from the Yukon Liberals since they started here in November of 2016, and it is very weak. It's very weak if this is all they have after 724 days in government.

Can the Premier tell us, with regard to the announcement he made in May about a rebate for placer miners, how the dollar-to-dollar carbon tax rebates will work for those placer miners?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I must take a little bit of issue with the way the question is phrased. I think we have been giving an awful lot of information about aviation exemptions from the federal government that are going to right across the north, dollar-for-dollar rebates from the placer industry as well — and being able to make sure those energy-intense trade-exposed sectors like mining must compete with prices that are set internationally and the work we have done to make sure that Ottawa recognizes that — meaning that the carbon levy is not supposed to disadvantage those individuals. I think we

have done an awful lot, and we have been updating Yukoners as we get that information.

We have gone to the northern premiers' and the Western Premiers' Conference, to the First Ministers' meetings and had unanimous support from all the other premiers that recognize the unique circumstances here in the Yukon. Now the results of those conversations have come in the form of rebates and also exemptions, and the final details on how we're going to get those cheques into the pockets of Yukoners will come.

I do appreciate that the members opposite are interested in when this Yukon government is going to put that money back into the pockets of Yukoners. I'm so happy we had the extension so we have another six months without that price happening at the pump. As we finalize those processes, we'll again make that information available as soon as possible.

Mr. Kent: I actually asked the Premier if he could tell us how the rebates will work for placer miners, especially with the new deadline that's going to hit right in the middle of the mining season.

Let's get this straight: For almost two years, no matter what you ask him, the Premier has said he is waiting for Ottawa. How will the carbon tax work? We're waiting for Ottawa. What are the impacts on the economy? We're waiting for Ottawa. So on Monday, the federal minister summons him down to Ottawa and he receives zero new information. He can't tell us anything new based on that trip.

This leads us to the conclusion that he was used as a prop by the federal government. They know he will say and do whatever they tell him. So can the Premier at least tell Yukoners when we will find out how the rebates in the territory will work?

Hon. Mr. Silver: We have been very clear — as we are able to make that information available — that the placer miners are getting dollar-for-dollar rebates. We don't want to grow government when we're making sure these rebates come back into the pockets of the placer miners and other governments, businesses and individuals.

Again, we have been very clear with the information, and the Yukon Party doesn't seem to like that we can't necessarily give them information on the floor of the Legislative Assembly. We have been over this a few different times. The inaccuracies of the questions asked yesterday — I didn't even get to talking about the impact analysis that was released by the federal government this year that estimates carbon pricing will reduce Yukoners' greenhouse gas emissions by nearly 5.5 percent in 2022. Again, the Yukon Party had that briefing from our government in the summer, so they should be aware of that information. Again, it's convenient for the Yukon Party to remember things only when they want to remember things and forget things on the floor of the Legislative Assembly.

We have obviously been advocating for the unique circumstance of the north. We are going to keep to our campaign commitment to give all the money back to Yukon businesses and to Yukon individuals — and actually even more than they put in, when you take into consideration that

the territorial government's money will go into that pot as well. It will be distributed to those businesses and to those individuals. We are very proud of the fact that we can take into consideration the economy and the environment when we are looking out for Yukoners.

Question re: Carbon tax

Mr. Hassard: I have a few questions with regard to the carbon tax as well. On May 1, 2017, the Minister of Tourism and Culture told us that any extra costs that tourism operators get as a result of the carbon tax will be offset by, in her words — and I quote: "... a corresponding rebate..." That makes it pretty clear that the Minister of Tourism and Culture has committed that each tourism operator gets everything back.

Can the Premier confirm that the commitment his government made in May of last year that every individual tourism operator will have all of their increased costs offset by a corresponding rebate still stands?

Hon. Mr. Silver: With all due respect for the Leader of the Official Opposition, we are not going to take his half quotes and half measures in the Legislative Assembly as we respond to questions here.

Yukoners need to know that we are showing leadership on the issue because Yukoners are already experiencing the impact of climate change. Climate pricing, is, once again, the most effective way to reduce emissions and to drive innovations toward a low-carbon future. We have talked about how, on a national basis, the Mining Association of Canada, the Business Council of Canada and Nobel Prize-winning economists all agree that this is the most cost-effective way to deal with those issues but also to drive innovation toward a low-carbon future. We have talked about all of the companies that are backing that, as well, and the list goes on, from Shell to Loblaw's, Desjardins to Scotiabank, Teck to Rio Tinto — and the list goes on and on. We will continue to work with the government to ensure that carbon pricing takes account of Yukon's unique circumstances.

We are not going to get caught up in the "At one point, somebody said one thing and somebody said something else the next day" type of narrative from the Yukon Party, because again, their plan was no plan. They talked about their plan — well, they don't have a plan for carbon. They never did have a plan. We know that Yukoners are smarter than that and they recognize that we will take action. When there are announcements to be made, whether in the tourism industry or the placer mining industry, we will make it when we are ready to make those announcements.

Mr. Hassard: I think it is important that the Premier remembers that leadership also involves taking responsibility for things that are said here on the floor of this Legislature.

There has been a lot of talk about medical travel in recent weeks. Costs are going up and this is making it more difficult for Yukoners in communities who need to travel to Whitehorse for essential medical services. We know that as soon as the carbon tax scheme comes into force, these costs will go up even further. The Liberal government has refused to increase the medical travel reimbursement rate. They say

that they can't afford to, but earlier this week, we pointed to the hypocrisy of them increasing government travel rates that all employees, MLAs and members of Cabinet get to claim, but when it comes to a sick Yukoner living in Mayo who needs to drive in for a doctor's appointment, territorial Liberals aren't interested in helping them.

Mr. Speaker, will the Liberals at least agree to exempt medical travel from the carbon tax?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, we will be answering the questions that are coming from Yukoners, but it is hard to parse it out from the rhetoric from the members opposite. They continue to be confused about carbon pricing. We have been clear all the way along; we will be rebating all of the money collected by Ottawa to Yukoners. We have made a commitment as well to rebate First Nation and municipal governments. We will be rebating placer miners for the carbon price, dollar for dollar, that they pay on fuel, and we will be encouraging all Yukoners to reduce their reliance on fossil fuels in their homes and in their businesses.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to advocate on behalf of Yukoners when it comes to a federal carbon-pricing mechanism. We are very proud that we will be able to be on the right side of history, give all that money back to Yukoners and Yukon businesses. Again, a little bit of patience before we realize when we are going to be able to rebate that money to Yukoners — but those cheques will be coming.

We will be on the right side of history for the economy and the environment, Mr. Speaker.

Question re: Elevator safety regulations

Ms. White: We have heard reports of a recent serious workplace accident involving an elevator on a Whitehorse construction site. This raises questions about the safety requirements for contractors working on elevators in Yukon. We understand that, unlike many other jurisdictions, employees working on an elevator do not need specific certification to perform this work. The vague wording of the regulations simply requires the contractor to be capable of performing the work. There is no obligation for the actual employee performing the work to be certified or to have specific training on elevators.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Community Services explain why Yukon doesn't require specific training and certification for every person working on an elevator?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thank the member for that very specific question. On the specific part of it, I will try to get an answer.

What I can say right now — and maybe the Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board might be able to talk about some of those issues — in terms of elevators, what I know is that the regulations that we have around elevators are now tied to federal regulation, and we did this recently to make sure that they stayed up to date.

I apologize, Mr. Speaker. I don't have at my fingertips information regarding worker safety around those types of work sites, but I will be happy to try to get that information and get back to the member opposite.

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, this isn't an issue of legislation and regulations; this is about certification for people working on elevators. The Yukon's *Elevator and Fixed Conveyances Act* was last updated in 2002, more than 15 years ago. Since then, many jurisdictions have required that anyone working on an elevator be certified. In British Columbia, the certification by Technical Safety BC requires mechanical training specific to elevators and ongoing health and safety training.

Mr. Speaker, will the government review Yukon's elevator regulations to ensure that anyone working on an elevator in Yukon has the specific training for the job to work on elevators?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: First, as the Member for Takhini-Kopper King has referenced, an incident happened — a serious incident — I will speak to that just briefly.

OH&S did respond to a report of a workplace incident on October 24 in Whitehorse. A worker did suffer injuries in a fall and was transported to Whitehorse General Hospital. The OH&S investigation is ongoing, so no further information can be made available until that is concluded.

In terms of workplace safety, the health and safety of workers is absolutely paramount to government, and it is for sure a priority for the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board. Every worker in every Yukon workplace has the right to return home each day in full health. That is what the board's Occupational Health and Safety officers work to support. Sometimes safety officers write orders to enforce compliance with Occupational Health and Safety, so we're working hard with the tools that we have to ensure workers return home safely each and every day.

Speaker: Order, please.

Ms. White: The incident only highlights that there is a need for a review of the regulations that govern elevators. The current void in Yukon's regulations puts employees at risks and this government needs to act now to prevent future accidents.

We have spoken with certified elevator mechanics in Yukon who are concerned that current regulations are not enough to protect employees and the public. Governments across the country are requiring specific certification for any employee working on an elevator. Yukon is lagging behind the rest of the country when it comes to elevator safety.

Will the government commit to review elevator regulations to ensure that the safety of employees and the public comes first?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thank the member opposite for the question. I think I gave in my first response — I'm happy to turn back to the department and find out what the situation is. We always look across jurisdictions to try to understand what the level is. Of course I want safety for workers around elevators. I want safety for all workers, as the Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board indicated. I don't want an unsafe workplace — period. There are times when hazards are site-specific and precautions need to be put in place, and I'm happy to ask the department

to brief me on this situation, and I will be happy to try to bring that information back to the member opposite.

Question re: Carbon tax

Mr. Hassard: We know that the Premier doesn't seem to like quotes, but I have another one for him regarding exemptions. The Premier said that there is no exemption; there never was an exemption; an exemption was never an option.

As we see with a lot of things that the Premier says, his words don't always align with the facts, because in May, we found out that — thanks to the lobbying efforts of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut — aviation companies in the north are getting an exemption from the carbon tax. While we're happy that the Premier was proven wrong, we do have concerns about an unlevel playing field that this has created. The trucking industry competes with airline industries in hauling freight, so it really does look like the Liberals are picking winners and losers here.

Does the Premier believe it is fair to exempt airlines while not exempting trucking companies?

Hon. Mr. Silver: The exemption on aviation was an exemption from the federal government, and we are absolutely happy to have that. Again, in that conversation with all three premiers — and not just the other two, as the members opposite would have you believe — I think we made a really good case about the special case for the north. As the Yukon Party keeps on doing — they keep on wanting new updates, but then when we do give updates, they keep on forgetting that we have done that.

Since the last session, the government has been very busy advocating for Yukoners. We discussed the details of the rebate with the federal government. The Yukon government has negotiated provisions for all aviation fuel. That's a good thing. I'm not sure if the Yukon Party likes that or doesn't like that. All flights, whether they are in Yukon or between Yukon and other jurisdictions, will be exempted from that levy.

We also have ensured that the carbon-pricing levies do not negatively impact the emission-intensive, trade-exposed placer industries, and we're working on more to come on that.

This builds on the government's commitment to address the unique circumstances of the north in the design of the rebate mechanism. Again, this is the good work that we have been doing and I'm proud of the work that I have done with my colleagues across the north. We are making our case for the unique circumstances of Yukon when it comes to applying a carbon-pricing mechanism, yet making sure that our economy stays whole, and I think that's a good thing for Yukoners.

Mr. Hassard: I think the Premier being proud of what he has done so far is very cold comfort for the trucking companies here in the Yukon. One company that we have heard from estimates that they will use approximately 3.6 million litres of fuel in 2019. When the carbon tax is fully implemented, we know that it will increase the cost of diesel fuel by approximately 14 cents a litre. That would increase the cost for this one company by an additional \$500,000 per year

— \$500,000 for delivering things like groceries and diapers to Yukon families.

What will happen? Companies will end up passing these costs on to families. We know that at least one member of the Liberal Cabinet has acknowledged this — and I will quote the Minister of Community Services from 2016, when he said, "yes, the cost of diapers will go up."

Can the Premier tell us: Has he asked Ottawa to exempt the trucking industry from the carbon tax?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I guess what I'm hearing is that the Yukon Party does not want an exemption for aviation. We'll pass that on to Alkan Air and to Air North so they know where they stand on that. We have been working and have met with members of the transportation industry, and we have listened to their concerns. It should be noted — and the Yukon Party would never note this — that all businesses will be rebated. There will be a rebate going back to businesses from the Yukon government based on a federal carbon-pricing mechanism.

Again, details do remain from Canada, and we are still working very hard for Yukoners. The design of the rebate cannot be finalized until those specifics are known for how the federal backstop will be applied in Yukon and what considerations to protect industry competitiveness and vulnerable groups will be built into that tax-collecting mechanism.

We're happy to listen to the industry and I think those companies that have come forward from the transportation industry. I thank the chambers of commerce as we finalize conversations about how that rebate money and how that cheque is going to get back into the pockets of the transportation industry, the retail industry and Yukon individuals, but what we're hearing from the Yukon Party is that they are not happy with an exemption for aviation fuel in Yukon.

Mr. Hassard: I'm not sure why the Premier wasn't listening to the first question when I said that we were happy that the Premier was proven wrong in regard to the aviation industry getting exemptions.

My question is: Why do these other businesses, such as the trucking industry, have to fill out paperwork and apply for rebates when the aviation industry doesn't? Why does this Premier seem to think that the government needs to pick winners and losers when it comes to the carbon tax rebates and exemptions?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I think we have done an effective job of explaining the unique circumstances when it comes to the north. We are going to be rebating all businesses that pay into the carbon pricing. We will be rebating those companies.

I want to thank these individual transport companies that have come to us and expressed their concerns. We had an excellent conversation about cargo and cargo being transported, either through aviation or through these companies. We have heard the concerns and we are working with the chamber of commerce to make sure that we have an effective system when we are rebating all of the money that comes in and goes back to those businesses.

I am proud of the work that we have done when it comes to making a unique case to Ottawa. I heard from the member opposite. I think he was just happy with the announcement that I was wrong, but I don't necessarily know if he is happy with the exemption. I will take it that he means both of those things.

Again, Canada is working on the details as far as how we are going to be able to apply the large-emitter rebates. That is, of course, called the output-based pricing sector — more details to come on that. We appreciate Yukoners' patience on that and their patience on when the Yukon government can get those cheques in the mail to make sure that this money is flowing — and that Yukoners can see that the carbon-pricing mechanism is a nod toward the economy, but it also shouldn't be affecting the economy.

Question re: Carbon tax

Mr. Cathers: We may be halfway through the Liberal term in office and still there is no clarity on the carbon tax. In May, the Premier announced that municipalities would get a rebate from the carbon tax scheme. Since then, we have heard radio silence. Municipalities are currently setting their budgets for next year, and they need this information. They would like details on how this scheme is going to impact them and what, if any, rebates they will receive.

Can the Premier tell us how the municipal carbon tax scheme is going to work? What is the structure? When and how will they receive those rebates?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I do appreciate the question, but it is interesting to see that, yes, halfway through the Legislative session, these are the first questions that we are getting from the Yukon Party when it comes to carbon pricing. Question Period or legislative returns — we didn't have to do any of those. Committee of the Whole debates — over 20 hours in general debate here in the Legislative Assembly talking about everything under the kitchen sink, but not one question from the Yukon Party on carbon pricing. Now, two days in a row, it is their only question. It's interesting, as we see federal things happening.

I do appreciate Yukoners' concerns as far as how we are going to get that cheque in the mail, and so we are going to make sure that those details come out as soon as possible. I do appreciate that there are some final details to come — two main final details, really. First, with those large industrial emitters and figuring out how we are going to deal with the output-based pricing sector past the placer miners — it is especially important to Yukoners because the mining industry may be subject to these yet-undeveloped rules. We share the member opposite's trepidation. We really want to make sure that we get those details out as soon as possible for Yukoners. I do agree that we need to get the information.

Secondly, Canada is focusing on introducing the carbon levy by January 19 and the details related to how this revenue will be distributed to the provinces and territories will follow after the carbon pricing begins. That was an issue, so we got the extension for six more months.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that the Premier is complaining that we are not asking enough carbon tax questions. We have asked them in multiple Sittings and have yet to receive a good answer from the government.

Municipalities are legitimately wondering how this tax scheme is going to work. We know that the Premier plays a bit fast and loose with budget planning — like the time he announced in the budget that he was going to give money to Challenge but then was unable to tell us how much money.

This Premier's lack of attention to detail is becoming legendary. He seems more focused on photo opportunities than on the finances of the territory. Municipalities have to pay closer attention to their books than the Premier does, and they need information about the impact on their budgets so they can plan their budgets for next year.

I have a simple question: Will the municipalities get a carbon tax rebate up front or will they get it back at the end of the year, and how will it be structured?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I guess it is a little bit new for the Yukon Party, who would make budgetary announcements outside of the Legislative Assembly, give details about the budget outside of the Legislative Assembly, make announcements like paving runways at Roundups in Vancouver and not commit on those promises. I can see where they understand a different way of doing budgeting and working with the taxpayers' money.

We do things differently here. We go through the Cabinet process and orders-in-council, and those come out directly after Cabinet Committee on Priorities and Planning, Cabinet Committee on Legislation and then Cabinet and Management Board decisions. That is how we're going to make our announcements.

We are having those ongoing, frequent conversations with the Government of Canada and expect to have the finalized details related to the application of the pricing in these competitive, vulnerable sectors that I spoke about. Sometime in November — I don't know if that's early enough for the Yukon Party. We keep on answering the questions, but the answers are not good enough for the Yukon Party — a Yukon Party that doesn't really have a plan when it comes to carbon and that likes to talk when I'm talking in the Legislative Assembly as well. We're continuing to have those conversations with Canada and it has become clear that we want to get those details out as quickly as possible, especially when the Yukon Liberal Party — this government — can get those cheques in the mail for Yukon individuals and for Yukon businesses as soon as we possibly can, because those are the important issues and details that are left after all of the other information that we have shared in the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Cathers: I have to remind the Premier that he's breaking new ground as the first Finance minister in Yukon history who can't talk about the major elements of his own budget and explain them on the floor of the Assembly.

This carbon tax scheme that the Premier signed up for without knowing if it will actually work — as he slipped and admitted on national TV this week — is going to place

enormous pressures on municipal budgets. We know that. We don't know what rebate they will receive, if any, and what is disturbing is that the Premier doesn't seem to know either — or he will not tell municipalities.

I'm asking a simple question: Can the Premier tell us if each community will get 100 percent back of what they pay on the Liberal carbon tax or if it will be something different? Municipalities simply can't afford to be the targets of a Liberal experiment on carbon pricing that — the Premier himself admitted this week — he doesn't even know will work.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I love how the Yukon Party puts new words out there all the time and makes assumptions based upon half quotes. It just does such a disservice to intellectual debate in the Legislative Assembly, but I digress on that.

Carbon pricing is the most effective way to reduce emissions and to drive innovation toward a low-carbon future. The Mining Association of Canada and Nobel Prize-winning economists all agree. We have committed to ensuring that carbon pricing considers the unique circumstances of the north and does not put an undue pressure on Yukoners. That's what we're talking about here in the Legislative Assembly today. This is why we've committed to returning all of the revenues collected to Yukon households and businesses.

Yukoners are worried about the impact on climate change. They want a government that's going to take action. The melting of glaciers, the receding of rivers — we're talking about the patterns of rivers and record temperatures as well. As the Leader of the Third Party talks off-mic, I will continue to fight for the environment, and I will also continue to fight for the economy.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

OPPOSITION PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 294 — *adjourned debate*

Deputy Clerk: Motion No. 294, standing in the name of Ms. White; adjourned debate, Hon. Mr. Streicker.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, I would just like to begin by thanking the Member for Takhini-Kopper King for having raised this motion, I think, this past spring, and also the Member for Copperbelt North for having raised a motion similar to it. I really appreciate that we got to this debate two weeks ago. Thanks to the Third Party for bringing it back onto the Order Paper today. I am looking forward to continuing this debate.

Earlier this week, there was a news story that came out of Dawson City. It was from the folks at the Conservation Klondike Society. I'm not sure if I got the order right there. They are developing a reusable bag library, so they have put up some small boxes around the community near stores where

they put in reusable cloth bags to discourage the citizens of Dawson City from using single-use plastic bags, because we know that they are a real problem. I heard Ms. Katie English on the radio talking about it and I thought that was great. I have to put a call into Mayor Potoroka shortly on several issues. I am going to certainly have a conversation with him about that. I think that is a terrific initiative, and I would like to give a shout-out to the Conservation Klondike Society.

I want to talk about that example. As we discussed on the floor of the Legislature last time, it is an indication of Yukoners' interest and willingness to get to the point of eliminating single-use plastics. We know the problems that ensue for just the fleeting use of an object that, within seconds, can become something that goes from something you are using to something that goes into our landfills — or the environment, which is worse. It just is a great indication that the public is willing to get there.

The Member for Takhini-Kopper King made a comment during her opening debate on this about the importance of government showing leadership on this — that we should not in some way just try to rely on individual initiative to deal with this. I agree with her. I think that is a point well made.

I am going to turn back for a moment. I sort of finished off a couple of weeks ago talking about the ministerial Solid Waste Advisory Committee. I brought with me their recommendations for action, which we have adopted. I announced at the Association of Yukon Communities that we were working toward this and also said at that time that it was with a willingness to go further. I hope this is an example to show where we can and should go further. I know this is up on our website, but I thought to myself, "Well, maybe the right thing to do would be to table it somewhere in the coming days," Mr. Speaker. So I will make a legislative return of it and put it on the record so that everyone can see it. I encourage those who want to see it to turn to the website.

The committee, as I noted, is made up of both members from across the territory from various communities, including Whitehorse, but also including our rural communities and members of government. They are on the side of folks who deal with our solid-waste facilities. They are the ones on the front line dealing with solid waste and they are a great group. I would like to thank them for their work and for the advice that they have given.

One of the things that I wanted to talk about was making sure that this is not a hollow motion — that there is not just talk about it — and that we try to get to action. That was one of the requests from the Member for Takhini-Kopper King — that there be actual results. I think she said something like — and my apologies if I am paraphrasing; hopefully she can help us out here if I get it wrong in closing — she did not want to see this just be a discussion and then we find out in 2020 that nothing has happened. When I saw that the motion was coming forward a couple of weeks ago, I reached out to the Solid Waste Advisory Committee. As it turned out, the very morning of our debate, they met. I had asked them if they could please discuss this very issue about single-use plastics and how to address them, whether we could add it into the

scope of work that they had identified in the initial advisory recommendations, and they were all thumbs-up, which is great news. So we have started.

We have set up a meeting to sit down and talk with them about this. I have been invited to be part of that meeting. I think it has been set up for the end of next month or it is meeting in November — within a month. Let's say that, Mr. Speaker, because here we are: Happy Halloween to everybody. I do want to see action. Luckily, the way that they have set up the recommendations is that there is an opportunity here to integrate within the system that they have developed and make an effort toward the elimination of single-use plastics.

I want to be careful — one of the things that I heard back when I talked with one of the co-chairs two weeks ago is just that they expressed some concerns to me about trying to get to 100-percent elimination right away. They understand the notion of the aspiration to get to zero waste but they also recognize that we need to temper that with some reality. Mr. Speaker, I will use an engineering phrase: It is the 80/20 rule. To get to 80 percent of the solution, it is going to take 20 percent of the effort. To get the final 20 percent is going to be the reverse — it takes a large amount of effort. This, along with the notion that we have lots of issues within our solid-waste system to try to get at it — I want to keep getting at dealing with 80 percent of the problems often, with this and other issues.

I outlined two weeks ago the *Designated Materials Regulation*, and I was thinking back to how long it took to get this last round of designated material regulations which came in recently. It took years. I think that the Yukon Party started with this somewhere around 2012-13 and it took at least five years to get them. We need to get that system moving faster. I am really excited to see the *Designated Materials Regulation* come in. It is early days.

We will need to be doing some analysis on it to understand how it's working across all facets of our society, but what I can say is that I have seen improvements already in our solid-waste facilities.

Just a reminder to everybody that when you're dealing with electronic waste, if you're in the City of Whitehorse, please get it to Raven Recycling; if you are outside of the City of Whitehorse, please get it to your solid-waste facility. We're setting up so it's collected from everywhere.

I want to give one other example of a challenge just for a second. On the same day that this motion came forward two weeks ago, we had the legalization of cannabis here in Canada and here in the Yukon. On that first day, I started to hear my first concerns from citizens about packaging around cannabis. Let me also say, Mr. Speaker, if packaging is my only problem about cannabis, I'm pretty excited that it's the problem I have to deal with, not other issues. I'm very happy that we're dealing with the issue of displacing the illicit market. One of the issues around ensuring the health and safety of everyone is that the federal government has set up a lot of rules through Health Canada about the packaging. Packaging, to me and many Yukoners, seems to be excessive.

I have met with the president of the Liquor Corporation and asked that we reach out to the federal Minister of Health to talk about the packaging rules around cannabis. It just gives me an example that there are challenges to addressing the complex issue of solid waste and, in particular, this issue around single-use plastics.

Two weeks ago, when the Member for Takhini-Kopper King brought forward this motion, I reached out to her to talk about an amendment. I would like to move that amendment now.

Amendment proposed

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I move:

THAT Motion No. 294 be amended by:

(1) inserting the phrase “local business, consumers” between the words “with” and “industry”; and

(2) deleting all the words after “governments to” and replacing them with the phrase “work toward eliminating the distribution of single-use plastic, including plastic bags, food and beverage containers, straws, utensils, lids and packaging”.

Speaker: I have had an opportunity to review the proposed amendment with Madam Clerk of Committees and can advise that the proposed amendment is procedurally in order.

It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services:

THAT Motion No. 294 be amended by:

(1) inserting the phrase “local business, consumers” between the words “with” and “industry”; and

(2) deleting all the words after “governments to” and replacing them with the phrase “work toward eliminating the distribution of single-use plastic, including plastic bags, food and beverage containers, straws, utensils, lids and packaging”.

The proposed motion as amended would then read:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to respond to the presence of plastics in Earth's oceans, fresh water and environment by working with local businesses, consumers, industry, and municipal and First Nation governments to work toward eliminating the distribution of single-use plastic, including plastic bags, food and beverage containers, straws, utensils, lids and packaging.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I won't speak to the amendment too long but just to introduce a couple of points. The first one is that we do appreciate in the motion where it discussed industry and both municipal and First Nation governments. I recall that as we were doing the *Designated Materials Regulation* and we went back out to engage with the public, both the Minister of Environment and I were there, and I recall several MLAs, including the MLA for Takhini-Kopper King and several members of the opposition, attended. One of the things that I heard loud and clear is that we have to make sure to be reaching out to more than just the industry. The industry is very important, but also there were these other groups, the consumer groups and local business. I think that just adds to this motion.

As I said, I had a conversation with the Member for Takhini-Kopper King about trying to make this an achievable motion for us — to keep the aspiration toward the elimination and to work toward it. But also, as I stood here today and two weeks ago, I have tried to give confidence that this is a motion that we intend to act on, and in fact, we have already begun the action on it.

I want to pass across the encouragement of the committee. I spoke to them directly about it — but also, we're all Yukoners. We all bump into each other out there in the community from time to time. I did happen to bump into a couple of the members of the committee on a couple of occasions and they expressed their excitement toward this and gave me some ideas about how they felt that this could be achieved. In particular, they really enjoyed — when they did the analysis on the Northwest Territories, they thought that was a very good model given our size of jurisdiction and the realities that we face. It was a very good fit. I think that's one of the places — as we do a cross-jurisdictional look to try to understand how to achieve this or what the best method would be for the Yukon, I'm sure that's going to be one of the places that we look at very closely.

I just want to relay to the members of this Legislature that the committee is looking forward to working on this. In fact, what I will say for the folks here is that when they first were struck as a committee and they brought forward the main message — they asked me to please take leadership on this and to not sit back on it. With that, we adopted every recommendation, and I asked them that if we could go further, then to please work with me on that. This is a great example of that and I'm happy that it's coming forward.

Ms. White: I would be lying if I said that I'm a big fan of the words “work toward”, because I'm not — I'm really not — especially adding “work toward” before “eliminating”. But in the spirit of cooperation, I will support the minister's amendment. I have to say that I do appreciate that the minister has agreed to keep the word “eliminating” rather than the word “reducing”, which was initially proposed. For me, there is a big difference between “eliminating” and “reducing”. I will go with “work toward” because of that cooperation that was shown me in keeping the word “eliminating”.

The reason for this is that we're past the point when reducing our consumption of single-use plastics is enough. We need to eliminate it. We need to remove them all together. It's both feasible and it's necessary.

It's interesting that the minister spoke about Dawson City because there are even bigger examples right now. In fact, no later than last week, the European Parliament — which is composed of 751 members representing 28 member states and is the largest trans-national democratic electorate in the world, with over 375 million eligible voters — has voted for a complete ban on a range of single-use plastics across the union in a bid to stop pollution of the oceans. The ban will include things like plastic cutlery and plates, cotton buds, straws, drink stirrers and balloon sticks — because it turns out

that balloon sticks are a big deal in the European Union. Who knew?

They have been clear that the measure still has to clear some procedural hurdles, but it is expected to go through, and the EU hopes that it will go into effect across the block by 2021. It's important to note that, up to this point, some of those member states have already made their own announcements that they will endeavour to do this by 2021.

Mr. Speaker, the EU didn't stop there. Members of the European Parliament also tacked on amendments to the plans for cigarette filters, a plastic pollutant that is common litter on beaches and — as we know here — off the side of trails and everywhere. Cigarette makers will have to reduce the plastic by 50 percent by 2025 and 80 percent by 2030. This is an example of how when the government or governments make a decision, industry and manufacturers will change their habits — but we have to insist on it.

Another ambitious target is to ensure that 90 percent of all plastic drink bottles are collected for recycling by 2025. The European Parliament report says that currently bottles and their lids account for about 20 percent of all the sea plastic. Although we might be ahead in plastic drinking containers, we have a way to go on the others.

Mr. Speaker, if the European Union can do it on such a large scale, I am sure that we can do it in the Yukon on a much smaller scale.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on the proposed amendment?

Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Madam Deputy Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

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

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the amendment carried.

Amendment to Motion No. 294 agreed to

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

Mr. Kent: I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to speak to this motion as amended here this afternoon. I want to thank the Member for Takhini-Kopper King for bringing it forward, as well as the Minister of Community Services for the amendment that he brought forward.

I note that the Minister of Community Services mentioned that when debate adjourned on this motion two weeks ago, in the intervening time, he has initiated some conversations with groups. I will have to go back through the Blues to see exactly who he spoke of, but Zero Waste Yukon was on there. We certainly want to make sure that the hospitality sector and retailers are included in those conversations on the front end. I think it's important for them to be able to adapt quickly to what we're trying to do here with respect to eliminating the single-use plastics that are talked about in the amended motion.

As we know, many of the hospitality sector — restaurants, bars and other businesses like that around town — are already starting to do that. They're getting rid of straws. They're not automatically providing you with a straw with your drink, or they're offering biodegradable takeout containers, and we think that's great news. We're excited to see industry already starting to adapt to what many see as something that's inevitably coming as governments make these types of decisions and as legislatures such as ours — not only in North America but, as the Member for Takhini-Kopper King referenced, all over the world — are starting to make these types of decisions.

I think one of the things that we have to be mindful of is the substitution that some of these businesses need to put in place or can put in place when it comes to getting rid of plastic lids or plastic straws or that type of thing. I know that as a parent of a young child — many staffers, not only on our side but on the other side of the Assembly, have young children — we can all say that the plastic straw is sometimes what saves us from an awfully big mess happening. We want to make sure those alternatives are there and that they're practical alternatives for businesses.

One of the other things that may or may not be captured in this is making sure that we look at medical waste as well. That's something that's extremely important. The minister referenced that what we're seeing is excessive packaging on cannabis and we are pleased that he has started working with the federal government on that. Again, medical waste will have to be something that is taken into consideration as well, I think, and ensuring that as this work goes forward.

Again, congratulations to the minister and the Member for Takhini-Kopper King for having something initiated so quickly from a motion that hadn't even passed the House yet.

That said, we are pleased that work is underway, and we want to ensure that industry — in particular, the retail and hospitality industry — is engaged right from the beginning so that we don't end up in a situation where there is something being legislated or mandated for them that doesn't have a practical alternative for them. Again, I think the more people we have on the front end talking about this, the less surprises we will have on the back end.

Again, thank you to the Member for Takhini-Kopper King for her initial motion. Thank you for the amendment. We will be supporting this motion as amended today.

Mr. Adel: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to rise to speak to Motion No. 294 as amended. I also would like to congratulate the Member for Takhini-Kopper King for bringing this motion forward; it is very important.

For over a century, Mr. Speaker, we have been extracting oil and using it, and its by-products are smothering our planet. With this amended motion, our government is committed to responding to the presence of plastic in Earth's oceans, fresh water and environment by working with local businesses, consumers, industry, municipal and First Nation governments to work toward eliminating the distribution of single-use plastic bags and to work toward the elimination of the use of single-use plastic food and beverage containers, including straws, utensils and lids.

According to an estimate by the federal government, single-use plastics in the ocean could outweigh fish as soon as 2050. We cannot wait for the federal government to introduce policies to curb plastic waste. Nationally, it has been business and lower levels of government that have led the charge to change on this front. The forward-thinking Province of PEI passed a bill this past June becoming the first province in Canada to prohibit retailers from using single-use plastic bags. Instead, members are encouraged to use paper bags or bring their own reusable cloth bags. The bustling metropolis of Montreal banned plastic bags as of January 1 this year. In the oil production capital of Canada, the municipality of Wood Buffalo, Alberta, they banned the use of plastic shopping bags for most retailers. Vancouver is committed to becoming a zero-waste city by 2040. Earlier this year, they became the first Canadian municipality to ban plastic straws. They have also taken steps to ban the distribution of foam cups and takeout containers. Currently, major Canadian cities like Edmonton and Toronto are considering their options to curb single-use plastic items.

Here in Whitehorse, national franchise A&W has committed to being part of the way forward. A&W has committed to eliminating all plastic straws by the end of 2018.

Mr. Speaker, with so many initiatives taking place across the country to work toward the elimination of single-use plastics, we in the Yukon should be part of that movement. We should be there. There is no excuse.

Over two million people worldwide participated in this year's Plastic Free July challenge. Plastic Free July encourages participants to envision a world without plastic

waste, and encourages participants to confront the number of unnecessary plastics that pervade our everyday lives.

The notion of living without a single-use plastic is a hard one to get used to but it doesn't have to be. Simple behavioural changes such as using a refillable coffee cup and water bottle, saying "no thanks" to straws and disposable cutlery and remembering to bring a reusable bag to the grocery store are significant ways ordinary Yukoners can drastically reduce their environmental footprint.

Here at home, Yukoners have been making conscientious efforts to work toward eliminating their use of disposable plastic items. Zero Waste Yukon adheres to the goal of using sustainable used materials through thoughtful design, reducing consumption and increasing the recovery of resources. The organization highlights the achievement of people, organizations, businesses and communities to work toward eliminating waste through their "be a Zero Hero" program.

Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker: Yukoners are already leading the way. Small business owners know that reducing their dependence on single-use plastics doesn't have to be complicated or expensive. By purchasing in bulk, reducing the packaging of products we sell, lining compost and waste bins with old newspapers instead of plastic, we can make a significant difference.

Going forward, the Liberal caucus will undertake to ensure each of our MLA constituency events are plastic free. We encourage members of the public to bring their own plates, cups and cutlery to our free meals. We have supplied recyclable utensils and ensured that compost and recycling bins are on hand to divert unnecessary waste to our landfill.

Twenty years ago, we didn't think twice before tossing our hot-chocolate-laced Styrofoam cups into the trash after a Jackrabbit practice or at a hockey game or about throwing our straws into the garbage after a soda or a slushie. However, times have changed. In that time, those straws and bits of Styrofoam haven't disappeared; they have cycled in the ocean currents. We are all seeing the disturbing images of sea turtles encumbered with plastic straws and read about the huge mass of packed plastic circulating in our oceans.

It's time to recognize that we must also change our perception and behaviour when it comes to plastic consumption. Yukoners have all been to potlucks, community halls or public meetings where free coffee, tea and snacks have been provided. It's time that we change our behaviour to ensure "free" means "plastic free" as well.

Like the microplastics that pollute our oceans and Great Lakes, it's the little things that make a difference. It's time for the Yukon as a whole to take a step forward toward becoming part of the solution. We will work toward eliminating single-use plastics. I look forward to standing with members of this House to vote on this amended motion.

Hon. Ms. Frost: I am honoured to rise today and speak to this motion concerning single-use plastics in the Yukon.

The volume of plastic material used today and seen around our environment is very concerning. Everything we do as a society, from meeting our basic needs to enjoying our

leisure time with family and friends, impacts the water, the air and the land we share. Burning wood to heat our homes sends smoke into the air; bathing and washing adds soap and solvents to our water; making food to feed our family produces waste and much of that waste is made up of single-use plastics.

I am really honoured and proud to say that my own community of Vuntut Gwitchin of Old Crow has banned plastics. The Old Crow cooperative has banned plastics and they are using boxes and paper bags, and others bring their own reusable bags. They have also gone ahead and passed a GA resolution many years ago to introduce the elimination of plastics in the community, recognizing that northern rural Yukon communities rely on having to transport waste out of the community — that this is one way of addressing the environmental impacts.

Plastic bags to carry our food home from the grocery stores, as noted, are being addressed in our communities, and this is something we want to work toward in other communities. Lids and containers bring our food home from restaurants — straws and utensils to consume our food. Evidence is increasing about the adverse effects related to single-use plastics in marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems.

It is estimated that about eight million tons of plastic waste enters the oceans every year from human use on land. Plastic pollution and waste are not only detrimental to the plants and animals of our world but can also have a significant impact on tourism, fisheries and livelihoods. These impacts make plastic pollution an issue on international, national and local concerns.

Among other things, the Yukon Department of Environment is responsible for assessing, regulating and helping us to manage the impacts we have on the air, water and land. We have heard from Yukoners directly about the use of single-use plastics and plastic pollution. We want our children to have healthy ecosystems and smaller environmental impacts. We want future generations to have the tools, safeguards and equipment they need to maintain a strong economy and a healthy environment.

This government is committed to continual improvements in recycling, waste reduction and environmental stewardship. We work with numerous partners to do so. Addressing plastics is a current focal point for the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, which I am a part of. It's important to continue to work with our partners at the federal level, as currently only 11 percent of plastics used in Canada are recycled.

Closer to home, we have a ministerial committee on solid waste. This committee is made up of the Government of Yukon, the Association of Yukon Communities and Yukon municipalities. A recent recommendation from the ministerial committee on solid waste was that, as a government, we continue to explore an extended producer responsibility. This approach to recycling puts the responsibility on industry instead of government to develop recycling programs for the products they use and produce.

While extended producer responsibility programs are common in the provinces and elsewhere in the world, they do not exist in any of Canada's northern territories. Effectively addressing this issue will require action not only from the Yukon government, but from businesses and consumers as well.

I might add that this government has been proactive in tackling recycling issues in the Yukon. We have made changes to the beverage container regulations which came into effect in August 2017. These changes add categories of recyclable materials to the regulations and change the surcharge fee structure. This has simplified and ensured better management of more items under territorial and municipal waste management programs.

Just this year, we updated and introduced new surcharges for tires, electronic devices and electrical items. This change makes recycling more financially sustainable and reduces illegal dumping. While this government has expanded the types of plastic that are recycled in Yukon, we are still seeing volumes in our waste. Unfortunately, it often ends up in the environment. It can be difficult, especially in remote places, to understand what to do with waste, and more importantly, how we reduce it.

I emphasize the need to reduce our waste because too often, the costs of recycling or properly managing waste are more than the price that the product was purchased for. For example, in the north, we have to consider the emissions produced by transporting consumer products up to the territory and then we have to turn around and send it back down south to be recycled. That's no different than in my community of Old Crow where we acquire and collect the recyclables, and whenever we put a winter road in is when we ship it out. That's not something that the community supports and they are looking at some alternative options. We are looking at how to more effectively address recycling for a wider variety of products. Part of this will involve regulatory change, which does take some time to accomplish.

As we continue to try to reduce waste produced in Yukon, we will be engaging our stakeholders to make sure we are supporting diverse economic growth in an environmentally responsible way. We are committed to reducing the amount of plastic waste that ends up in our landfills and keeping it out of the environment. As Yukoners, we all have a part to play. Together, we can make sure future generations are not burdened with the liabilities from improper management of waste.

Ms. Hanson: I won't take long. I just wanted to say I appreciate the sincerity of the words that I have heard spoken here this afternoon. I hear a clear concern for what is recognized globally and locally as a very serious issue — an issue that we all have been part of creating.

What I am concerned about is a sense — and my colleague from Takhini-Copper King is way more polite than I am in terms of her willingness to want to believe that when we change language from the imperative to a process that there is that commitment.

The difference between what I am hearing in this Legislative Assembly and what I am seeing across the world and across Canada is, in fact, a decision being taken. I respect entirely the importance of various ministerial committees and committees involved and stakeholders throughout the territory, but you have to be clear when those committees get together that they have an objective. If the objective is clearly stated, then committees will work toward that. What I have not heard very clearly from the minister opposite or government members is that the objective is to eliminate single-use plastic. We have talked about working toward it. I have heard a lot about moving from recycling or talking about the difficulties of recycling, and yes, I acknowledge, as the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin has pointed out, that there are huge costs associated with the recycling initiatives and efforts we make in isolated parts of the country, but the objective is to move from recycling to eliminating — to getting rid of single-use plastics.

What I was hoping to see and to hear from this government was an absolute statement of commitment that this is what they are going to do. It is not that we are going to do it today. Nobody is saying that, Mr. Speaker. My colleague from Takhini-Copper King didn't come into this Legislative Assembly and say "today", but what we have seen across the country, which is different from what I am hearing repeatedly from this government, is not a stated objective that "We will do this." For example, yes, I agree with the Member for Copperbelt North that Montreal did say on January 1, 2016, that it was going to eliminate single-use plastic, but it didn't do it on January 1. It gave the time to have that implemented over time, so by June — it provided six months' notice — businesses knew that was coming. Prior to that, there had been work done.

They made a decision, and what I am not hearing from the government here is a declarative statement that, "We will eliminate single-use plastic as an objective of our government's efforts." That is the objective. That clarity is what is needed. That leadership is what is needed.

That is why I will support this motion. I will support it with a hope — a deep hope — that it will move from process to action and that we will not be talking about this in five years or 10 years. In our lifetimes — it has only been since the 1980s that the use of single-use plastic has exploded globally. We didn't start making these things until then. Anybody who has travelled, walking down the river — every day when I walk on the Yukon River, there is single-use plastic. Walking in Kenya or walking in Costa Rica, Mexico or Australia — those countries have started to work on this. They made that decision. We in this little jurisdiction can't do that. We can't say out loud that we want to do that and we want to get into another process. How long is that process going to go, Mr. Speaker? That is what I am unsure of. At the end of this day, we will walk out of here and we will have said some really nice words about how important the environment is to us, but I am not sure that is going to assuage or make anybody feel any better when the reality is that there will continue to be

the importation and the dumping, effectively, throughout our environment of single-use plastic.

I am hopeful that my skepticism will be replaced by appreciation — or direct and clear statements from the government about how — so not about more process but making a clear statement that we are moving from making an effort, and the minister and this government believe that there is a real and urgent imperative toward eliminating single-use plastic, and that they will indicate that. They have said this on many other issues. They have told us they believe in evidence-based decision-making, so I don't know how many more bodies of evidence we need to accumulate — it is globally there, it is nationally there and it is locally here.

I am looking for that kind of clarity, and I think that Yukoners are. I have heard repeatedly binging around this Legislative Assembly this afternoon that Yukoners are taking the lead. Yukoners know that this is an issue. Yukoners are telling ministers that they need to do something, we need to do something; they want to do something. Let's just say that we are going to do it, and then let's talk about the "how" as part of that process — the working toward. I want to hear that this is what we are working toward, and that is not what is in this motion. When I vote today, it will be with reluctant support for something that could have been much clearer and more direct in terms of a stated objective, but there we go.

Mr. Gallina: Thank you for the motion being brought forward by the Member for Takhini-Kopper King and for the debate that we have had here today. Thank you to the minister for bringing the amendment forward.

I just wanted to say a couple of things on the sincerity of this government in committing to move in a direction that I believe Yukoners do support. This does signal to consumers; this does signal to industry; this does signal to municipalities and First Nations that we are prepared to work toward eliminating single-use plastics. This is genuine, and this is a statement that we are making here. We are debating this today.

We have confidence that we can get to the "how" that the member from the Third Party has brought forward. I think those are valid points, and I think we all want to get to the point of the "how". We also are mindful of getting to that point. I just want to quickly say that this government is sincere in working toward this. I will reiterate that there are many user groups that we are signalling today with this motion being brought forward, as amended, that we are working toward the elimination of single-use plastics, and we are prepared to talk about the "how" — the minister has said that.

We are working toward the elimination of single-use plastics and we are prepared to talk about the "how". The minister has said that. Colleagues of this caucus are prepared to talk about the "how".

The eventual goal is the elimination — we agree with that. Our goal is elimination, and with this motion, as amended, we are showing that we're prepared to take that commitment and we're prepared to take those next steps. This

is a significant move toward the elimination of single-use plastics.

I thank the members for debate today.

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

Does any other member wish to be heard on debate on Motion No. 294 as amended?

Ms. White: I'm going to start by saying I have been to dozens and dozens of meetings talking about recycling, about demand-side management and extended producer responsibility. I have been to weekend workshops put on by Zero Waste Yukon. I have toured the waste management facility in Whitehorse and in communities. I have gone out to Mount Lorne. I have gone out to Tagish. I have gone to Marsh Lake and other areas as well.

When I bring this forward, I bring it with an understanding of the challenges across the board. I understand this won't be easy — I do. I understand that. I have heard what the ministers have had to say and what the other members have had to say, but eliminating single-use plastics will require more than just our passionate words. What we have seen with the example of Montreal is that the date was January 1, and then it didn't start until June. We have the European Union — they have set a date that they will work toward. There is a concrete date.

I want to offer a word of caution. The motions we pass in this Legislative Assembly are just words, and whether those words have any material impact on the real world depends on the political will of the government. It does; it depends on the government. We hope that in a year or two we won't be here in this House talking about the same issue and that I won't be told by government that, yes, we're working toward it, we have had an online survey, we have had this committee meet and that committee meet and they have brought back four recommendations, because if it just keeps going into the future, our landfills are filling up with plastic at great cost to governments now. We're seeing the cost of landfill remediation across the territory. We haven't seen the remediation yet, but we see it coming.

Our environment and our oceans are suffering from our society's addiction to plastic. It's a major concern now. It's not going to decrease between now and the future.

Mr. Speaker, for all these reasons, years on in the real world nothing will have changed if governments don't make the decision. If you get your takeout food, it will still come in a plastic container with plastic cutlery unless we tell people that we want it to be different and that we insist that it be different. There will still be plastic bags along the riverfront, along McIntyre Creek and along our favourite walks no matter where we are in the territory, and single-use plastics will continue to pollute the world we live in.

Mr. Speaker, I'm hopeful that this isn't the road that government takes because I want to know that when we have had these sincere conversations here, the political will is there to make lasting change.

In that hope, I offer the dual ministers who share this file my full collaboration to make sure that this issue of eliminating single-use plastics becomes a reality in Yukon. I will go out and have the conversations. I will assist in whichever ways I can because I am convince that we can do it. I absolutely fundamentally believe that we can make the change.

What I am hopeful for is that government will make a formal announcement that single-use plastics will be banned in Yukon, just like the EU did. They adopted a clear timeline. It doesn't need to happen overnight, I understand. I mean, ideally, it would happen overnight, but it can't happen overnight. I understand that. The European Union set themselves a deadline of 2021, so they had a time frame that they were going to work toward.

If we were to set a clear goal with a timeline — say, a year or two or three, if needed — then I believe that government can use that time to work with all the parties that we listed in the efforts that we have highlighted.

Changing won't be easy, and it will require businesses to change suppliers. It will require individuals to change their habits and some people are not going to be happy. They weren't happy with the changes to demand-side management. They weren't happy with the EPR. That is okay, because we have to make the choices that make the most sense for the future, whether they are popular or not.

I hope that the government has the strength of conviction to make this happen. I hope they have the belief that this is the right thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, my hope is that at the end of the 34th Assembly we will have made a statement, a clear statement, which will have banned single-use plastics in Yukon. Our future depends on it, and Yukoners are ready and they are able. They are interested in making single-use plastics a thing of the past.

I thank my colleagues for the broad discussion, and I look forward to a Yukon without single-use plastics.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question on the motion as amended?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Madam Deputy Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Deputy Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 18 yeas, nil nays.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion, as amended, carried.

Motion No. 294, as amended, agreed to

Motion No. 192

Deputy Clerk: Motion No. 192, standing in the name of Mr. Istchenko.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Kluane:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with the City of Whitehorse and the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 254 in the planning and development of a veterans square.

Mr. Istchenko: It is a pleasure to rise to speak to this motion today. I believe this is a timely motion, as we are approaching Remembrance Day. It gives us a great time to recognize the hard work the legion does at this time of the year and throughout the year. As we have a newly minted council for the City of Whitehorse, it is also timely, as this motion seeks to work with the city to bring this idea to fruition.

I will first start by saying there is an existing veterans square here in Whitehorse and it consists of a cenotaph and plaques. I know all of us here in the House understand where that location is but for those who are listening, it faces Second Avenue and it is located between city hall and the fire hall. For those who are aware of its existence and who have attended gatherings there, they can attest that there is not very much room there and the space issues do, in fact, prevent larger or more accessible public gatherings from taking place.

Quite often, we see large groups for ceremonial purposes, such as the first poppy ceremony, which was held at the square last Friday. We saw a very large gathering for Filipino Independence Day. With gatherings of this size and nature, there are safety concerns that arise due to the size and location of the square. Being directly adjacent to Second Avenue means large gatherings creating quite a spectacle to motorists. Distractions can be dangerous, and often you see drivers straining to get a look at what might be going on there.

Further, because the location of the current veterans square is so small in size, it does hamper planning for a number of potential events and ceremonies. Increasing the size would have multiple benefits for the city and, of course, for our community. I believe, as do many others, that it is a great time to consider creating a new space accessible to all and plan to address some of the current safety concerns.

Initial discussions have taken place between the City of Whitehorse and the legion with respect to the proposed new location for the veterans square.

As the city is planning the renovations for city hall and fire hall, it would be timely and efficient to undertake to also make plans for changes and upgrades to the square.

The proposed location by the legion, working with the city, would not move far — located on Steele Street between city hall and the CIBC parking lot. The proposed location is not only bigger but safer for those using the space. It would have room to grow and room for people to access. Ceremonies taking place at the cenotaph would attract more pedestrian traffic, and it would be a wonderful thing to see more people able to attend these important events. It's educational, as each ceremony marks a special event in history in our country. The legion's motto of "Lest we forget" would reach a larger audience, giving true meaning to the phrase by welcoming all to remember.

I would just like to touch on some of the ceremonies that take place at the cenotaph. We see Remembrance Day events, of course, like the "first poppy" ceremony I mentioned earlier, but we also see VE-Day, victory in Europe, or VJ-Day, victory over Japan, and other notable historic dates celebrated from throughout the history of Canada's military and Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

We saw the 100th anniversary of the RCMP where Yukoners remembered members of both the North-West Mounted Police and the RCMP, such as Major General Samuel Steele — Sam Steele — and, of course, we all know and have heard of him. His is a historic name to most Yukoners and he was a distinguished Canadian soldier and a police official. He was an officer of the North-West Mounted Police, most famously. He was the head of the Yukon detachment during the Klondike Gold Rush and the commanding officer of Strathcona's Horse during the Boer War.

Other significant ceremonies worth mentioning were the 50th anniversary, and last year, the 75th anniversary of the Alaska Highway. Our main highway was constructed during World War II for the purpose of connecting the southern United States to Alaska through Canada in response to the threat of Japanese invasion of the west coast after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

These are just a few reasons why our cenotaph in veterans square is so important. The new location will have room, as I alluded to earlier. This will make it better for ceremonies as most of the ceremonies do have a parade with soldiers, and there will be room for both soldiers and spectators. As well, there will be places to install future monuments, and those were some of the discussions for first responders, the RCMP, firefighters and EMS, among others. Additional flag poles can be installed.

One major thing for me and many others is to have a place to go sit and reflect or remember, or for a school class to go and learn about an event or a person and remember the history that got us to where we are today. When I first heard of this idea, I was at a legion meeting about a year ago, I

believe. One of the big things I was impressed with was how the city was and is accommodating in recognizing the efforts of the legion, and I thought about how we as legislators can help. This discussion today in the House on this motion is a wonderful first step.

Our discussion today — and I am looking forward to hearing from members opposite and from the Third Party — highlights the work and discussions that are happening. I am also happy to provide some background as to why those discussions are so important. When I was writing this earlier yesterday, I was reminded of our cenotaph in Haines Junction. It is located in front of the Village of Haines Junction offices at the St. Elias Convention Centre.

We didn't have one, but it was members of the Haines Junction Ranger patrol and I who went to the mayor and council of the day with that idea. They were so accommodating and recognized the need for a place to remember. Our patrol — we went out and we did the work. We commandeered a rather large boulder of about four tonnes from one of the local highway jobs. We almost killed a pickup truck loading it, and I had to get a bigger vehicle, but we got it. We asked our commanding officer to help us pay for the plaque. They were more than happy to, and we got the work done. That's how things get done in Canada and you can see it all the time in the Yukon here especially.

We worked together to ensure that our history is not forgotten through initiatives like this, and we must remember. If we do not, the sacrifice of those Canadians' lives will be meaningless. The meaning of their sacrifice rests on our collective national consciousness. Our future is their monument.

In closing, I just want to really thank the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 254 for their efforts in moving this forward and the City of Whitehorse for listening, recognizing and being so accommodating.

Like I said earlier, I sure am looking forward to hearing from my fellow colleagues in the House here today about this initiative. Highlighting this initiative is just going to bring it out to Yukoners that "Hey, you know, the Legislature supports this great initiative." I hope today the members of this House can lend our support for this initiative through a unanimous support of this motion.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Speaker: I would just like to take the opportunity at this time to acknowledge that in the gallery we have David Laxton, former Speaker of the House and veteran member of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 254. I am sure he is interested in the debate on Motion No. 192. Welcome to the House.

Applause

Speaker: Is there any further debate on Motion No. 192?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Let me begin by thanking the member opposite for bringing forward this motion. I just want

to start by acknowledging that this year marks 100 years since the armistice of the First World War, so I think it is a time when it's very important to reflect on the service and the sacrifice of all those who have gone before us and served. I know that this is a very important thing for Yukoners.

We had 600 Yukoners, and I think our population at the time — 600 Yukoners went to serve overseas in the First World War — and if our population was about 5,000 people at that time, that's, like, 12 percent of our population, which was way above anywhere else in the country. It is a real indication of the spirit of the Yukon. I know that the Premier would talk about Joe Boyle and the Yukon machine gun detachment, and we all know about Commissioner Black leading a contingent of men. I understand, as well — when the monument recently went up at the corner of Fourth and Main Street — that Martha Black also went overseas to serve. I think that there is a long history — to use the word that the member opposite used — here in the territory.

I'm going to tell you a story of my own. In preparing for our Remembrance Day tribute and Remembrance Day coming up and the 100th anniversary, I called up my nephew, because he happens to have my grandfather's Belgian Croix de Guerre, which is now with his great-grandson.

I remember my grandfather ever so slightly. I never had a chance to talk with him because he passed away when I was very, very young, but my mom and I talked often. My grandfather was born in the year of the Klondike Gold Rush. He was orphaned at the age of eight, and he was living on his own by the age of 12. When he turned 17, he walked with his two brothers — one older and one younger — 45 miles to enlist. His younger brother lied about his age. He went and fought in the war. He was part of the Canadian Light Horse cavalry unit, the 1st Hussars. One of the things that my mom explained to me was that, during training, he was going to get promoted to second lieutenant, which meant that he was going to stay back and train others, so he got himself demoted so that he could go overseas. He went there with his two brothers in 1915, and he fought in many of the major battles — Vimy, Passchendaele, Ypres and Somme. He would have been the age of someone here who is just out of high school. It is hard to imagine and to think through those things. I think my grandfather, even though he was awarded several medals, would never describe himself as brave, but I think he probably was.

Anyway, I just think that all of us here in the territory have a strong connection and a debt of gratitude to those who have served.

I want to talk for a minute about the motion. I am totally supportive of the motion, first of all. Let me just put that on the table.

There are some things that I heard from the member opposite that I will try to comment on and are new to me or that I am finding out this information as we are here in the Legislature. That's fine. The principle is what I want to talk about.

We strive — and I know that the previous government and, I think, all Yukon governments strive — to have a strong

working relationship with our municipal partners. I want to see them as government-to-government relationships. I have talked about that here. I know that we have developed a memorandum of understanding with all of our municipalities. I will just quote for a moment here from the Association of Yukon Communities memorandum of understanding, which I just recently signed with the president of the Association of Yukon Communities. It pertains to all of our municipalities — and I quote: "This partnership agreement intends to promote engagement and cooperation between the Parties, to foster timely and meaningful consultation on matters of mutual concern to the benefit of citizens of Yukon, and to identify areas where there can be enhanced cooperation and collaboration while respecting respective jurisdictions."

I know that there are other relationships. Just this Monday, the Whitehorse City Council was sworn in. I would like to acknowledge that 11 of the MLAs here in this Legislature were there to witness that swearing-in. It was quite good to see that — and from all parties, by the way — to show that respect between the orders of government.

One of the things that the mayor mentioned at that point was a declaration of commitment between the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and the Kwanlin Dün First Nation. I just want to mention that. It shows the relationships of governments to governments and the importance of making sure that those relationships are strong and respectful.

At the same time, I know that there are two of us here who have been on Whitehorse city council in the past, and I know that we have always sought to have strong relationships with community organizations, including the Royal Canadian Legion. It is an important relationship with Branch 254. There are other groups, of course — for example, the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce, the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition and working on the Safe and Home program. Those relationships are incredibly important, and I am going to talk a little bit about the relationship with the legion.

Before I get to that relationship, let me just talk for a second about the importance of public spaces. The Member for Kluane articulated the importance of having gathering spaces, safe places — places that would foster the public coming out and honouring our history. Again, I think that this is an important facet of our history. I think there are other facets. I mentioned, for example, the relationship with First Nations. I appreciate so much that we need to foster public awareness and participation and that we need those spaces.

I remember, Mr. Speaker, we used to gather a lot in front of the Elijah Smith Building and go there, as a community, to rally, to talk about issues and to express opinions. Then it became challenging to do so because you needed liability insurance to get there. That was frustrating, but from it, I noted the importance of the ability of the public to gather — with government, without government — to express shared views from across our communities. It is so important to help our citizens feel connected.

I think it is important to enhance our community spaces, and I certainly am supportive of working with the city and in

partnership with other groups to make sure that we foster those community spaces.

A moment ago, I talked about respecting the respective jurisdictions. In my relationship with all municipalities — in particular, with the City of Whitehorse — we respect their lead on planning. That is generally where the planning is done. We want to support them at all times. I know that they work with groups, and I thank the member opposite for mentioning the work that has been ongoing with the legion and totally support the city in doing that. I don't want to take a lead role because they have the lead in planning. I want to take a support role around that.

I have spoken often with the mayor — including this week — about planning issues. I let him know, of course, that this motion was coming forward. He reminded me of some things about how the story of city hall has been evolving lately. I will just mention a little bit about that.

Some years ago — I think it would be around 2012 — the city went through a planning exercise about what to do with its current municipal services building on Fourth Avenue, recognizing that the life of that building was nearing an end. At that time, the city took a decision to, first of all, develop an operations building, which we now know is underway at the north end of the airport. That work is ongoing. When I last spoke with the city about it, they said that they expected it to be operational — up and running — sometime next year. That was phase 1 of that overall project.

The other piece of it was to try to get services centralized and accessible for all citizens of Whitehorse. The location they were choosing was in and around city hall. Another puzzle piece there is that the downtown fire hall, which is there, is at the end of its life. Just in speaking with city staff this week, they let me know that work is underway to relocate that fire hall downtown over to the Motorways lot, so that's underway. I'm not exactly sure where it is in the process, but I understand that it's in development.

The last phase will be coming sometime soon. As the member opposite notes, the opportunity is there to think about space. At the same time, there had been some discussion around Canada's 150th birthday about the old Pioneer Cemetery. I would like to acknowledge that the Canadian government got some money to the City of Whitehorse and, in dialogue again with the legion, the Yukon Order of Pioneers and other community groups to talk about the Pioneer Cemetery — if you have gone by there lately, Mr. Speaker, it has changed. It has had some significant work.

There was some early discussion about whether that might be a location for the cenotaph. It's my recollection that — and I stand to be corrected — the legion said that, no, it needed to be someplace more central and more for gathering. I think that led to the opportunity now before us.

The city has been in dialogue and is interested in being in dialogue with the legion, and we, as the government, should be supportive of our municipal partners and let them take the lead — be happy to be there listening to their infrastructure priorities and offering support as we can, wherever that lies.

The part that I learned — which was referenced earlier from listening to the Member for Kluane's opening remarks or his debate today — was his discussion about some actual physical location for this to go. For me, that's new. I don't know about that. I'm just interested to support the city and to help work with them and be supportive of the legion as well.

It's not about trying to fix on a location; it's to try to be supportive of them in the process of acknowledging, through a cenotaph, a place for Yukoners to gather and to pay our respects to those who have served our country but also the city and this territory and to acknowledge the history that is part of our fabric.

Generally, Mr. Speaker, I'm very happy to rise in support of the motion. I am always willing to work with our municipalities in partnership with them as they go through planning processes and want to be supportive, as always.

Ms. White: I thank the Member for Kluane for bringing this motion forward in this timely fashion and having the previous Speaker of the House here to listen to this.

We have talked at length in my time in the Legislative Assembly of the importance of recognizing the contribution of veterans, both those who have returned home and those who have not — whether we talk about current battles or historic battles. The Member for Kluane was very conscientious in his wording of this. He did not dictate where or how it would go, just that they be supportive of both the City of Whitehorse and the legion branch.

My hope is that as we see this progress — if there is a funding requirement, that the Yukon government is able to respond, in a way. I also know that making sure that the cenotaph is in a visible spot is very important. It's important to be able to drive past it on a daily basis in the days leading up to Remembrance Day or the 24 hours when it will have the honour guard. It's quite a powerful thing to drive past. It's important to see when the wreaths have been laid down, and it's important to see when people put down flowers. In recent years, we have seen things happen in the world where veterans have gone to the cenotaph just to be present. It's important.

Just like the monument for injured or killed workers, it's an important place to be able to gather. We thank the Member for Kluane for this motion. We look forward to seeing the day of the opening of the new area.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I'm pleased to speak to this important motion that has been put forward regarding memorials here in Yukon and Whitehorse specifically. I would like to thank the Member for Kluane for bringing this motion forward. It's important and timely.

I would first like to say that we absolutely support the City of Whitehorse and the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 254 in their discussions around the planning and development of a veterans square. As my colleagues have, I would like to speak a little bit about some personal connection to veterans and those who have served in our military and who have protected our country.

My sister spent her entire career serving in the Canadian military and was in active duty during 9/11. You can imagine how difficult that was for me, my family and my sister. Her husband served as well. I also had a paternal uncle who served in the Vietnam War and a brother who served for a few years in the Canadian military, so I have really close connections to this and absolutely want to personally be in support of memorials in dedication to those who have served and who have helped to create the freedom that we have in this country.

It is so important that we support our community partners on projects that are so valued in our communities. One note here is — and my colleague has already spoken about this today, but I will speak about it again in a little bit more detail — the importance of these community-level conversations that include our local First Nations — specifically in this case, Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än. They too have a vision for their traditional territories, and it is important that their vision is incorporated and considered during these conversations.

My colleague has referenced the *Declaration of Commitment* that the city entered into with the Kwanlin Dün and Ta'an Kwäch'än First Nations. I would like to talk a little bit about what this declaration contains. It recognizes that the City of Whitehorse has been built on the traditional territories of the Tagish Kwan and Southern Tutchone peoples of Kwanlin Dün and Ta'an Kwäch'än. They are the original signatories of the very first urban-based, modern-day treaty in Canada. It's very unique in that we have many considerations as we develop this beautiful City of Whitehorse.

It also speaks to the fact that the First Nations have shared this land for hundreds of years and that there have been positive relationships established. Ta'an Kwäch'än and Kwanlin Dün First Nation are contributors to heritage and social, cultural, spiritual and economic wealth that is enjoyed by the City of Whitehorse.

Specifically, it goes into a number of commitments, and one of them is to seek economic, heritage, social, cultural and spiritual opportunities for partnerships. I think this is a really important aspect of the discussion today. I know that it has been shared with me by the First Nations that they face a number of pressures in terms of memorials and commemorations that are being considered, so they have been consulted on a number of them already. I think that this is something that we just have to keep in mind.

As the Minister of Tourism and Culture, I would like to focus today some of my remarks on the importance of memorials within communities and their importance when it comes to sharing the story of the Yukon with visitors. I will then put on my Women's Directorate hat to share some more comments from that perspective.

The Yukon sees over 450,000 visitors every year. The Department of Tourism and Culture is constantly tracking and evaluating what tourists are looking for when it comes to their visitor experiences in Yukon. We know that one thing that visitors to Yukon are constantly looking for is authentic experience showcasing the heritage of the Yukon. Such local memorials and monuments that showcase the history of the

Yukon are authentic and meaningful ways to do this and have lasting impact on those who visit our territory.

We all know that the Yukon has a vast and rich heritage, and it is important that we consider the impact that monuments and memorials can have on our visitors to Yukon. We have several important monuments and memorial sites across the Yukon that are frequently visited by both locals and visitors alike. There are many more, but I will just give a few examples: a memorial to the *SS Princess Sophia* on the banks of the Yukon River in Dawson City; the Minto Park memorial municipal site, also in Dawson City; and several Alaska Highway memorials that can be found along the length of the highway.

When it comes to the planning of these monuments, it is really important that we undertake a holistic approach that encompasses all of Yukon. Rather than taking a one-off approach, we should consider the planning and design of memorials from a perspective that encompasses all of our community partners, all industries that are potentially impacted and the many important stories that we have to tell. I think it is a great opportunity for us to tell our story in a unique way — but to have a very coordinated approach on how we do that.

The creation of memorial spaces is an important way that a community can come together to share their story in a way that both honours those who have come before us and tells a story to those who may not know it.

Considering how to showcase Yukon's heritage does not live only in the Department of Tourism and Culture. It is also a focus within the Women's Directorate. Just recently, the directorate was pleased to support the creation of the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle monument in downtown Whitehorse. This monument is in honour of the students of the Whitehorse Indian Mission School and is an important symbol of our commitment toward reconciliation. This monument encourages healing, contemplation, ceremony and remembrance, and it serves as a tangible reminder of the resilience of former students, their families and their communities. This monument is a great example of how important and powerful memorials can be for a community. It is also an example of how our government supports advancing reconciliation with our First Nation partners.

An entire section of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action is dedicated to commemoration. We are absolutely committed to continuing to work with our First Nation partners to advance the TRC's calls to action, including commemorative projects such as this one that I just mentioned.

We know that coming out of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, there have already been references in the mid-term report about commemoration and memorials.

The reason I am bringing this forward today is — going back to my comments about not taking a one-off approach and really working to look at the collective of possibilities of memorials in the City of Whitehorse and throughout Yukon — that, I think, it is important. It is an important exercise that

we could go through to work with all of our partners. Monuments such as these can have immense healing power for a community, and it is so important to support these initiatives.

In conclusion, I am pleased to support the motion before the House today. Creating thoughtful, engaging memorials and monuments is a way to share Yukon's heritage in a unique way with both visitors and locals. Memorials can help to heal deep wounds and bring communities closer together. I look forward to working with our partners across Yukon to continue to share the Yukon story in new and important ways.

Mr. Gallina: I am pleased to stand in the House today to participate in debate on Motion No. 192, brought forward by the Member for Kluane.

Mr. Speaker, across Canada public spaces are a way to create welcoming and inclusive places that foster peace, reflection and education — a place where heritage can be preserved and where tribute can be paid. Veterans squares in other jurisdictions have proven to be sacred places where the veteran community, their families and the public can visit and pay tribute to those who have served as well as those who continue to serve — those who are dedicated to protecting our communities, our country and our way of life.

I wanted to touch briefly on our approach to allocating infrastructure dollars for municipalities. We do that by receiving the priorities that have been brought forward by the municipalities. Priorities are set. Development around city hall and the services within the City of Whitehorse come from the requests and the priorities identified by them as a municipal government, and those requests are built into the priorities that are then put into the five-year capital plan.

As of March 2018, the total estimated Canadian veteran population, including war service veterans and Canadian Armed Forces' veterans, was 649,300. More than one million Canadians served in the Armed Forces during the Second World War alone. Mr. Speaker, here in the Yukon, over 1,000 people volunteered for service in World War I, making this one of the largest per capita representations of volunteerism in Canada. This number included high school students and miners from the Klondike, Mayo, Atlin, Forty Mile, Kluane, Livingstone Creek, Carcross, Carmacks and Whitehorse.

I would like to take a moment to highlight the work of a constituent of Porter Creek Centre, Mr. Michael Gates, a Yukon historian, author and researcher who recently co-authored the book entitled *The Yukon Fallen of World War I*.

Authors D. Blair Neatby and Michael Gates undertook two years of research to bring together this comprehensive and moving tribute to Yukon soldiers and the families affected by what was, at the time, thought to be "the war to end all wars". The Whitehorse legion took on the responsibility to ensure the sacrifice made by Yukoners in World War I was given proper recognition, with funding from Yukon Archives and the Legion as well as supporters from the Yukon community. In this book, Mr. Gates highlights the many noteworthy efforts and sacrifices made by Yukoners in World War I.

These include 225 Yukon men who enlisted and came to be known as the Black Contingent. Of these 225 men, two dozen would not return home after the war, and they are buried on four continents. Yukon women contributed to the war effort by raising money for a hospital ship and Belgian relief through the Daughters of the Empire and the Imperial Order. The Yukon Comfort Fund was established to send aid to Yukon men overseas. Women wrote letters to the men and knitted socks for warmth in the trenches.

Mr. Speaker, I highlight sacrifices made by our veterans because it helps me to appreciate, to the best of my ability, the value of life that I have here in the Yukon. Every day, I pay thanks for the young family I have been gifted with; every day, I reflect on how fortunate we are to have life, and I reflect on what we have here in the territory. I am so appreciative and value things like walking peacefully on trails or reading stories to my children, and the opportunities I have to generate an income and provide for my family with a roof over our heads and put food in the fridge to share with family and loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, Yukoners gave their lives for a cause they believed in and helped move Canada closer to nationhood. I support this motion and I thank the Member for Kluane for bringing it forward. By working with the City of Whitehorse and the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 254, we can collectively explore ways to celebrate veterans who contributed to our society.

With Remembrance Day fast approaching, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the Royal Canadian Legion in their efforts to serve and support members of the military, past and present. Legions lead numerous remembrance activities across the country, not only on November 11, but throughout the year.

I believe that by working with the City of Whitehorse and the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 254, we can explore options to create a public space that honours Yukon veterans, our active duty armed forces members, the 1st Canadian Ranger Patrol Group, our cadets, families, communities and each other.

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

Does any other member wish to be heard on Motion No. 192?

Mr. Istchenko: I do want to thank the speakers today for their support for this motion. One of the reasons it was important to bring this motion forward is that I know next week, we'll be paying tribute to Remembrance Day, and it's during Tributes, when we don't have a whole bunch of time. Not everybody gets to get up and say something, and it's great to hear some personal touches from the members' perspective.

I could go on for hours about my history in the military and stuff. I just know that the personal touches are sometimes hard to come out, as it was for my grandfather who served in the war. He didn't talk a lot about it, but we were proud of him.

A couple of things I just wanted to highlight — and this will be short — it's just relationships. This is about the city and the legion working together. For us — I know the Member for Takhini-Kopper King said “if there are funding abilities”, but for me it's not even so much the monetary funding. There could be funding opportunities — they could ask for that — but maybe we just go there one day and help when they're laying the sod for the grass, or after this is seen through to fruition, we legislators decide that it would be great to go in a historic moment and do it there as opposed to here. I think that is the reason that we are all so supportive of this motion.

One other thing that I did want to touch on is the memorials. Most of the time, if you talk to anybody in Canada and you go to a memorial — there is a newspaper sitting right there with a memorial on it — there are names on it of people who have gone somewhere to fight for their country.

When I was a young man in Europe in the military, I went to a lot of memorials and toured a lot of the battle sites. A friend of mine and his wife just came back last winter, and he said to me: “You are not going to believe how the memorials are over there. Their memorials are also a plaque and a statue, but it is not of a soldier, it is of a citizen who took kids and sheltered them from the Nazis — whether it was during World War I or World War II.” Memorials are important; it doesn't matter where you go across this world.

Again, thank you to everyone in this House today, and I look forward to this motion passing.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Madam Deputy Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Deputy Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 18 yeas, nil nays.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion No. 192 agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Mr. Hutton): The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 207, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19*.

Bill No. 207: Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19 — continued

Chair: Is there any further general debate?

Seeing none, we will proceed to clause-by-clause debate.

We will now proceed to clause 1. Clause 1 includes schedule A, containing the departmental estimates.

The matter before the Committee is Vote 51, Department of Community Services.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

The matter before the Committee is Vote 51, Department of Community Services. Is there any general debate?

Department of Community Services

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I would like to begin by welcoming deputy minister Paul Moore and director of finance Jessica Schultz. I thank them for coming today, and I am sure everybody is happy to see them. I would like to thank the Members of the Legislature for an opportunity to talk about the Community Services supplementary budget for 2018-19.

It is an approximately \$4.5-million increase in operation and maintenance and an approximately \$7-million increase in capital, making it just shy of \$11.5 million overall. These investments prioritize the programs, services and activities that help Yukoners to lead healthy, productive and happy lives.

As I mentioned, we have an overall increase of \$4.45 million in this supplementary budget for operation and maintenance. Specifically, that is for Protective Services and

Wildland Fire Management. As part of Community Services, Wildland Fire Management's mandate is to protect Yukon communities from wildfire. I have said several times in this House that while this wasn't an extremely large year for wildfire in the territory based on recent years, overall, recent years have been higher than past years, and so additional monies are required to pay for wildland fire.

While Wildland Fire Management's mandate is to protect Yukon communities from wildfire, they work in cooperation with First Nations, Yukon communities and other government departments to provide professional wildfire response. Every wildfire season is unique and difficult to predict, and the budgetary increase is due to increased fire activity late in this fire season, which was also close to communities. Fire requiring sustained attack occurred on the northeast side of Poison Lake near the Robert Campbell Highway. This fire grew to an estimated 27,500 hectares in size, crossing the highway. As a precaution, the Emergency Measures Organization issued an evacuation alert for kilometres 44 to 60 of the highway.

The cost of fighting wildfires is driven by the need for air tankers, helicopters, fuel, fire retardant, heavy equipment and crew time.

In 2018, Wildland Fire Management had 23 initial attack fire crews built from both Yukon government and First Nations for a total of 72 firefighters across the territory.

When a fire threatened the community of Lower Post, Wildland Fire Management supported our neighbours and colleagues in the British Columbia Wildfire Service to manage a rapid and effective response.

In August, Wildland Fire Management sent 20 firefighters, support staff and equipment to British Columbia to assist with the fires in that province. Exporting fire crews to other jurisdictions not only provides crucial aid to our neighbours, it benefits Yukoners by providing Wildland Fire Management staff with valuable firefighting experience. It is also true, Mr. Speaker, that BC is willing to come to our aid as we need it.

Our response to fire is determined by a fire's proximity to a community. Being prepared to action a new fire requires having aircraft and standby crews ready to respond. This adds to costs attributed directly to the suppression of wildland fires. The increase to the supplementary estimate reflects this government's promise that Yukon's people and property will continue to be our number one priority when it comes to managing the unpredictability of wildfires. The supplementary capital estimate before us consists of a \$6,966,000 increase in expenditures.

The Fire Marshal's Office protects lives and property in the event of structural fires or emergencies and facilitates fire prevention and fire safety-related programs. It operates 16 volunteer fire departments, including 150 volunteer firefighters in unincorporated communities.

We know that fire protection is provided in different ways throughout the Yukon, with many departments relying on volunteers and each with unique challenges and opportunities. We are grateful for the support of volunteers as well as the

full-time firefighters throughout the territory. We continue to work with all communities to ensure that fire departments have the resources that they need. We provide equipment, vehicles, training, administration and maintenance to unincorporated communities through the Fire Marshal's Office. Fire services in unincorporated communities are provided by municipal governments and, in some of our smaller communities, by volunteers. I was able to chair the AGM of one of the volunteer fire departments just last week.

In support of our unincorporated communities, two fire trucks were delivered in the current fiscal year at a total cost of \$819,000. Our ongoing partnerships with Canada, municipalities, First Nations and unincorporated Yukon are helping us to build those vibrant, healthy and sustainable communities. These partnerships are essential as we address core infrastructure priorities for roads, clean drinking water, green energy and solid-waste and waste-water management at both territorial and local levels. We are continuing to work with Canada and municipal governments on investments in community and territorial infrastructure through the clean water and waste-water fund and the small communities fund. We have transferred \$1,187,000 from the public transit infrastructure fund to the clean water and waste-water fund to reflect that we were able to move ahead with a funding transfer for the purchase of two city buses for Whitehorse sooner than expected — in 2017-18 rather than 2018-19. The transfer will offset additional construction expenditures under the clean water and waste-water fund.

One of this government's top priorities is to provide an adequate supply and range of land options. This will help to overcome challenges related to affordable housing in the Yukon. I have always talked about it in this Legislature, Mr. Chair, as a spectrum and the need to make sure that we work to supply an adequate, two-year supply of lots for our communities.

The Government of Yukon's rural land development program was transferred this summer from the Land Management branch of Energy, Mines and Resources to the Land Development branch of Community Services. This was done for efficiency reasons. The priorities of the rural land development program include: lot development in communities where there are lot shortages and where higher than normal demand is expected; delivering more detail design and shovel-ready projects; and maintaining a focus on residential, commercial and industrial lots. The rural land development program builds on the work that Community Services is already doing in the communities to strengthen and enhance this program. The residential rural land development working budget of \$1,731,000 was transferred from Energy, Mines and Resources to Community Services. In addition, \$366,000 was transferred for the branch's staff from the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Mr. Chair, as we know, Whistle Bend subdivision is the fastest growing subdivision in the Yukon. We are working hard to increase the number of lots available to Yukoners by continuing our land development work in this neighbourhood. An additional \$4 million is required to pay for the completion

of Whistle Bend phases 3C, 3D and E and for the start-up of phase 5. Phases 3D and E — which include nine multi-family lots, 35 commercial lots and two parking garages — began in the spring of this year and is targeted for release in the spring of next year.

The increase to the supplementary estimate reflects the thoughtful and careful decisions made by this government to deliver the programs and services that contribute to the development of sustainable communities, the protection of people and property and the advancement of community well-being.

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I look forward to questions this afternoon for the department.

Ms. Van Bibber: I would like to thank the officials for coming today. I'm going to start with transfer stations. Some of the transfer stations around Whitehorse are no longer accepting compost, and this has people resorting to either hauling their compost to Whitehorse or attempting to compost at home. As we know, there has been much talk this year about reducing bear attractants around homes, and compost is a major attractant.

Has the minister considered other solutions, now that residents outside Whitehorse are unable to drop off compost at their transfer stations?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: That question is a very good one. I mentioned earlier that I had been on the Southern Lakes dump tour. I hope to get to Deep Creek as well. I will reach out to the Member for Lake Laberge.

Yes, there was a challenge. Can we just acknowledge, though, that if compost is an attractant around people's homes, it's also an attractant around the landfills? We have bear fences there, but it still is an attractant and a problem.

One of the issues with compost is trying to make sure you have the tools to be able to keep it active so that it doesn't get smelly. The solutions for that are not simple.

Just recently, the department and I toured the compost liberator, which is another locally innovated composting machine that I think is being sold to Red Deer, Alberta, and is manufactured locally. In talking with Mr. Gillespie — the owner/operator of these compost machines — he has a design that he is going to be working on shortly for a smaller machine that may work for our regional landfills, ranging from Deep Creek and Marsh Lake up to our communities like Dawson City and Watson Lake. It is an ongoing dialogue. I don't have a specific update. We are aware of the concerns.

I made a commitment after doing my little dump tour to try to follow up with some comments — just like a “what we heard” at those landfills. I definitely heard this issue. I don't have simple solutions for our landfills. I am totally willing to stay in dialogue with our municipalities as well as the communities — whether they are run by the private sector or run by societies, because we have a range of all of those. I'm not sure if I gave enough information to the member opposite, but I am happy to get back up on my feet.

Ms. Van Bibber: Yes, I realize it is an ongoing problem and also realize that this is your favourite topic when we're talking about waste.

There have recently been concerns around the amount of waste that is being dropped off at these transfer stations so that people avoid tipping fees. Then this material is brought back to Whitehorse to be sorted and then that material is sorted again and possibly shipped Outside for processing.

Can the minister tell the House what work is currently being undertaken on these concerns and whether there have been any development or planning initiatives for dealing with people who are trying to avoid tipping fees — that just don't seem to abate when they take things to transfer stations?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Chair, again, it's an excellent question. I will say that it is more than frustrating to me to see Yukoners when they work to avoid a tipping fee. They drive material out to landfills outside of Whitehorse, they put the material there, and then that is borne by the taxpayer. That's not a good system. I would rather that it be a polluter-pay or a stewardship model, which I have said many times. It does need to be addressed — let's say that. A system where someone drives something out so we drive it back — that cannot be sustainable.

Thankfully, in talking with the Solid Waste Advisory Committee — which I have talked about here in the Legislature several times recently — they have some notions about how to address it. It is a suite of solutions that they're talking about. What I will commit to do is to table that in the Legislature so that it is actually a document that we all share. I encourage everyone who can to turn to our website. I think there is a link on the front page of the Community Services site.

Under that whole model of stewardship and getting the prices right, there is a range of solutions that are out there. One of them will be to try to level tipping fees across the territory. One of them will be to try to deal with making sure that we're concentrating this material so that it is going into centralized locations rather than 100 landfills, because our smaller ones are costing us so much compared to the bigger ones. Those aren't sustainable, so what we need to do is to — and it's going to take us working with Yukoners, for sure, and it's going to have to happen over time, but there is a range of solutions.

Included within that is the designated material regulations solution. When you deal with that piece, what it does is it says, “Let's get people to pay for the recycling and/or reuse of that product as they buy it and not as they try to get rid of it.” At that point, you can have a much more robust method of making sure that you're going to recycle. It tends to push up your recycling overall.

We have recently seen real steps on the designated material regulations for tires and e-waste, and I believe those real steps are making a difference as we speak. There are next steps on that same front.

We have talked about the need to move to household hazardous waste, and now, just today in this Legislature, we have passed a motion that will have us work on single-use plastics. It is exactly under that same framework where they will start to address this. I know that they have had that initial conversation, and I'm looking forward to us coming up with

the solution. I don't have a very exact answer yet, Mr. Chair. What I can say is that there still is a need to deal with this situation so we stop having people drive stuff out of our larger centres.

Ms. Van Bibber: I do have a copy of that committee on solid waste report. In the review of the services and costs for unincorporated solid-waste facilities, there is that mention of a possible introduction of user-pay — or as you say polluter-pay — systems at the Yukon government sites. Are there any thoughts on when this might be introduced, and have you had much feedback from the First Nations, municipalities and the LACs?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, what I want to say is that one of the principles that the advisory group asked us to work on was that it was levelled across the territory. It's not just unincorporated that we're talking about. By the way, municipalities signed on to this as well. So the Association of Yukon Communities asked us to do this and we agreed. That was part of it. It certainly goes beyond just the government sites.

In order to get there, though, they put this particular recommendation into the category, I believe, in the medium term — which I would have to look up the numbers to be sure — but I think we were talking about the short term, medium term and longer term — I think the longer term was in the range of five to 10 years and the medium term was around five years, so something like that. I apologize if I get that wrong; I'm just trying to give a rough sense.

We have had ongoing dialogue with many groups, but they haven't yet come to me with a more detailed plan about how they think this should be rolled out and, if it is to be rolled out, a whole part of that is how we engage first. Will it happen in some locations? For example, would it happen near Whitehorse first? That's a notion that I know they consider.

There would have to be a lot of outreach to the communities with that and lots of heads-up and forewarning about where it would head to work with them. None of that work has happened yet. The work has been happening with the people who deal with solid-waste facilities. That is where the conversation has been. We haven't made it out into those broader public conversations yet.

I have flagged for them that this one will be challenging. It's one where if you're talking about it, the public will have concerns. We need to do that diligent work around it to get there, but underlying it is this mistaken notion that we are paying for it right now. We're just paying for it through tax dollars — right? That's the truth of the matter. We're not paying for it efficiently right now, so we really need to make sure that the way this is handled is a way where we shift it off the tax and onto the polluter. That way it encourages the behaviour of reduce, reuse, recycle; it encourages the behaviour of not driving it away to some other landfill, and you put it in the smart place. You want the system to work for you to encourage that we are as responsible as possible around waste.

Ms. Van Bibber: You just mentioned the possibility of this user-pay system coming into the Whitehorse periphery.

What area would constitute the Whitehorse periphery? It also states it's going to be implemented in 2019, so I'm assuming this is sort of like a strategic move to see how it fits with Whitehorse. Can you tell us when in 2019 this might begin?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I can't give a timeline. What I want to say is that the committee has not identified exactly where. Does Whitehorse periphery mean Mount Lorne, Marsh Lake or Deep Creek? Does Whitehorse periphery mean Haines Junction? I don't know.

What I will say is that when I was at the last AYC AGM or maybe at one of my meetings in Haines Junction the then-council said to me, "Please include us in that conversation when it happens." I don't have a notion of timing at this point. I have a notion that their recommendation is that we start near Whitehorse. That is what I have. When I looked inside their recommendations on the time frame — which are recommendations because we all agree that there is groundwork to do first, before we ever get to those positions — it would be somewhere over the next several years. I don't recall us saying that it would be 2019. What I recall is somewhere in the mid-term, over the next several years, that we would be working on that.

I guess what you could say is that, in that whole overall set of recommendations, they have a set of priorities that they are working on. We have just added one to them today, but they were good with that. I said that we had talked and they had given me the double thumbs-up on adding single-use plastics — to develop a program around getting rid of single-use plastics. They can't do it all in one go. Every one of these things requires some work with the public, the industry and our local businesses. We heard a suggestion from the Member for Copperbelt South today about making sure to include the hospitality industry. I think that was an excellent suggestion. There are a lot of steps to take before we get to that — the one of having a user-pay system.

Ms. Van Bibber: The recommendations in the *Yukon Solid Waste Action Plan* — have any of the updates or recommendations been worked on? If so, could the minister tell us which — is it the management strategy or is it to develop strategy for managing landfill liability responsibilities? What actually has been worked on in the short to medium time frame?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I was thinking of the list of tangible actions that have happened. We updated the beverage container regulations — they came in. We introduced two designated materials regulations. They are now in, and they are in that initial first-year phase to see how they are going.

We are working on trying to make sure that they are working efficiently. We still believe that there is room for us to work with industry around the tires and to deal with the collection and transportation of those tires in a more efficient manner that makes this a better system. We had an overall liability assessment happening around all of the landfills to try to understand the levels of liability within them. When I was at the Association of Yukon Communities AGM, I made the commitment that we, as a government, would work in partnership with our municipalities to address the liability

question and that we were not going to leave them high and dry around that question. We agreed to continue to pay for the monitoring of wells around the landfills. Those wells have been put in place to make sure that there isn't some issue of ground leachate or water leachate getting out beyond the landfill area.

One of the ones that we have been working heavily on is the regionalization question. I will give you a couple of examples. Watson Lake acts as a regional landfill for smaller communities nearby. That has been the case for some time. We like that model. We think it is a more effective and efficient model, so we are looking at places like Mayo and whether we can make it a regional landfill while closing smaller landfills nearby and having everyone go there as a regional landfill. There has been a sort of mapping of how that should work around the territory, and those conversations are progressing very well.

Ms. Van Bibber: In the summary, there is a capital cost. You have one star, which is \$10,000 or less, and up to five stars, which is \$1 million or more. The recommendation for the development and the implementation of a solid-waste regionalization strategy and framework — and I think that is what you are just talking about — regionalizing, say, the Mayo area — can the minister elaborate on a three-star estimation of costs — anywhere from \$10,000 to \$1 million, is it?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will check back with the group about what they meant by “three stars”. It is a relative thing. It is not as much as five stars, and it's more than two. It is meant to weigh these against each other, not to say that it's going to be this much money. This was not a detailed costing analysis. This was a group of professionals who are very active in the area and who have a good sense of what the rough costs are.

I want to talk about the regionalization one for a second. While it has three stars — meaning that there is maybe some cost outlay from a capital perspective — we think that, on the overall cost, it is a cost-saving. This notion of taking these small, inefficient landfills, which we know are costing large dollars in an O&M sense, and allowing them to regionalize — we think that there is a win here on the O&M side for everybody — meaning our municipalities and meaning the territorial government. We hope it's a win. So even though it's three stars on the capital side of this, it doesn't mean that this is an unwise choice from a fiscal perspective.

The proof is in the pudding. It depends how you regionalize and it depends on how you deal with those environmental liabilities and work to concentrate them in a way that you're going to deal with them. It's not a given. It's a work in progress, but we understand that there's potential to have a cost-saving — and that's why this makes sense to do the regionalization — and also an environmental savings — both.

Ms. Van Bibber: The government is taking steps to implement a coordinated communication strategy promoting stewardship programs and practices in the Yukon. Is this something that is going to take place with the solid waste so

that the First Nations, municipalities and LACs know exactly what is happening with the solid waste plan?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I want to say is that I hope we are always coordinated about our communications out there. It is an aspiration that we work toward at all times. Again, it's a great question.

It was one of the things identified within the strategy. I apologize for not listing it a moment ago on the things that are underway. We recently put out a tender for a contract for this to be done centrally for the whole of the territory to make sure that the outreach is happening in a unified fashion, with messaging heading to all groups, especially our government-to-government partners, but not just exclusively them. I understand from talking with the department that the tender closed recently. I don't think it has been awarded yet, but it's in the works.

Absolutely, we want to have a coordinated effort to educate, inform and engage with Yukoners around the strategy.

Ms. Van Bibber: The committee on solid waste also recommended that the group or implementation working group begin as soon as possible because this project is finished as of April. They recommended that a new implementation group begin in order to continue the work and to ensure that appropriate mechanisms were in place for that feedback and communication.

Did the minister agree with this recommendation? Is there now such a working group for the minister?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Yes; on day one, they made the recommendation that this should keep going, and we said, “Great, please keep going.” We took the group that developed the advice around the strategy and moved them straight — that day — into implementation.

When the Member for Porter Creek North was asking a moment ago about whether municipalities are part of this engagement and communication — the municipalities are sitting on this group. We didn't say which of them should be there. What we said was that we would like to see four or five members. We have someone from the Association of Yukon Communities; we have someone from several of the municipalities — maybe it's three or four. I would have to go back and check.

We turned around and said, “Great. Yes, we absolutely need implementation.” They also talked about the importance of dealing with recycling and having a focus. They have flagged certain areas that they think would be really good to reapply the work that they have been doing — the bringing together of all the various government entities, whether that is municipal or territorial and whether that is Environment or Community Services operations — to try to get that whole-of-government look at this. They still know that we have to go out and engage with the private sector, with the public, with First Nation governments, et cetera. If there was a First Nation government that decided to take over a landfill and have that responsibility, I would absolutely welcome them to that table as well. It's about those governments that are dealing with landfills.

Yes, an implementation group is in place. When I referenced earlier today in the Legislature that they met two weeks ago, that was the implementation group. The implementation group is meeting again at the end of next month.

Ms. Van Bibber: So they met two weeks ago and they're meeting again. Is part of their mandate to visit the communities so that they can engage with those partners that you spoke about? How often do they do that?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am probably going to get it wrong, but it is my belief that there is someone from the City of Whitehorse, someone from the Village of Faro and someone from the Village of Teslin. I somehow think there is one more there.

An earlier conversation I had before we were called to order — it might come to pass here where I get some help from the Leader of the Official Opposition. You never know. What I want to say is that those folks who are on that committee — we encourage them to go back and have dialogue with their municipalities. We have someone from the Association of Yukon Communities there as well. We encourage this dialogue that is going back out to our municipalities all the time.

To the point though, I think the member opposite was asking more about whether we go out there and are they going on an engagement tour. No, that's not really what they are about. That's not to say that won't happen.

I'm happy if they are part of that when it does but they're really the government-to-government planning group about dealing with those folks who are responsible for the landfills themselves and talking about how to make this happen.

There is a lot of work yet that would have to go on. For example, I had a call recently from Mr. Mike Bailey who heads up the not-for-profit that runs the Mount Lorne solid-waste facility. He's not sitting on that table, but I want him to know about the things that are happening and to be part of that dialogue. So there are people who are more engaged because they are involved with solid waste — and less. We didn't task this committee. The terms of reference were really about strategic planning and implementation.

Ms. Van Bibber: I will just make some wrap-up comments and pass it over to the Third Party. I know that implementing user fees is going to be a tough challenge. I think people are feeling they pay enough taxes as it is and that's what their tax money should be doing. I know it's going to be a tough slog for the Minister of Community Services.

Thank you again to the department officials.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thank the member opposite for all of her excellent questions.

It's also Watson Lake that sits on that committee. My colleague just remembered and prompted me.

I want to say I completely concur that we want to be very careful with the spending of tax dollars. The point that I want to make, though, is that, right now, I don't think we're that careful with the spending of tax dollars around solid waste. We have all these costs that are hidden. I believe there are some real inefficiencies and I also freely acknowledge that, as

we adjust stuff and we move from tax-based to user-pay, there still will be concerns and we have to be ready to have a conversation about those.

I just want to say that, from my perspective, it is totally right to say that people want us to be very careful and frugal in spending tax dollars. If I can just give a shout-out to this group, they know that, as well, and that is one of the things that motivate them.

Ms. White: I thank my colleague from Porter Creek for ceding the floor right now.

The first question I have is, in Question Period and again in an e-mail when I asked about the *Yukon Solid Waste Action Plan* — so I had already found the ministerial committee on solid waste, but when I asked about the action plan, because it had been referred to in Question Period as the solid-waste action plan, it's also important to know that the title of this document also says: *Recommendations for Action towards a Sustainable Solid Waste Management System for Yukon, April 2018*. When the minister referenced the solid-waste action plan, is he talking about this ministerial committee on solid waste — their paper?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: To be clear, I absolutely am. What happened was they gave us this document with their recommendations, and we adopted it in total.

I stood up at the Association of Yukon Communities and said that we adopted it total, and it is now our action plan. I still see the word "recommendations" there, and I think that is a good catch by the member opposite. They gave it to us as, "We recommend this as your advisory committee." We turned around and said, "Thank you. Let's adopt it as is." I mentioned somewhere in debate today at some point that I also said to them, "Please, by all means, if you think there are further steps we should be doing, let's be talking about that. Let's not think of this as static." It was with that prompting and the prompting of the motion from the member opposite that we got to the point of saying that single-use plastics should be considered in the plan and how to address them.

Ms. White: I do appreciate that there was the kind of full-scale adoption of the plan as it is, but the difference between looking at this document as a solid-waste action plan as compared to others — when the costing is done by professionals — but it is not actually truly costed — the time frames are more variable. Are there intentions for the department to kind of revamp what this committee reported and actually table a solid-waste action plan so that those of us who pay attention can follow along and say, "Oh, well, this was a goal for 2019, and we have passed that and are into 2021"? Is there a plan to update this so that it is more of a complete plan?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: That is an excellent question, Mr. Chair. We have reconvened the group as an implementation committee, and I think that there are a couple of things at work. One of them is that they really want to see concrete steps taking place. One of the things that they focused on right away was to get going on some of these things — to move out of the planning phase and to get into the happening phase — and some of that has happened. I think

that as that happens, they are also starting to work on the more detailed plans, including costing around some of the next steps.

I haven't sat down with them to have that specific conversation as the member opposite has posed it. Should we take the time and put the full diligence around this that will set specific targets? I am happy to have that dialogue with them. I want to say that so far what has been happening is that, in our desire to get concrete steps happening — can I also say that there have been quite a few solid-waste action plans that we have had over the years, and they are hard. This is not about trying to wag a finger; I am just trying to say that in my experience on the municipal side, on the science side and on the Government of Yukon side, we have seen some of these things come and go. There was a really sincere request from our municipal partners that the first thing that we do is not another study. They asked that we get some of the steps done so that they could see some sincerity and commitment to this plan, and so we went that route to begin with.

I will ask them when I sit down with them — one month today is when it's coming — about what they would recommend — should we put more effort into that? I appreciate the notion of a need to transmit to Yukoners what our goals are and where the thresholds are so that we can see and test whether or not we're performing as we wish to.

Ms. White: The reason I ask this is that, ultimately, it's the accountability of government. I know that we have other solid waste action plans, and I know, in my case specifically, that having that written down in a concrete form actually was the ability to try to move things forward because it had been stated that it was the goal.

I look forward to maybe having a more concrete plan tabled or posted on the website before the Spring Sitting so we can talk about it more. It's not a criticism of the work that was done; it's just trying to figure out how, as a member of the opposition, I can help move that forward. When we don't have the accountability measures in place, we can talk about grand ideas, but what I really need to know is: What is the concrete step to follow that great idea — including today and our debate on single-use plastic? This will be something that I talk about in the future.

I'm going to just go all over the place today, mostly in the hope of getting some ground covered. There was a report released on October 2, 2016, entitled *Tiny Houses in Canada's Regulatory Context: Issues and Recommendations*. The reason I'm bringing this up is that it's a provincial-territorial-municipal working group on tiny homes. I believe there was a Yukon government member on this committee.

I'll say right now that my hope is that Community Services will come again, so maybe I'll flag this report. It took me a long time to find. I need to state this: It took me a long time to find. This report was written in 2016, and there were issues identified across the country about challenges around tiny houses, what solutions there could be and how governments could work around it.

The reason I'm flagging this report right now is that, in this day and age when the interest rate continues to go up, we

know that housing affordability is becoming more challenging, and it's important to look at alternatives. We know that Blood Ties Four Directions has a combination of four tiny houses. It looks like there's another tiny house complex being built downtown. I'm flagging this report because I would like to discuss it and find out if there have been updates. I can share that with the minister.

One of the questions that I had is — when we got to the point, which I'm excited about, where electronics and e-waste and things are now captured, there's the reporting.recyclemyelectronics.ca website. If I go to the Community Services webpage and I look into recycling and at my responsibility as a retailer — I have had a couple of conversations with friends who own businesses, and they have actually talked about the challenges of the website. One of them is that if their distributor isn't on the website there are a whole bunch of complications.

One of the ones was, if they were purchasing items from another jurisdiction in Canada and they weren't registered, then the local business ended up paying twice — that was my understanding — for the recycling fee. The challenge was for this small business owner to contact their suppliers and say, "Look, I need you to sign up to this website" — and how there were challenges in that.

One of the things I wanted to know is that, since we have brought this online, has there been a reach-out to the business community to find out how it has been working? What are their strengths? Have weaknesses been identified. If there have been problems, what are the fixes?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Three things that came up there: First of all, I am looking forward to having a look at that report on tiny homes — I completely agree that they are an important piece in the housing spectrum. I happened to be there with the Minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation when she was recently in Haines Junction turning some soil for the tiny houses project there. Also, I went by the tiny houses project at the corner of Jarvis and Sixth recently. I think there is going to be five tiny houses there, but I'm not sure. I think the Steve Cardiff House was going to be moved over. It is a nice little project that is coming along. I am sure, at some point, the Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation could give us a bit of an update.

I don't know specifically about that working group that the member opposite was referring to, Mr. Chair, but I will say that we are often involved across jurisdictions and do want to be involved. Our involvement as Community Services will often be around trying to enable the building standards part of this so that we support the notion of a spectrum of housing ownership abilities.

I will leave that there. I thank the member opposite for flagging that. I will say, as well — just backing up for one second about the solid waste action plan — and I appreciate the accountability notion that the member opposite is talking about. It is my recollection in reading through it and certainly in meeting with them, they talked about the need to be measurable and accountable. They used the SMART acronym: specific, measurable, actionable, relevant and time-bound.

They talked about that importance. I just don't know where we are at with thinking of it as the overall plan and whether we put more emphasis that way.

I know they definitely want to keep moving on the actions. I think we have seen some good ground and it's important to keep that momentum up. Just to comment again to the Member for Porter Creek North, none of these are easy issues. They are all challenging because there are concerns out there with this change, but I will say that, here in the territory, I totally believe we have been moving in the right direction. I don't want to go back to burning. When I look at the arc in change, it's in the right direction. Today in this House we debated the importance to move further and faster down that. I heard many members speak today about the imperative to move in that direction.

Mr. Chair, I am trying to remember what the third point was from the Member for Takhini-Kopper King. I think it was around working with our business owners and trying to educate them.

Absolutely — let me just say this: When it comes to the designated material regulations, it is the Department of Environment that deals with the enforcement side, because they are the owners of the regulations. The Department of Community Services deals with the operations side of delivering on those things, and so it is incredibly critical that we work with them and reach out to them. I have talked with some members of the public service and they've let me know that they have been in dialogue with them, but I don't have a specific update today. In particular, I am just flagging for the member opposite that it is not directly my department. That is not an excuse; I just like to make sure that I get the question to the right folks.

I want to say that if there is any business owner out there who is having some challenges around those websites and things like that, I want them connected right away. The system is supposed to catch those suppliers who are supplying in the territory — that they are required to register here. Not everyone will have figured that out, but if we know of people, then that is great information to get. I just really encourage all members here, if they are in contact with business owners to please, please put them in touch with the Department of Environment officials who are working on this, because they are the ones who can make sure that we plug those holes. We want this to be fair for our business community so that it is a level playing field.

I would just like to thank the members opposite for their very good questions and also thank the department officials for coming here today for Committee of the Whole.

Noting the time, Mr. Chair, I move that you report progress.

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

Motion agreed to

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Chair: It has been moved by Ms. McPhee that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Hutton: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 207, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that the House do now adjourn.

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

Motion agreed to

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

Happy Halloween and have fun trick-or-treating.

The House adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

The following sessional paper was tabled October 31, 2018:

34-2-77

Yukon Public Accounts 2017-2018 (Silver)

The following legislative returns were tabled October 31, 2018:

34-2-160

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Ms. Van Bibber related to general debate on Bill. No. 207, *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19* – airport facilities and air carrier partners (Dendys)

34-2-161

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Ms. Van Bibber related to general debate on Bill. No. 207, *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19* – engagement on draft tourism strategy (Dendys)

The following documents were filed October 31, 2018:

34-2-58

Coverage for Herpes Zoster (Shingles) Vaccine, letter re (dated October 24, 2018) from Patti McLeod, Member for Watson Lake, to Hon. Ms. Frost, Minister of Health and Social Services (McLeod)

The following written question was tabled October 31, 2018:

Written Question No. 30

Re: Yukon Emergency Medical Services auxiliary-on-call paramedics (Cathers)