



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 144

2nd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Wednesday, April 17, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Spring Sitting

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

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

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

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

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

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

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

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, April 17, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if we could please welcome from Yukon College to the Legislature today Dan Anton, Joel Macht, Polly Madsen, and George Green. We also have MaryRose Metcalfe. As well, the students of this winter's Targeted Initiative for Older Workers class will be graduating tomorrow. We have with us Andy Calahizen, Barb Carty, Chris Williams, Trudy Tom, Susan Power, Carla Pitzel, Melissa Pigeon, Diane Dillon, Isabelle Dewhurst and Heather Kennedy.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I also would like to have my colleagues welcome to the Assembly today members from our film sector who are here to support our tribute which we'll be doing in a minute. Mr. Neil Macdonald, Carol Coote and Andy — Andrew I should say — but I refer as well to Andy Connors, David Curtis, Kerry Barber, Iris Merritt, and just of note, the fact that I know that the Premier will be doing a tribute tomorrow around the Dawson City International Short Film Festival — I just want to give kudos to David Curtis who was a founder of that very important Yukon event.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors?

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of National Canadian Film Day

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal Party, the Yukon Party Official Opposition and the Yukon New Democratic Party to pay tribute to Yukon's vibrant film and media industry on National Canadian Film Day.

The Yukon film and media industry has an impressive past and boasts a promising future, Mr. Speaker. Yukon-made productions from web series to television episodes, from short films to theatrical releases continue to captivate local and international audiences.

Sharing our unique Yukon stories with the world helps build awareness of our developing industry and our beautiful

territory. To promote the industry in Yukon, Max Fraser and Teresa Earle travelled to this year's European Film Market at the Berlinale film festival in February.

The European Film Market is one of the top international film markets in the world, and participating in this event helps Yukoners solidify production opportunities.

To build on this exposure, the Government of Yukon will lead a delegation of Yukoners at this year's Hot Docs Festival, which starts next week. Mr. Speaker, Hot Docs is North America's largest documentary festival. Yukoners have been well-represented at this major industry event in the past, and this year is no exception. Naomi Mark and Vivian Belik are participating at this year's Hot Docs distribution rendezvous to acquire additional broadcast and distribution sales for their film *How to Bee*, and I wish them all the best.

In addition to screening at festivals and participating in markets, Yukoners are also taking advantage of training and development opportunities. Naomi Mark participated in the Hot Docs accelerator fellow program and will be completing her mentorship this summer. Teresa Earle was selected to participate in the Producers Without Borders program at the European Film Market and was one of just 20 Canadians selected for this exclusive mentorship opportunity. Both Kelly Milner and Kirsten Madsen were selected for the National Screen Institute's 2017 Totally Television program and the 2018 Talent to Watch program.

These industry programs and development opportunities showcase Yukon productions and connect filmmakers with buyers, financiers, broadcasters, distributors, and potential co-production partners to promote the Yukon film industry as a whole. There is a lot to look forward to as the film and media industry in Yukon continues to grow.

It was announced just yesterday that the Outpost 31 short film *The Changeling* was selected by Telefilm Canada to be showcased at the Cannes Short Film Corner. *The Changeling* also earned Outpost 31's Jayden Soroka a coveted Zombear award at the Dead North Film Festival earlier this year for best visual effects. I know my counterpart the minister from the Northwest Territories is pretty excited to be part of that and he let me know about it the next day.

Suzanne Crocker's new documentary *First We Eat — Food Security North of 60* is in post-production, with its release scheduled for later this year. Andrew Connors' and David Curtis's documentary *Sovereign Soil* is currently in post-production as well.

Max Fraser is developing a documentary about the legendary Klondike Joe Boyle called *Finding Joe Boyle*, which is sure to be highly anticipated by Yukoners interested in the territory's history and personalities.

Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the Yukon organizations and festivals supporting our film industry: Screen Production Yukon Association, Yukon Film Society, Dawson City Media Cooperative, Yukon School of Visual Arts, Klondike Institute of Art and Culture, Northwest Community Television, Available Light Film Festival, and the Dawson City International Short Film Festival, which begins tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, I will close this tribute by saying thank you to the Yukoners who are building our media industry, whether it is in front of the camera or behind the scenes. And for the cinephiles, remember to visit canadianfilmday.ca to review the list of Canadian-made films to watch at your leisure or to find a screening.

Applause

In recognition of Targeted Initiative for Older Workers program graduates

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I rise today to pay tribute to the graduates of Yukon College's Targeted Initiatives for Older Workers program on behalf of all colleagues in the Legislature.

Tomorrow, the 10 learners who participated in this winter's program will celebrate their achievements at their graduation ceremony — congrats.

The Yukon's economy and work opportunities are rapidly changing. That's why lifelong learning is so important. It's great to see Yukoners of all ages adapting and building the skills they need to pursue their goals and contribute to their communities. The Targeted Initiative for Older Workers program is an innovative program at Yukon College that gives learners between the ages of 50 and 70 the opportunity to develop the skills they need to succeed in today's workforce. This program highlights a commitment and opportunity to supporting older workers with their lifelong learning.

Over the last 13 weeks, students of this program have developed their employability and enhanced their work-related literacy. They have strengthened their skills and confidence using computers and the technology that has become integral to succeeding in today's economy and workplaces. They have gained a better understanding of how they can transfer their personal strengths and expertise to the workplace. As part of their curriculum, they've learned more about Yukon First Nation ways of knowing and doing. It has been my distinct pleasure to present to this class for many years now. I come and discuss climate change and sustainability. This year, we had a great conversation about carbon pricing.

The students also gain valuable work experience by completing a four-week job placement. These placements are a rewarding part of the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers program, giving participants opportunities to explore new careers and sectors. Sometimes these placements lead to long-term employment with employers when employers hire back the older worker participants. Sometimes this program leads to older workers getting elected to this Legislature. I believe the Member for Copperbelt North is a graduate of the program. So who knows? Maybe some of this year's graduates will also seek the awesome job of representing Yukoners here in this Legislature.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that this initiative succeeds thanks in large part to the dedicated instructors who, year after year, deliver programs that meet the needs of their learners. They adjust the program's curriculum for each group of learners to suit their needs, aspirations and education levels. This targeted

approach has led to a high rate of success for participants in finding employment after they finish the program.

I would like to give a personal shout-out to Mr. George Green, who I believe was a co-worker of the Minister of Economic Development maybe about a decade ago in this program. I understand that he is retiring, and this will be his last class. We will miss you, George.

To the graduates — I hope that each of you takes what you have learned and uses it to meet your personal goals. As older workers, you each have valuable life experience and unique knowledge that will strengthen our economy and workplaces and our communities. Mr. Speaker, Yukon's employers will be fortunate to have these graduates work for them.

On behalf of all members of this Legislature, I wish all the graduates the best of luck in all the opportunities that await them. Congratulations.

Applause

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Speaker: Under Tabling Returns and Documents, the Chair has for tabling a special investigation report of the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner, entitled *Allegations of Wrongdoing in the Delivery of Group Home Care*. This report was prepared pursuant to subsection 43(3) of the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act*.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I have for tabling two legislative returns to follow up on questions that were posed during Committee of the Whole debate on the *First Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

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

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House supports the Government of Yukon releasing residential parcels and individual lots in Whitehorse subdivisions for private development as part of the 2019-20 budget.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Legalization and private retail of cannabis

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Today I rise to provide an update on the legalization of cannabis and to share news on our Liberal government's progress toward private retail. October 17, 2018 represented a significant shift in our laws and in societal norms. This shift has taken a tremendous

amount of work, and I would like to thank the departments of Justice, Health and Social Services, and especially the Yukon Liquor Corporation for their efforts.

Throughout, this work has been guided by the principles of protecting public health and safety — especially that of our youth — and displacing the illicit market. Through the government's store, our online store, and now through private retail, Yukoners have access to cannabis that is safe, legal and quality-tested. Six months to the day that cannabis was legalized, I'm happy to note that the Cannabis Licensing Board has approved the Yukon's first private retail licence. Congratulations to Triple J's Canna Space on their successful application.

We're happy to work with private retail and I look forward to them putting us out of the bricks-and-mortar retail business. To ensure that consumers are informed about health impacts and how to consume cannabis in a socially responsible manner, this week, we launched our online server training course for licensees and their employees. Be a Responsible Server for cannabis is a mandatory course for retailers and is also available free of charge to the public.

This past January, we established an independent Cannabis Licensing Board, which has the sole authority to grant or refuse licences, set additional conditions, and hold hearings related to applications. Despite the fact that applying for a retail licence is a rigorous process, I am pleased to advise the House that there are a number of other potential retailers across the territory who have submitted applications and are currently undergoing the review process.

Once private retail becomes established, we look forward to exiting the physical retail market. We will maintain e-commerce operations to ensure that all Yukoners have access to safe non-medical cannabis, regardless of where they live. Again, Mr. Speaker, I want to note and acknowledge the work that the corporation has done over the past year. Since legalization, cannabis sales have exceeded \$2 million in the Yukon, or approximately 140 kilograms.

We are very early in the evolution of legalized cannabis. In the absence of more market data, it is not yet possible to make definitive statements regarding the impact on the illicit market. However, I can tell you that, based on data from the Statistics Canada cannabis hub, the Yukon has had the highest monthly legal sales per capita in the country. I am confident that this is due to opening a government store and having e-commerce, as well as our efforts to secure a consistent cannabis supply and to keep prices as low as possible.

For the fiscal year 2019-20, the corporation plans to be revenue neutral to support our principled commitments. Early on, knowing that there would be supply challenges, the corporation sought to establish multiple product agreements. We just signed our ninth supply agreement, and we are currently stocking over 70 percent of our requested product portfolio. Ensuring supply and keeping wholesale prices low will also help to ensure that private retail can succeed and displace the black market.

It's a new era in Canada and the Yukon. We are working hard to meet the challenges and opportunities of this shift to legalization.

Mr. Istchenko: I am pleased to rise on behalf of the Official Opposition in response to this statement. It's surprising that the Liberal government chose to do a ministerial statement about private retail of cannabis, considering how badly they have handled this file and the move toward private retail. When the federal government moved to legalize cannabis, we took the position that the Yukon should use a model similar to Saskatchewan, where distribution and retail are done by the private sector and the government's role is just as a regulator.

Instead, the Liberal government insisted on growing government and getting deeper into the business of doing business. The government never needed to spend \$3 million on getting into this business, and I should remind everyone that it was only under pressure from this side — from the Yukon Party — that the Liberals finally agreed to advance the shutdown of the government cannabis store.

We acknowledge the work that Triple J's Canna Space and its owners put into preparing their application for licensing and open their doors. They had a better development plan than the Liberal government — well before the government even developed legislation — and they have done everything they can to play by the rules. They have succeeded despite the series of roadblocks put in their way by the Liberal government. This government has changed the goalposts many times. They have also failed to come through on promises that they made. In some cases, they seemed to be actively trying to make things harder for this local business.

Here are a few examples: The government made a commitment to provide Triple J's with a product list by early this year. Instead, they missed their own deadline by 2.5 months. Based on assurances from government, Triple J's expected to have their licence in hand to be able to open today. Instead, government dragged its feet, and Triple J's didn't get their licence until this morning. They are hoping to open tomorrow. That delay may seem like a minor issue to the Liberal government, but Triple J's told us that it is costing them about \$10,000.

This company set up preauthorized by the government, but then the government changed the goalposts again and demanded a certified cheque for the first order. On top of that, the government refused to even tell them how much to make the cheque out for until they received their licence from the government — which of course, as I said, didn't happen until this morning. The minister mentioned the Be a Responsible Server training requirement in this statement, but I should note that it wasn't until this week that government informed Triple J's that all of their staff would be required to have this training.

There has been a long practice of the Liquor Corporation allowing retailers to order product without requiring them to take large case lots. The government changed the goalposts again, and it's forcing this private retailer to order in bulk,

which adds a substantial cost and is one more roadblock government threw in their way.

Here is another example of the government needlessly making things harder for Yukon small businesses: To apply for the retail licence, the owners were required to submit three years of personal income tax statements and three years of business income tax statements. Why? Is the government actually trying to make life harder for this local small business? Is the minister trying to set private retail up for failure so that the government can continue to do cannabis retail, as the Liberals had originally planned? Or is this Liberal government just so badly out of touch with the private realities of small business that they don't even realize that this red tape is making life more difficult for businesses?

Since the Liberals took office, the Yukon has lost 900 private sector jobs. Does the Premier realize that his Liberal government is a big part of this problem?

Ms. Hanson: The Yukon New Democratic Party congratulates Triple J's Canna Space for successfully navigating the frustrating and often confusing waters of Yukon government's private legal cannabis sales process. We find it interesting that the Minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation chose to use the Legislative Assembly today to make the announcement of the issuing of this licence — timing that, as has been noted, appears to have been prompted by media reports that this private retailer had planned to open its business today, but as of yesterday had not heard from nor had confirmation by the Cannabis Licensing Board which is supposed to be at arm's length from government in its decision making and the sole authority to approve licences, determine licensing conditions, and hold hearings.

Yesterday, *Yukon News* featured a photo of a sign posted on the front door of Triple J's Canna Space on Wood Street that said: "It is with deep regret we are writing to advise that due to circumstances beyond our control, we will not be able to open our doors for business as planned for April 17.

"We are very frustrated with YG process, however we remain cautiously optimistic we will be licensed and ready to receive your smiling faces on Thursday April 18."

The notice pointed out that 12 staff who are awaiting employment are impacted by the government's delay in issuing their licence. Given that Triple J's Canna Space had already successfully addressed all issues raised by the City of Whitehorse — issues respecting the sale of cannabis within the city and the city making necessary changes to city bylaws — and that Triple J's Canna Space had in fact demonstrated their commitment as a responsible business by limiting their hours of business to considerably less than the Yukon cannabis regulations, which are 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m., this first private retailer has set a high bar for social responsibility for future cannabis retailers in Yukon.

Rather than attempting to do a media spin in this Assembly, the minister might consider acknowledging that this trailblazer in Yukon's private cannabis market has had to, and continues to, deal with a series of barriers resulting from

the government's rush to announce that it was ready to license private retailers before it had fully completed internal processes to facilitate a successful execution of this initiative. As the first private cannabis retailer to be licensed in the Yukon, Triple J's Canna Space provides a case study for this government, as there are many lessons learned to be gleaned from the numerous snakes-and-ladders-like steps that applicants have to follow.

The minister might choose to exercise a note of humility in acknowledging this and commit to reviewing his procedures and to improving them for the next applicants.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to urge the minister responsible to push for real data beyond the pride that he takes in the highest monthly legal sales per capita. Surely the gaps in data, especially those from the government's e-service cannabis sales, point to the reality that the illicit sales continue unabated. We will remind members that when MLAs were briefed, we were told at the time that the government's e-service website had only sold \$40,000 worth of cannabis. The fact that this number is so low is telling, as it is the only way for Yukoners in communities to access cannabis — and yes, while they can visit the store in Whitehorse — there are likely still large numbers of Yukoners purchasing from the illicit market in Yukon and Yukon's communities. This partly has to do with availability, but it also has to do with cost. A recent Statistics Canada report has documented that, Canada-wide, illicit cannabis prices are 32 percent cheaper than legal sales.

When you include the shipping cost for cannabis in Yukon, which can be as high as \$12, you can see that there are increased costs between legal and illicit sales. We urge the government to develop greater rigor in its data gathering and analysis.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will begin by agreeing that we will always work to have continuous improvement on how we can serve the private sector. I think that is a great suggestion.

I will also say that the point that the Leader of the Third Party raised about the Cannabis Licensing Board being arm's length from government is exactly the point. We did not try to influence the choice of the Cannabis Licensing Board in any way. They are there for a real reason.

Triple J's Canna Space — which I commended in my opening statement and will congratulate again — has done great work, but they went out and advertised that they were opening on a day before they actually had their licence in place. Respectfully, I think that we should make sure that whenever there is a hearing that will happen, that the hearing happens and the licensing board does their work — which they did. I thank them for that work. In fact, they met this past Monday, which was just one week after the city passed its bylaw.

There is a whole process. As the Official Opposition noted, we asked that there be a look into past financial records of anybody who is applying. Why did we do that? It is to protect the safety, through regulations, of the public so that we

don't get the black market back into private retail. That is why we did that.

I would actually like to thank the Cannabis Licensing Board. This was their very first application. I'm sure that they wanted to make sure they dotted their i's and crossed their t's, and I'm glad they want to do that. That's their role.

The board's role is to consider applications and to be diligent around public health safety and social responsibility.

By the way, I know that the City of Whitehorse and the Yukon Liquor Corporation have been working very hard to try to support Triple J's Canna Space's goal of being open by 4/20. I am happy that we were all able to do so.

I am sorry that it wasn't yesterday. That's the role of the Cannabis Licensing Board, and I respect their right.

By the way, I just want to say that this is the first private retail north of 60 — the first in any of Canada's small jurisdictions. For example, PEI still has chosen not to have private retail — little old PEI is the second-highest per capita legal sales, which is our best indicator of displacing the black market. We will continue to work with Statistics Canada to get their information. As I said, they're collecting it nationally. We'll happily work with them. So little old PEI is just behind us in per capita legal sales; Nova Scotia — we are 1.5 times higher in legal sales than Nova Scotia; we're two times higher than Newfoundland and Labrador — which is private retail by the way; 2.5 times higher than Northwest Territories; 6.5 times higher than Canada on average; and 12 times higher than Saskatchewan. That's who the opposition who voted against legalization of cannabis said we should mimic. Let's take a look at that — we are selling 12 times as much as Saskatchewan and 16 times as much as Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, we will work with the private sector. We're very excited that they're here starting today — exactly six months after cannabis was legalized across this country — and I'm very happy that they're going to put us out of business.

Speaker: This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Cannabis retail licensing

Mr. Cathers: On February 28, 2018, the *Whitehorse Star* ran a story based on an interview with the Premier. In the story, the Premier claimed government was going to be — quote: "... getting out of the business of doing business."

He also said, "We have a comprehensive network of private sector businesses that can do more, as long as we just do less."

Yesterday, we saw another example that the government is actually making life tougher for small business. The Liberal government's approach to regulating cannabis is needlessly creating roadblocks to the private sector, changing the goalposts, and failing to live up to specific commitments made with local businesses.

Yesterday, Triple J's announced they had to delay their store opening because the government failed to live up to its promises, and they didn't have a licence yet from YTG.

During the ministerial statement earlier, the Premier laughed at this and the minister then blamed it on the company. My constituents do not find this funny.

Mr. Speaker, why did the government throw needless roadblocks in the way of Triple J's and change the goalposts during the process so many times?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I have met with Triple J's several times, Mr. Speaker, in person. The president of the corporation has met with Triple J's several times.

I was at their soft launch last Friday. I was there actually with the Mayor of Whitehorse. I know that the City of Whitehorse has been working with Triple J's. I know that we have.

What I'm hearing in the question, Mr. Speaker, is that the opposition — both the Third Party and the Official Opposition — doesn't think we should listen to the Cannabis Licensing Board. They think somehow that we should tell the Cannabis Licensing Board how they should make a decision. Sorry, that's not how we're going to act. The Cannabis Licensing Board has been diligent and has done their work.

Even this past Friday, when Triple J's were saying they were going to open, I said, "You know you have to get through the licensing board piece here, so please, let's just see how that goes." Anyway, I'm very happy that they're open today. I know that the corporation had their order ready to go as soon as the licensing board issued their decision. They issued it this morning, and away we go. I am so happy that Triple J's Canna Space is now our first legal private retailer in the Yukon.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, the government didn't need to make it tougher for business or get into the business of doing business, despite their claims to the contrary.

The Premier and this government talked a good line, but failed to deliver. They have grown government and, despite claims that the government will do less and let the private sector grow more, they have created more red tape, expanded government to compete with the private sector, and unnecessarily entered retail. We have seen this situation where this latest victim of red tape found that government changed the goalposts multiple times throughout the process and failed to live up to specific commitments a number of times.

For example, the company set up preauthorized payments with the government, but government changed the goalposts and demanded a certified cheque for the first order. On top of that, government refused to even tell them how much to make the cheque out for until they had their licence from the government. The company has tried hard and done everything asked of them, but they have gotten the runaround. Earlier today, we saw the response from the government — the Premier laughed at this issue and the minister blamed the company.

Why did the government fail to take action on this and issued the licence only when it became a media issue?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question, but again, I will say that it is not our decision who to license. We set up a Cannabis Licensing Board. Can I please articulate this very clearly so that the member understands?

We don't decide who to license; we set up an independent quasi-judicial Cannabis Licensing Board to do that, and I am going to respect them. This government will respect them. I will encourage the private sector to respect them and I hope the opposition will respect that.

By the way, what I heard the Premier laughing at was the suggestion that we should have followed Saskatchewan's model. Man, we have had almost enough sales in our online sales to match the per capita sales of Saskatchewan. That is not the right model at all. I'm so happy that we didn't go with that model. We are 12 times better than Saskatchewan.

When I originally met with Triple J's, we originally gave them our timeline. Our timeline was for after 4/20 — after April 20. That is when we were saying to them that we thought the work that needed to happen would be ready and in place — because we said that there was a lot of work to happen. They asked us if we could make it faster. We worked hard, and I would like to thank the corporation for all of its work because they got it done. I'm very happy that they did so for Yukoners and for private retail.

Mr. Cathers: I do have to correct the minister — it was when my colleague made reference to this delay in the business being able to open that the Premier laughed at this delay off-mic.

The Premier's plans to regulate cannabis have been focused on growing government, hiring more employees, and creating a new government retail store. A private sector company shouldn't have to issue a last-minute press release highlighting that the Yukon government left them high and dry. Government permitting should be designed to support responsible business, not make it harder by constantly changing the goalposts.

An example of this is that the Be a Responsible Server training is now a requirement for Triple J's, but they tell me that they weren't notified that all their staff would need that training until this week. There has also been a long practice of the Yukon Liquor Corporation allowing retailers to order product without requiring them to take large case lots, but government changed the goalposts and is forcing this private retailer to order in bulk, which adds a substantial cost — another government roadblock.

Since this government took office, the private sector has lost 900 jobs. Does the Premier realize that his government is a big part of the problem? Will he agree to stop making things needlessly hard on Yukon businesses?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I'm pretty disappointed with the Yukon Party, but this is a typical tack for the Yukon Party. In the fall, the line of questioning over retail and private and public sector cannabis was that we were growing our government and that we were never going to get out of the business of it. Now, in this session in the spring, we have a minister who not only effectively — through hybrid legislation — got us out of the business of doing this business, but also did it in a quicker time frame than what he originally announced, and he did it while working with the private sector.

What we're hearing from the opposition right now — as they continue to heckle off-mic as I try to give them answers — they're not listening, because this is not good for the Yukon Party. But it is good for getting illicit drugs off the street; it's good for the private sector, and it's good for an education campaign on the legitimacy — having a legitimate industry for cannabis to get those drugs off the street.

Question re: Plastic waste management

Ms. Van Bibber: Regarding the government's plan to implement a tax on single-use shopping bags, we have heard concerns from the local small businesses regarding the information that was shared at the consultations last week. Feedback that we have heard from the meeting has centred on poor quality of communications, with failure to specify that paper bags are included.

During debate, even the Minister of Environment — with the support of her senior officials — thought it was just for plastic bags. At the consultations last week, officials at first indicated that grocery stores had been consulted, but then two grocery representatives in attendance indicated that they hadn't even been contacted.

Why did the minister authorize a consultation process that left so many Yukon businesses, and even the Minister of Environment, unaware that paper bags are also included in this new tax scheme?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, I'm really happy that, during the engagement process, the folks from the departments of Community Services and Environment are going out and engaging with businesses and talking to them about their concerns. I had a conversation yesterday with the president of the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce. Through that conversation, I did hear some of the concerns that are coming from small businesses, and I'm happy to hear them.

We have also heard from 1,689 — I'm not sure if I have that number right, Mr. Speaker — Yukoners who think this is a good idea to put a price on single-use bags — both paper and plastic. I'm not sure — the member opposite is talking about the issue of paper and plastic. I know the Minister of Environment is clear on it. She did say something that was incorrect during Committee of the Whole. She turned around and put in a legislative return the next morning to clarify.

I hope that we can all together here in this Legislature make sure that we're saying that the proposal is about a price on single-use bags in order to reduce them. I'm very happy to talk with the private sector, and I thank the member for her input.

Ms. Van Bibber: We know that local retailers and small businesses in Yukon are concerned about the government's plans. In fact, just this morning, the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce sent out a notice to its membership highlighting a number of concerns they have with the government's proposal stemming from the consultation.

Just to quote from the note: "During this meeting, the business community expressed their support for an outright ban on plastic retail bags..."

This is consistent with what we have heard from others who were in attendance at this meeting. However, the government officials in attendance indicated that the reason they didn't want to do an outright ban is because they want to use the plastic-bag tax as a revenue generator. As it turns out, instead of this being an environmental policy, it is actually a tax policy.

Can the minister confirm that an outright ban of plastic bags is off the table and why they are not in favour of this proposal from the business community?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am totally in favour of eliminating waste in general, including single-use plastics and including paper waste; yes, that is the goal. That is the whole point of this goal. Yes, it is a model of "polluter pay"; that is the whole point.

It is to get toward — when the Northwest Territories introduced this similar regulation — the *Designated Materials Regulation*, they saw a 70-percent reduction in single-use bags. That is a great thing. I am very happy that the chamber has turned around — and in my conversation, they raised it with me as well. I said to them, "Oh, that is terrific." They are looking at how to get further, at least on single-use plastics, but of course I want to make sure that this leads to reduction. If all it does is shift from plastics to paper, that is not a real gain ultimately. That is a question that I think we need to tackle.

I'm really happy to hear how progressive the chamber and the constituents of the chamber are around this issue. I think it is incumbent on all of us. Whether we are businesses, individuals, or governments, we need to work together to reduce our waste and this is one of the great ways that we are doing it, to balance the economy and the environment.

Ms. Van Bibber: In their note to the business community today, the Whitehorse chamber indicates that they do not want paper retail bags to be considered in the same category as plastic bags. They further indicate that the 25-cent surcharge for retail bags at point of sale will place an additional administration burden on businesses that would be required to track and remit the surcharge.

With the addition of the increased CPP premiums, increased minimum wage, federal small business tax hikes and the carbon tax, small businesses in the territory are feeling like a lot is being piled on them all at once. With respect to adding a tax to paper bags, I am going to ask the minister a question that I have asked several times, one he has dodged and not given an answer.

Will the minister commit to doing an analysis of the impacts on local Yukon businesses for these proposals and make it public before implementation? Yes or no?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, I am always happy to try to get some economic analyses done. We are in the middle of an engagement period. We received here in this Legislature a petition from 1,689 Yukoners asking us to take a decision on this and I stood up here and, in the response to petitions, said, "No, I am not giving an answer to that because we are in the middle of the engagement period." I am not telling people

where we are going get to because the whole purpose is to try to receive that input back.

I have said that if the model that is being proposed is just a shift from plastic to paper, which is what I heard the member opposite suggest, that is not really reducing. If the goal here is reducing, then let's try to keep that in mind as we are working to design the system. I think it is important that we listen to the business community. I want to commend them where they talk about outright bans. When I spoke with the chamber yesterday, I said, "Hey, let's do some work where we praise those businesses that are working on outright bans." I thought we were talking about outright bans on single-use bags, not on just, "Okay, no plastic, but I will shift it over to paper, thanks."

What I would like to do is say that if there is an outright ban, let's hold those businesses up as praiseworthy because they don't have any overhead with that because they are just doing a great job for all of us as Yukoners.

Question re: Opioid overdose and death statistics

Ms. White: Yesterday was the National Day of Action on the Overdose Crisis. Across Canada, 22 cities and towns participated in marches, round tables and educational events. The aim was to raise awareness to the importance of safe spaces and a safe drug supply for all members of communities.

Overdoses don't just affect marginalized populations. They affect people from all walks of life and from all different backgrounds. Since 2016, there have been 18 confirmed opioid deaths in Yukon. In 2018, there were four confirmed opioid deaths, and three of those involved fentanyl. It is our understanding that there are still cases outstanding.

Can the minister update this Assembly on the number of deaths and reported overdoses related to opioid usage in 2018?

Hon. Ms. Frost: What the Member for Takhini-Kopper King has noted is that the number of opioid overdoses is confirmed at 18. We continue to work with the Yukon Medical Association on defining the numbers. My understanding is, as of 2018, we have 18 confirmed. We are working on preventive measures. We have provided additional resources to the program. We are working with Canada and of course the Yukon Medical Association on Yukon's opioid action that we released in November.

In response to that, we have seen a reduction, and we are looking at working with our partners like Blood Ties Four Directions, for an example. I'm really pleased about that. I think that whenever there is a crisis, clearly we need to be responsive and react accordingly, and that's exactly what we are doing. Prevention is where we need to focus our energy rather than dealing with the continued crises. I am happy where we are with the department and with our partners.

Ms. White: I am hopeful that we can get those updated numbers. We know that people die from drug overdoses, but we also know that there are numbers of people who overdose and end up in the emergency departments where those overdoses are overturned. These numbers are important

because it gives a clearer picture on the current drug crisis and if steps that government has taken are enough.

Can the minister tell us the number of overdose cases that resulted in visits to the emergency departments in 2018?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Clearly, I don't have that number at my fingertips. I would have to work with the Hospital Corporation and the Yukon Medical Association to determine the number of visits. What I can say is that we are seeking further preventive measures and supports with our departments. We have seen significant overdoses associated with fentanyl, and we are continuing to work with the RCMP as well.

What we have in front of us right now are 15 confirmed deaths and 20 overdoses in 2016 with respect to the numbers we have currently. I will have to work with the Hospital Corporation on the number of emergency visits. It's not something I have at my fingertips.

Ms. White: Last year, we asked for public warnings about dangerous drugs, and we want to thank the medical health officer for alerting the public to a dangerous drug potentially being here in Yukon, and that's purple heroin. We believe this action has saved lives.

We're fortunate to have groups such as Blood Ties Four Directions that work hard to be a safe place for individuals who are drug users. They provide naloxone kits and training and are able to test street drugs for fentanyl. But we know individuals of all ages continue to die or overdose — not just in Whitehorse, but in the communities as well.

I spent some time today around town looking for posters or information on the dangers of fentanyl or opioids and found very little. Even in this building, a very public space, there is not one single poster or pamphlet.

Mr. Speaker, what is this government doing to share and educate the public on the risks and dangers of opioids, including shared spaces like this building?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I am pleased with where Health and Social Services is at, and it's important to note that we're not taking this lightly. This is a serious situation that all Yukoners need to be engaged in, and part of that is to educate young people, educate our partners, help to work on solving the crises. To say that the Yukon medical health officer makes note about specific drugs — tainted drugs or drugs that come onto our streets — that's done in collaboration with the Department of Justice and with Health and Social Services. The team has to work together to identify the crises.

With regard to the posters and the notification, if there isn't sufficient notification out there, we will endeavour to get more information out there. We are working clearly with our partners to combat the opioid crisis in our communities and we have been doing so since 2016. By releasing the opioid action plan in November, we have raised the profile and will continue to look at focused areas like harm reduction, public awareness, surveillance, opioid and pain management. Those are some of the areas that are identified in the action plan, and we will continue to ensure that we communicate with the public.

Question re: Finlayson caribou herd hunt

Mr. Istchenko: Last year at the eleventh hour, the minister cancelled the permit hunt for the Finlayson caribou herd, which was very disappointing for many Yukon hunters. We understand that hunting ban will extend for another year and include outfitter quotas as well.

Can the minister update this House on the recovery plans she has in place for the herd, including the work the minister has done to date, baseline population numbers, and when she anticipates these efforts will result in the reopening of the hunting opportunities for this herd?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I'm happy to speak. I believe the member opposite is speaking about the Finlayson caribou permits. If that's not the case, then perhaps he can re-ask the question.

Where we are right now in collaboration with Ross River Dena Council is we are working closely with them to identify the priorities in that particular area. What we have seen — and why the permit hunts were implemented in the first place — was because the herd was declining and there is a management measure in place to protect the herd, to sustain it long term and to sustain it from overharvesting.

We know that, currently, we can only sustain an extraction of 27 animals from that particular herd. We are working with the local First Nations to identify the accurate numbers; therefore, time is required to do that type of work.

Question re: Airport improvements

Mr. Kent: I have a question for the minister about planning for the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport. On May 4, 2017, a contract entitled "Master Plan 2040, Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport" was awarded to the MMM Group Ltd. from Ottawa for approximately \$210,000. Since it has been almost two years, can the minister provide us with an update on this work? Has it been completed? If so, where can we find this plan?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I thank the member opposite for the question and the opportunity to speak about the airport this afternoon.

The Department of Highways and Public Works has made significant investments in aviation over the past few years to upgrade equipment and facilities, and we will continue to advance the priority of Yukon aviation. A comprehensive multi-year investment plan will make sure that we are meeting Yukon's current and future aviation system needs. Over the next year, Highways and Public Works will engage with stakeholders, airport users, and the public to gather input on what priorities, operations, and future investments in the Yukon aviation system should be. The stakeholder feedback will help to inform the investment plan that combines safety, efficiency, stakeholder needs, and operational requirements for Yukon aviation.

Mr. Speaker, we are doing this because we have heard concerns about the previous plan — the 2040 — that was hatched under the last government. There were shortfalls there, and we are taking the time to make sure that we get this

right and reflect the needs of the aviation stakeholders in the territory. We are happy to do that work.

Mr. Kent: It appears that the minister grabbed the wrong briefing note, because he was talking about the Yukon's Flight Path plan that closed earlier this month. I was actually asking about the Yukon Liberals' 2040 master plan for Erik Nielsen airport.

When we were debating the *Public Airports Act* in the fall of 2017 — that was approximately 18 months ago — the minister mentioned that the important work would be accomplished in the regulations. One of many quotes from him during the debate came on October 17, 2017, during Question Period when he said — and I quote: "... the more important part of this process, the meat of this legislation, will come during the drafting of regulations. This is the first step."

Can the minister let us know when we can expect that first step to be taken and when the regulations associated with this act will be drafted, consulted on, and implemented?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: The member opposite has been out of government for several years now, and he seems to be losing his understanding of how this whole thing works.

The members opposite had a plan. There were all sorts of plans. They put together a master plan 2040. We heard about that plan, and that it wasn't very good. There was the Dawson airport functional plan and the Yukon aviation systems review, and there was a lot of confusion around that. What we are doing with Flight Path, Mr. Speaker, is going out to the stakeholders and finding out what their thoughts are on safety, efficiency, stakeholder needs, and operational requirements for Yukon aviation.

We are also about to finalize the lease issue up at the airport. That has been ongoing for years and years, after some bungling by the previous government on the lease issue. We are fixing that issue. We are investing in new snow-blowers and graders up at the airport that have been woefully missing and absent for many, many years. We are fixing the baggage-handling equipment, we are putting more tarmac on the Whitehorse runway apron, and we are paving the Dawson City runway.

We are doing an awful lot, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that this aviation infrastructure is a strategic investment for the territory.

Mr. Kent: Clearly the minister has been in government too long because he has forgotten which plans are actually his.

I mentioned that on May 4, 2017, the contract entitled "Master Plan 2040" closed and was awarded to a group from Ottawa. Mr. Speaker, when the minister talks about the system review — again, that is something that has been undertaken by his government. Then most recently, Yukon's Flight Path closed earlier this month. So we have three different studies that are underway.

Mr. Speaker, when will all these studies translate into action on developing regulations and getting airport lands in the hands of airport users?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am really pleased to see the members opposite finally taking an interest in airports and turning their eyes to it. That attention has been lacking for a

very long time. As members opposite know, as we debated it at length, we have a *Public Airports Act* now that has been passed. We are currently in the process of getting the terms of reference before the public so that we can move ahead with the aviation advisory committee that was put in the legislation to make sure the minister had good feedback from the aviation stakeholders in the territory.

The reason why that is so important is because when we took office, the aviation community had websites up calling it a "war on aviation" in the territory. We are trying to make sure that we have the rules, the tools, the investments, and the understanding of this critical industry in the territory to move it forward so that it actually reaches the economic potential that it really should have.

So we are investing in the Dawson City Airport, we are investing in Whitehorse, and we are investing in Mayo — \$6 million going into Mayo this year to make sure that they have scheduled flights.

Mr. Speaker, the aviation industry is central to this government's focus, and we are proud of that.

Question re: Ross River School

Mr. Hassard: Mr. Speaker, in this year's budget, the government allocated \$1.4 million for the Ross River School; however, the actual bid came in to fix the ground under the school at \$200,000 more. Obviously this is a shock to many Yukoners, as the Minister of Highways and Public Works has so often bragged that he put so much work into budgeting and planning to prevent projects from going overbudget. So now we see that the Liberals are considering dealing with this minister's lack of planning by actually cancelling the planned work at the Ross River School outright.

Can the minister tell us if in fact he is cancelling this work?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am happy to speak about the Ross River School again this afternoon. Our number one priority is the health and safety of all students and staff at the school. The school continues to be a safe place to learn and to work. That is our top priority and is something that I have stressed and have kept a very close eye on since taking office.

The future of the Ross River School is not — I will repeat that, Mr. Speaker — the future of the Ross River School is not a decision our government will make unilaterally.

We will continue to work with the Ross River Dena Council to listen to the community's needs and jointly determine a long-term solution to the future of the school.

I'm not really sure what the member opposite is suggesting that we do in this situation. The only bid we received — the sole bid that we received for the cooling work came in well overbudget. It is in fact over the entire budget for work on this school this year.

Would the member opposite suggest we simply award the contract? That's a recipe for spending \$1.50 for every \$1.00 you collect in the territory — that is not something this government is willing to do.

Mr. Hassard: We have certainly seen this government do that in the past, so that's exactly why I was asking the question.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, the earthquake in 2017 has shone a further spotlight on the issues in the Ross River School, and instead of taking immediate action then, this government sat on their hands and refused to do anything.

The residents are getting worried, and to quote one concerned resident from this week's CBC story: "They basically want to have a safe space for their kids, and to have somewhere where they don't have to worry about the school falling apart."

Even the engineering firm that the government hired says that work needs to be done — and I'll quote from their report: "We note that the foundation movements occurring at the Ross River School to date are significant, and will lead to serious non-structural and structural damage if no remediation work is carried out to address the degradation of the permafrost..."

So what is the government's long-term plan for the school?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I want to be very clear about this. This is vital for the students and staff working and learning in Ross River. The main focus — the intent of this government — is to provide a safe place for our students and staff to learn and work in Ross River. That is the focus of this government, and we will continue with that focus.

Right now, all the engineering reports we have done — and we have done many — we have actually released them to the public, which is also something that hasn't been seen in this territory before, but we're doing it because we want to be open and transparent. We are releasing those reports, and those reports show the school is safe.

That is the focus of this government. We want to make sure the students and staff of Ross River have a safe place to live and work.

Mr. Hassard: So we see in the five-year capital plan where it says the Liberals are planning on spending \$10 million to \$25 million on the Ross River School over the next five years, but if the building is going to continue sinking on the current ground, then money isn't being spent wisely, one would think.

As I have pointed out, community members are worried about the school. Staff in the school are worried about it. Even the government's engineering firm has said that remediation work is necessary to prevent structural damage. The minister, in my opinion, needs to go to Ross River, meet with the community, families, and staff to come up with a long-term vision for a school in that community.

Mr. Speaker, will he agree to do that?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I would be happy to go back to Ross River. As a matter of fact, it's not only that I will be happy to, but I am going back to Ross River. I have trips planned as soon as the Legislature stops sitting.

I will be in Ross River in May, and I will be having the conversations the member opposite is talking about. That's a very important point for us — that the future of the Ross River

School is not a decision that this government will make unilaterally. We're not in that business. We work with our communities; we work with all communities. My good colleague in Community Services has the numbers. We have made hundreds of visits to communities, and we're going to continue that this summer and into the years to come.

We will work with the community of Ross River on the future of this school. We are going to make responsible decisions to make sure that school remains a safe place to learn and a safe place to work. We will do so in a fiscally responsible manner. We are not going to award contracts that are grossly overbudget. In light of that information, we will look at what we can do to make sure that we keep a safe, productive school in Ross River and move forward with a plan so that the students and staff in Ross River have the best educational facilities they can depend on into the future.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 423

Clerk: Motion No. 423, standing in the name of Mr. Hutton.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with:

- (1) the private sector to provide for the sale of cannabis via the private sector; and
- (2) the Government of Canada to regulate the use of cannabis edibles.

Mr. Hutton: It gives me great pleasure to rise in the House today to speak about cannabis.

On October 17, 2018, it became legal to consume non-medical cannabis. This is the date that the federal *Cannabis Act* came into effect. The *Cannabis Act* created a strict legal framework for controlling production, distribution, sale, and possession of cannabis across Canada.

The discussion today is quite timely, as I came into it having read the news, understanding there is a possibility that a private cannabis retailer would be opening their doors today. It was great to hear the ministerial statement earlier this afternoon on cannabis.

I am happy to hear that the Cannabis Licensing Board has approved the Yukon's first private retail licence. It leaves an awful lot of work to do, Mr. Speaker, because there are far more communities in the Yukon than just Whitehorse. Until there is a private retail outlet in every community in the territory, I don't believe that the minister's work is done.

I was also very happy to hear that Yukon has had the highest monthly legal sales per capita in the country. Again, as mentioned by my colleague, this is the best indication that we have that we are making some inroads into the illegal market.

While the first private licence has been issued, I am mindful that there's still work to be done in a complete shift from a government-operated store to an exclusively private market.

I would like to start by providing an overview of what falls into the purview of the federal government and what falls to the provincial and territorial governments.

Because this legislation is so new and there is still work being done at the federal level, it is important that, in debating this motion today, we have a clear picture of where we sit currently.

As per the federal Justice webpage, the federal government's responsibilities are to set strict requirements for producers who grow and manufacture cannabis and to set industry-wide rules and standards, including the types of cannabis products available for sale, the packaging and labelling requirements for products — which, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, they have gone far overboard on. They have created an environmental hazard and a cost-prohibitive measure that private retail is going to have to deal with, and Yukoners are going to have to pay for the price of disposing of all that plastic packaging.

The federal government is also responsible for standardized serving sizes and potency, packaging and labelling requirements, prohibitions on the use of certain ingredients, good production practices, tracking requirements of cannabis from seed to sale to keep it out of the illegal market, and restrictions of promotional activities.

Provinces and territories are responsible for developing, implementing, maintaining, and enforcing systems to oversee the distribution and sale of cannabis. They are also able to add their own safety measures, such as increasing the minimum age in their province or territory, lowering the personal possession limit in their jurisdiction, creating additional rules for growing cannabis at home — such as lowering the number of plants per residence — and restricting where adults can consume cannabis, such as in public or in vehicles.

I want to talk a bit about social responsibility. On October 16, 2018, the Minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation issued a ministerial statement in the House on cannabis. In the opening paragraph he said — and I quote: “The legalization of cannabis tomorrow, October 17, represents a significant shift, not only in our legal framework but in the societal norms of our country.” This is absolutely true, and the discussions around societal norms and social responsibility are ones that I am really looking forward to having today. In fact, this was a sentiment that we heard from the minister today in his ministerial statement on cannabis. I think that a lot of the conversations around cannabis are intimidating to folks, as it does push the boundaries of societal norms.

Studies have found that over 80 percent of Yukoners supported the legalization of cannabis, so we know that it

certainly has been a conversation, but a lot of it has been behind closed doors. Despite the high percentage of supporters, most people aren't as open about their consumption of cannabis as they are about their consumption of alcohol. There is a long-standing stigma around cannabis use and a long-standing tradition of trivialization and normalization of alcohol use.

One of the things that legalizing cannabis has done is that it makes us, as a society, recognize and evaluate our relationship with intoxicants. Because cannabis — and all things related — is such a new discussion to be having out in the open, I think that this topic is a great one to bring to the House for debate.

When the idea of cannabis being legalized was first introduced, there was a lot of fear and fear-mongering going on. That is really consistent with the history of cannabis in this country, Mr. Speaker. I am going to quote from the Senate Special Committee on Illegal Drugs' cannabis summary report. They talked about the early legislation in this country: “Early drug legislation was largely based on moral panic, racist sentiment and a notorious absence of debate.”

When the introduction of cannabis came to the House of Commons and the narcotics schedule, there was no debate. Most of the members of the House of Commons didn't even know what cannabis was. That is when it became dangerous and illegal.

People were concerned that usage would skyrocket and that our rates of drug-impaired driving would be negatively impacted. We haven't seen those things happen. According to the most recent Statistics Canada national cannabis survey, about 4.6 million — or 15 percent — of Canadians aged 15 and older reported using cannabis in the last three months. That is a similar percentage to what was reported before legalization. Another statistic that might be interesting to people is that 82.9 percent of Canadians over the age of 15 used alcohol in the previous month last year. The drug-impaired driving rates didn't skyrocket, Mr. Speaker, but if you refer to Yukon Bureau of Statistics' most recent report, alcohol-impaired driving in the Yukon went up by 48.5 percent year over year from 2015 to 2016.

I am a firm believer that good ideas come from all parties, and I think that each party brings a different perspective on this issue. I know that, in response to the ministerial statement last year on cannabis, the Member for Takhini-Kopper King had a large focus on personal responsibility. That is something that I am very much aligned with her on. Social responsibility with the use of any intoxicant is at the top of my priority list. Again, this is where we really have an opportunity to evaluate our relationship with intoxicants as a society.

As much as in some ways there is absolutely no comparison between the effects of alcohol and the effects of cannabis on people, Canadian roads are a dangerous place because of alcohol-impaired drivers — 96 percent of the impaired driving incidents, of which there were 72,000 in Canada last year, were alcohol-impaired driving. The other four percent — some 3,000 compared to 72,000 — makes up all the other drugs together. Cannabis can't even be sorted out

from those 3,000. The numbers are not there. So every other drug — with the exception of the drug that rules them all, alcohol — is included in those statistics.

I think that our federal government really lost its focus when it comes to Bill C-46 and protecting Canadians from impaired drivers on our highways when there are, nationwide, 3,000 incidents of drug-impaired driving versus 73,000 incidents of alcohol-impaired driving. It defies logic to me that you would create a law that would deal with the 3,000 and not deal with the 73,000.

There has been mention in this House about the cost of unnecessary emergency room visits. Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker — 77,000 hospitalizations occurred in Canada last year directly related to alcohol. Statistics Canada reported that the average cost was \$8,100 for each one of those 77,000 incidents, compared to a \$5,000 cost for any other emergency room visit.

In response to the same ministerial statement, we heard some criticism from the Official Opposition Justice critic that they were not supportive of the government's plan to hold off on privatization and to instead operate a temporary cannabis outlet. They would rather have seen immediate privatization with no involvement from the government.

When we look at what other provinces and territories across the country have done, seven of them opted to base sales out of a government-operated store. We have slowly seen a transition where other jurisdictions are shifting to private retail. Because legalization was brand new and work is still being done at the federal level, I can appreciate why the majority of provinces and territories opted to start off basing sales through a government-operated store.

It takes a bit of time to work out the kinks and to learn the regulations. Growers and distributors were getting set up and learning how to navigate this very new market. In fact, we saw a Canada-wide shortage in the availability of product. Because of the excellent pre-planning on the Yukon government's part, we were one of the few jurisdictions in the country that did not feel the effects of this. I think that we are in a good position now to start having discussions about moving to the privatization of sales in Yukon and how that will look throughout the territory.

When it comes to privatization, there are a few things that I am mindful of. A big one for me is the packaging and the environmental and cost implications of the current packaging. I remind folks here today that packaging is currently determined by the federal government. It falls under part 7 of the federal *Cannabis Regulations*, entitled "Packaging and Labelling". Section 108(a) stipulates that the packaging must be opaque or translucent. Section 108(e) stipulates that the packaging must meet the requirements of a child-resistant package under subsections C.01.001(2) to (4) of the *Food and Drug Regulations*.

Again, it makes for a very interesting dichotomy. When you look at the alcohol that you purchase from the liquor store, it is not individually packaged; it is not in opaque and non-transparent containers; it is not in childproof containers.

It is an extremely poisonous intoxicant. The lethal dose for alcohol is 13 one-ounce shots of alcohol in a 15-minute period — that kills 50 percent of the populations being tested on. The Drug Enforcement Administration in the United States came to the conclusion that the LD₅₀ for cannabis — a person has to consume 1,500 pounds in 15 minutes in order to overdose.

When you compare half a bottle of whisky to three-quarters of a tonne of cannabis, how can you possibly think — which one of those do children need protection from? It is going to be very difficult for any child to consume 1,500 pounds of cannabis in 15 minutes, but they can twist a top off of a bottle of whisky, drink half of it, and die from it. When we are talking about public health and safety in this country, we need to focus on the most dangerous drug that is out there — we need to talk about alcohol.

Eight-two percent of Canadians over the age of 15 using alcohol — it's incredible that it has been so normalized and so trivialized in our society. It seems that Canadian society is prepared to accept four deaths every day from alcohol-impaired driving on a road — just the cost of fun. The rest of Canadians need to have fun. Why should we care that four Canadians lose their life every day?

We heard talk across the floor about the opioid crisis. 10,000 Canadians have died in the past three years from opioids — fentanyl, carfentanyl, purple heroin. It is a crisis, but I will tell you about an even bigger crisis: In the last three years, over 15,000 Canadians have died directly from alcohol-related causes. That is 1.5 times what the fentanyl problem is, and it's still not a crisis. These are not new numbers from this year. You can track these numbers back to 17 years ago, when there were 4,000 Canadians killed by impaired driving on our roads. Fentanyl wasn't even heard of then. If you look at the toll that the drug alcohol has taken on our society, it far exceeds the death toll of every other drug known to man out there.

This fearmongering with cannabis needs to stop. The moral panic, the notorious absence of debate — there is 100 years of evidence now. There is no longer any reason for people to put this stigma on cannabis users when alcohol users are killing people on our roads and highways every day. They are jamming up our courts. They are jamming up our emergency rooms and our hospitals. They are costing — last year, Canadian taxpayers — \$15 billion is the estimated cost to our health care program from alcohol-related problems. You don't need to be a rocket scientist to figure out what the real crisis is in this country — it is alcohol.

To get back on track here — we were talking about cannabis and the regulations for the containers in which cannabis is packaged — that's what got me off on that little tangent about how easy it is to open a bottle of whiskey compared to one of these child-proof packages from the cannabis store.

The regulations go on to stipulate the package finish. Not only does this excessive packaging have negative effects on the environment; it has serious cost implications. When we're talking about one of the primary goals of legalization being to

eradicate the black market, prices need to be competitive. We can't force our private retail stores to bear a cost that the illegal market does not have to deal with.

Again, I was really happy to hear from the minister this afternoon in his ministerial statement that the Yukon has had the highest monthly legal sales per capita in the country, which tells us that we are making a positive shift toward eradicating the illicit market. I believe we have a long way to go, Mr. Speaker, but we are certainly taking steps in the right direction.

I feel strongly that reducing the cost of packaging will further aid in reducing the costs of legal sales, thus helping to weaken the illicit market and strengthen the private retail market.

I am looking forward to hearing from others in this House this afternoon on the topic of packaging and if this is something that they have given any thought to. I do see this as a potential barrier for privatized operations to develop a financially stable business model. It's important that, if we're going to set up private retail, we set them up for success and not for failure, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to talk a bit about cannabis in the rural communities. I'm very happy to hear today that Whitehorse is going to have its first private retail cannabis outlet in the very near future. That is not going to be the same, unfortunately, for many other communities in the Yukon. I don't believe the minister mentioned the online sales that are out there, but for the most part, for people in the communities, online sales and the black market are their two sources. The black market online is one of their sources as well — so the online store also has competition out there. It's very difficult for the RCMP to be able to deal with the number of sites that are out there selling illegal products now. They have dramatically proliferated, and there doesn't seem to be a lot of success in shutting them down.

I've seen in the news recently some decisions which are being made at the municipal level across the territory with respect to implementation of bylaws around cannabis retail outlets. The City of Whitehorse recently adopted bylaw 2019-08, which is a bylaw to amend the zoning bylaw to provide for the private retail sale of cannabis and cannabis-containing products. Under this bylaw, cannabis stores in Whitehorse will be permitted to operate between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. — again, a very interesting dichotomy in how the intoxicant cannabis is dealt with in terms of hours of operation versus the intoxicant alcohol. Alcohol can be purchased most places in the territory at retail outlets until 2:00 in the morning.

It is no coincidence, Mr. Speaker, that the vast majority of alcohol-impaired driving incidents that happen in this country happen between 10:00 at night and 4:00 in the morning. I suspect that we could make some inroads there if perhaps we quit selling alcohol at 10:00 at night, the same time as we quit selling cannabis. If we are going to talk social responsibility around one intoxicant, we surely need to talk about it around the other one.

Under this bylaw, cannabis stores in Whitehorse will be permitted to operate between 9:00 in the morning and 10:00 p.m. I don't think too many cannabis users would find that unreasonable, Mr. Speaker. Most of the other stores they shop at close at 7:00 or 9:00 at night, so I don't think it puts any hardship on users out there to restrict the hours.

We also saw Watson Lake adopt a bylaw which permits one store per 200 people. I believe this would allow for four stores with their current population. As this process continues to unfold across the territory and we see how other communities respond, my hope is that governments respect the community's prerogative on these issues.

There is another option out there for people in rural Yukon, and that is growing their own cannabis. Currently, Yukon allows four plants per household. Yukon stipulates that plants must be grown from legally obtained seeds or plant material, and plants have to be grown at a private residence.

I am going to switch now to the second part of the motion, Mr. Speaker, which deals with cannabis edibles. Again, a tremendous amount of fear-mongering has taken place because it seems like when cannabis was legalized, edibles became invented. Cannabis edibles have been around in China, India, Pakistan, and Morocco for thousands of years. It is easy enough to get information from those jurisdictions on the massive harm that cannabis edibles have caused to their society. I hope you detected the sarcasm in my voice, because I was not intending that as a real statement; I was being facetious, Mr. Speaker.

Worldwide, three million people die annually from alcohol. Six thousand years of cannabis use — there is not one single recorded overdose death from cannabis alone in 6,000 years. When three million people across the globe die from alcohol every year, it drives me insane when I hear people point the finger at cannabis. Cannabis has been the red herring for alcohol for 99 years in this country.

At about the time they legalized alcohol, they criminalized cannabis, and the big alcohol companies in this country have made hay with that ever since. In order for them to keep raking in the massive profits that they make off their drug of choice, they somehow managed to convince the Canadian government, saying, "Don't call alcohol a drug; that's going to hurt our business." Well, Mr. Speaker, alcohol is a drug. A rose by any other name smells just as sweet. You can call alcohol anything you want, but it is a mind-altering, psychotic drug and it is the drug that rules all others. It takes a bigger toll on young Canadians, middle-aged Canadians, senior Canadians — and, most innocent of all, 3,000 innocent Canadian children are born every year in this country with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. This is not through any decision they made.

If we as legislators are going to stand up and protect the health and safety of the public out there, we need to educate people about the harms of alcohol. Three thousand children every year are born to live a life that has less quality than the life that each one of us enjoys, through no decision of their own. Poor decisions perhaps on their parents' part — but where is the government in all of this; where is the education?

How can 10,000 deaths from fentanyl in three years be a crisis, and 15,000 deaths from alcohol in that same period of time not be a crisis? I just don't get it.

So edibles, Mr. Speaker — Health Canada conducted consultation on the strict regulation of edible cannabis extracts and topicals, which ran from December 20, 2018 to February 20, 2019. These cannabis products will be permitted for legal sale under the *Cannabis Act* no later than October 17, 2019. This consultation sought feedback on draft regulations.

The conversation around edibles is an interesting one. You might say that it opened a real can of worms, Mr. Speaker — gummy worms — cannabis edible gummy worms. It is a conversation that could have been had in this country anytime between 1968 and 1972, when the Le Dain Commission was given the resources to look at the non-medicinal use of cannabis and all other drugs in this country. Unfortunately, the good recommendations from that report had no effect on legislation until 1996, when a few of the drug laws were changed in this country. If we had the conversation back then, we could have a lot less conversation around it right now.

There are a lot of considerations when it comes to when, where, and how it will be deemed acceptable to consume. I can tell you that it will be very difficult to detect when someone consumes at home and leaves their house. People are going to have no idea about what they consumed.

So there are some challenges around this whole issue of edibles, but I hope I provided some comfort for the fearmongers out there who are creating the narrative that the youth in our country are at risk of being poisoned from cannabis overdoses. It's not going to happen, Mr. Speaker.

Smoking is something that society has really changed its norm on over the past 15 or 20 years. It is becoming very unpopular, except among a very distinct age group.

The tobacco deaths in this country, if we want to talk about social responsibility, are second only to alcohol. These are both legal drugs, both sanctioned for sale by the Government of Canada in every province and territory. Where is the social responsibility attached to it? If you want social responsibility, Mr. Speaker, you sue a company that makes tobacco, and that's where you get the social responsibility from.

Until we start taking those steps, pushing back against big tobacco and big alcohol, we're going to continue to put our citizens in this territory and this country at risk of harm. If we really want to protect our citizens from harm, we need to get a grip on alcohol and tobacco and the trivialization and normalization of its use in this country. It's just not acceptable.

Some people who prefer not to smoke choose to ingest their cannabis through edibles. There are many other people who find smoking has a strong smell, and people find the smoke bothersome. Of course, there are some people who suffer allergies from being in contact with somebody who has smoked. We have a right to protect those people as well, so if edibles is the way to allow someone to enjoy their drug of choice without impacting certain individuals who are allergic,

I don't see anything wrong with consuming it in an edible fashion, as opposed to smoking it.

My doctor strongly discouraged smoking cannabis or smoking tobacco. He didn't say anything about eating it, though — but not tobacco.

Smoking of any kind is not permitted in public buildings in the territory. We have legalized cannabis; we're going to allow people to consume it, but if we don't want them to smoke it, we need to provide other alternatives for them. With edibles, it's more discreet. You're not dealing with the added concerns of smell and smoke. Edibles also open up the possibility of consumption of cannabis within a public space — for example, in a café or a bar — similar to alcohol. It would be really interesting to see what happens with regulations around edibles if certain mixtures of ingredients will be prohibited. For example, if it so happens that mixing cannabis and caffeine is prohibited, that would rule out things like chocolate bars from product menus.

There's a lot of buzz out there about cannabis-infused alcohol and beer right now. It seems there are already alcohol products on the market that use hemp; however, it isn't currently permitted in Canada to have alcohol infused with THC.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I really look forward to comments from across the House. I hope that I have provided some fodder for debate this afternoon. I know that I have provided a perspective that's not widely held in this country. One hundred years of propaganda has really worked wonders on a lot of people, and the fearmongers have that 100 years of rhetoric behind them.

In closing, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to remarks from the members opposite.

Mr. Cathers: That was an interesting and, in some aspects, surprising comment on behalf of the government by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun.

In rising to speak to this motion, I just want to outline again — as the Official Opposition Yukon Party has consistently said regarding this issue: We recognize that the issue of legalization of cannabis is one that there are strong views on and we respect the fact that there are Yukoners who are strongly in favour and Yukoners who are strongly against it. We have taken the position that we respect the views of Yukoners who support it and those who do not, and that since the federal government made the decision to proceed with legalization, we believe that it's the job of the Government of Yukon to responsibly manage cannabis, including responsibly regulating, once it is legalized —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: Minister of Community Services, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am just having a very difficult time hearing the member opposite. I really do want to hear his remarks, and I am just wondering if there is a way that his mic

could be turned up — or something — so that we can hear him better.

Speaker's statement

Speaker: If there is anything that can be done to the control panel; communication is limited. If the Member for Lake Laberge could move as close to the mic as possible — but perhaps there is just a technical issue.

Member for Lake Laberge, please.

Mr. Cathers: I think there may be a technical issue of some sort. I am talking in a normal tone of voice. I do not want to raise my voice too loud in speaking to this motion. I will attempt to speak clearly and loud enough for members to hear.

I am just going to recap since the minister did not hear what I said in hopes that it is working better now.

In rising to speak to this motion brought forward by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, I want to make it very clear — as the Official Opposition has consistently said regarding the legalization and all aspects of it — that we recognize and respect that Yukoners have strong views on the issue of cannabis legalization. There are Yukoners who are strongly in favour, Yukoners who are strongly against, and others in the middle. We have taken the position that we respect the views of those who support it and those who do not, but since the federal government made it quite clear that they were proceeding with legalization, we took the position at that time that it's the job of the Yukon government to responsibly manage cannabis, including the responsibility to regulate it after legalization and to take enforcement action to ensure that the regulations are complied with. We believe that it is our job, as the Official Opposition, to present our concerns with the government's approach and to bring forward constructive suggestions. In fact, we have done so repeatedly through the time that this has been discussed in this Legislative Assembly, including the fact that we made it very clear from the beginning that we believed that government should take a model similar in structure to that in place in the Province of Saskatchewan whereby government would not enter distribution and not enter retail but would simply responsibly regulate the private sector.

It is unfortunate the government has chosen not to do this and we see that now again — in the third year of this government — they're still fumbling the ball on moving forward with allowing the private sector to enter the retail market. We again emphasize the fact that it was never necessary for government to enter the retail market and it is quite unfortunate — the concerns that we've heard from a local company about the difficulties they have had with proceeding through the government's process for private retail.

I think it's important to specifically note that Triple J's Canna Space, which is owned by constituents of mine — this is a company that has been very proactive in coming forward with proposals to government. They had a very detailed approach of how they intended to manage it well before

government had even developed legislation in this area. They were proactive in coming up with policies around security and management to ensure that it was being done in a responsible way.

We go back to the early days in discussing this with the Liberal government. I note that on October 18, 2017, during debate on the issue of cannabis regulation in the Yukon, the Premier was indicating that he was waiting on Ottawa and that, at that point, he said — and I quote: "... hard to decide if we are going purely public, purely private, hybrid — all of those considerations." Again, just for the reference of Hansard, it is page 1185 from October 18.

Again, we do have to point out that we did throughout this process bring forward constructive suggestions, some of which were listened to. We note that the government had indicated at one point that they intended to permanently be in the area of retail of cannabis and have a public option, and under relentless pressure from us, they did change their position on that and commit to exiting the sale of cannabis. But what we have heard from the private sector, from the first company to go through the government's application process — it has to be pointed out, first of all, that they were ready long before government was prepared to take their applications to submit an application. But government took a long portion of time to get its own affairs in order.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to recap the fact that, as noted by my colleague the Official Opposition critic for the area of permitting the cannabis corporation, in response to the ministerial statement: We are concerned about how the government has mishandled the file and the move toward private retail. The fact that when the member raised the issue of the delay in the company being able to open up their store the Premier was actually laughing off-mic is an indication that the government simply doesn't understand the impact of their fumbling the ball and what effect this has had on this small business. They have told us that the cost of them being delayed is roughly \$10,000. As was noted earlier in the House, they have 12 staff as well who are impacted by this delay.

The fact that the Premier seemed to think a delay of one day was a small issue for us to bring up and actually laughed in response to the comments made by my colleague and then the minister went to the point of seeming to blame the company for this — this is concerning and it is, in our view, an indication that the Liberal government really is out of touch with the needs of the private sector. That certainly is part of why the private sector has declined under the Liberals. We have seen — according to the Bureau of Statistics branch numbers — a loss of 900 jobs in the private sector since this Liberal government has taken office. Some of those problems are due to permitting and licensing issues — mostly not in the areas of cannabis, but the challenges faced across the board, whether it is in the mining sector or just within other segments of the business sector. Dealing with permitting — whether it be through YESAB or challenges they face with building inspections or environmental health — all of these are areas where the government is not recognizing that the problems

they are creating are causing a red tape burden and a cost to Yukon businesses.

As noted by my colleague earlier — but I want to reiterate in speaking to this motion — we took the position from the start that the Yukon should use a model similar to Saskatchewan's, where distribution and retail are done by the private sector and government's role is as the regulator. Instead, the Liberal government insisted on growing the size the government and getting deeper into the business of doing business, which again, as I pointed out earlier, is in direct contrast to the rhetoric and the claims coming from the Premier and this Liberal government. They claim to be in the business of getting out of doing business and yet expand into the private retail of cannabis. They claim to be interested in working with NGOs, and again, not wanting to grow the size of government. We have seen the demonstration that not only was there a long list of NGOs that saw their funding frozen earlier this year — many of them key service delivery partners — but in fact, in the area of the Salvation Army, we saw an example where government demonstrated that they would quite literally rather hire 40 new employees than find a way to work with and support an NGO.

Again, within the private sector, we hear growing concerns from businesses that the government simply does not understand when it is creating problems for the private sector, and it doesn't seem to think that the issues they raise with government are significant. They seem to dismiss these issues as complaints and not understand the significance of the problems that are faced by the private sector and the cost, as well as the uncertainty, that they face in dealing with increasing government red tape.

Reiterating the fact that the Liberal government did not need to get into the business of doing business in the area of cannabis retail or distribution — in fact, what we have heard is that for the first company that came in to apply for a licence and was ready long before government was ready with its legislation, in submitting a detailed proposal to government as well as the policies they had worked out around security and even lockdown, that in many areas are even better than the Yukon government's own policies for matters of that type.

We have seen a case where a company that has done everything to follow the rules and to work with government is running into roadblock after roadblock after roadblock — changing information from government, government failing to meet its own commitments to this company, including — as I believe my colleague may have mentioned earlier — the fact that we saw a situation where government took a very long time to provide a product list to this company. They are dependent on receiving that list because their only option is to buy products from government as the distributor. Government missed their own timeline by 2.5 months. Yet the minister, his colleagues, and especially the Premier don't seem to get how they've made it harder for the private sector through their fumbling of this file.

Mr. Speaker, the changing goalposts have been a significant problem. The delay of Triple J's getting their licence again, according to the information they provided us,

is costing them about \$10,000. The company has set up a preauthorized payment with the government, but government later changed the goalposts and told them they had to provide a certified cheque for the first order of cannabis. To make matters worse, the government refused to tell them how much to make the cheque out for until they had their licence from government, which didn't happen until this morning.

Again, as I mentioned, in the area of the Yukon Liquor Corporation, there has been a long practice where the Yukon Liquor Corporation has understood and acknowledged the fact that it is important to allow retailers to order product without requiring them to take huge case lots, because that simply becomes cost-prohibitive for any small business.

In the area of cannabis regulation, the government changed the goalposts and is forcing the private retailer to order large quantities, which adds a substantial cost, through their decision not to break up case lots or pallets — whatever the proper term may be — and it is just one more roadblock the government has thrown in the way of allowing a private sector company — which is doing everything it can to be a responsible member of the business community — a reasonable path forward to become licensed.

Again, there is the issue of requiring this company — and we've heard that others have been in the same situation — to submit three years of personal income tax statements and three years of business income tax statements. Again, the question was asked by my colleague the Member for Kluane: Why is this information necessary for government to have? Is the government actually trying to make life harder for local small business? Is the government trying to set private retail up for failure so that government can continue to handle cannabis retail as the Liberals had originally planned? Or is the government just out of touch with the needs of the private sector and the reality of small business so that they don't even realize when they're killing the private sector with unnecessary red tape and roadblocks?

I have to go on to a few areas that were mentioned by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, as well as by the Minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation and cannabis. The government has presented their revenue numbers from cannabis and has claimed that this proves that they are displacing the black market. Mr. Speaker, that is a statement that is not factually sound. For the minister to suggest that an increase in government sales proves that the private sector sales have gone down correspondingly — the minister does not have the evidence to actually demonstrate that.

It is probable, in fact, that with the legalization of cannabis that some people — and again, we don't know the exact numbers because we do not have the statistics, nor does the minister. It is probable that legalization caused some Yukoners who previously did not consume cannabis because it was illegal to choose to try it. How many new consumers there are — again, I don't pretend to know the answer to that, but the minister doesn't have the answer to that either.

With a growth in the number of customers buying cannabis, that would lead to some new revenue — or, if you prefer, some increase in the amount being spent on cannabis

within the territory. The portion of that roughly \$2 million in revenue that the minister referred to that is due to displaced black market sales and the portion that is due to new cannabis users is information that, to the best of my knowledge, no one has at this point in time. Certainly, if the minister has that information, he has provided no evidence of knowing the answer to that.

Another thing that we have heard with the black market — we expressed the concern to the government about how slowly we are moving on private retail — the fact that they were creating a single government retail outlet in Whitehorse and delaying the rollout of the private sector option to rural communities. During that time, we have heard the concern that this may actually be making it easier for the black market in rural Yukon, because we have heard from many sources that it is harder now to crack down on cannabis use. It is difficult for the police to enforce this. Determining the source when someone is smoking cannabis in rural Yukon — whether that came from the government's online store or their local dealer — is something that is hard to determine and even harder to prosecute.

I want to turn to some of the comments made by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun on behalf of the Liberal government. I am concerned to hear the statements coming from government which appear to actually encourage heavy cannabis use and suggest that it's fine. As the Official Opposition, we respect the rights of Yukoners who choose to consume legal intoxicating products and who choose to do so in moderation, but we do encourage people to do that in moderation, to know their limits, to ensure that they are never behind the wheel when they are intoxicated, and to ensure that their own choice to use alcohol or cannabis does not put someone else's life or safety at risk.

The comments coming from the Member for Mayo-Tatchun and in fact the minister bragging about the per-capita sales numbers of cannabis here compared to elsewhere — suggesting that was proof of success and something to be proud about — something that I found strange and perhaps encouraging overconsumption or encouraging people to use what is an intoxicating product. I think that the message coming from government — it is always important that government, in part of its role in social responsibility, emphasizes moderation in consumption of any intoxicant and encourages people to know their limits and to recognize where there may be health effects from consuming that product.

For the member of the Liberal Party — many of his comments, in my view, were not a responsible message about moderation. While his criticisms about alcohol use and the risks of it do have a point, when he drew the comparison to cannabis use and suggested — according to information that he was referring to — I'm not sure of the accuracy of that information, but it seemed questionable to me. By his conclusion, if you weren't smoking 1,500 pounds of cannabis, your usage is fine. That seemed to me to be a really bad message about moderation.

I would encourage the government to refine their messaging and to actually work with experts in public health

and health promotion to come up with a better thought-out message about what responsible consumption limits are. In fact, at well under that level, of course, people can become intoxicated enough to make them unfit to be behind a wheel or to operate heavy machinery. That may not have been what the member was intending to convey, but the list of supposed information that he was relaying seemed to be sending a message that, for anybody listening or reading it, does come from a member of the government caucus suggesting that people can consume a very large amount of cannabis without having to worry about it being a problem.

I just have to say that this is the wrong message. The government should be talking about reasonable limits, understanding what your limits are, and referring people to information that is medically approved about responsible consumption limits and how to ensure that you are not intoxicated and putting others at risk if you choose to consume cannabis.

I was also concerned, Mr. Speaker, with the comments that the Member for Mayo-Tatchun made in speaking to the motion about the hours that off-sales are open. His comments appear to prejudge the outcome of the *Liquor Act* review and suggest that the government is moving toward a 10:00 p.m. closing hour for off-sales. I would hope that the government hasn't prejudged the result of the *Liquor Act* review before they have concluded it. I would also encourage the member and his colleagues, before rushing to a conclusion to have off-sales close earlier than the current time, to be thoughtful and work with experts in this area to seriously consider the question of whether having off-sales close earlier would actually reduce access to alcohol or whether that would simply be a boon to the black market in increased bootlegging between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m. if someone — whether in line for a bar or elsewhere — is wanting to buy alcohol for consuming it at home after the bar — whether that creates an opportunity, in fact — that there are no legal private sector options during those hours if the government moves to what the Member for Mayo-Tatchun seems to be suggesting.

Again, I do urge them to take a look at it with the experts in this area before rushing to the conclusion that they should do this, and think about whether — in solving what the member seems to see as a problem — they in fact simply increased the amount of bootlegging going on and black market sales of alcohol.

Mr. Speaker, the last comment I am going to make on the comments brought forward by the Liberal member who led off this debate, before I move on, is that in referring to health information about cannabis use from countries like China — I would point out that when we're dealing with authoritarian regimes like the Chinese government — the health information that comes out of those areas is often spotty at best and should probably not be relied on as accurate.

The next area I want to move on to is the issue of cannabis use in campgrounds. We heard on the radio this morning an announcement from the director of Parks about what the rules are going to be for where you can smoke in the campgrounds — which is your own site and that you can't be

in a private area. But one of the concerns I have with that — recognizing that with this issue, there are people who believe that if you can smoke cannabis, you will have to be able to do it in a campground and people who believe that if they're at a campground, they don't want to have smoke from someone who chooses to enjoy cannabis drifting over to their campsite if they're someone who does not wish to use cannabis.

But the other concerning part on this is that when we discussed the legislation — at that point in time, the law in that area was not clear. It's questionable whether the decision made by Parks in this area — whether the government actually has the legal authority to do what they announced this morning — because if they're not empowered by the act or regulations to take that action, then they may end up with a situation where they can tell someone to do something, but they have absolutely no authority to back up what they've said. It can lead to a situation where, if they attempt to charge someone, they find themselves unable to issue a ticket or take action in that area.

I'm just looking to the part during debate last year where I was discussing this issue with the Minister of Justice during debate — I believe it was on April 5, 2018. At the time, I noted that, under the current legislation as proposed, the "... government has created a situation where — to protect the public, including children, from unwanted exposure to cannabis smoke — it won't be legal to smoke marijuana in public, on the streets or on Crown land that isn't a government campground, but at the moment, it may be legal to smoke in a government campground."

I went on to say: "I would appreciate it if the minister can provide some clarity on that area. What is in the act? What is government envisioning doing or considering doing, either under this legislation or under the regulations that already restrict activities at campgrounds..." — which of course are regulations under the — I believe it is the *Parks Act* in that case.

In response — again, from April 15, 2018 — for the reference of Hansard, I am on page 2439 — the Minister of Justice moved on to talk about — and I quote: "The question then moved on to one about campgrounds generally. There are campgrounds in the territory that are owned, run and regulated by the federal government, there are some that are owned, run and regulated by the territorial government and there are some private campgrounds. Clearly the answer to this question about cannabis use in and around that property will be determined by who is the owner of the campground."

In continuing to discuss this, it was clear from the minister that, at that point in time, the government wasn't clear in bringing forward the act on whether cannabis use in campgrounds would or would not be legal. Again, I just have to draw government's attention to the fact that if they wish to make something an offence, they have to prescribe it somewhere. They can't just have the director of a branch make an announcement without having the clear legal authority to do what they say they are going to do under some act or regulation. If some action has been taken that I am not aware of, I would appreciate it if the minister — who I am

sure will be rising later to speak to this — could in fact clarify. If that is the decision they have made around campgrounds, have they passed a regulation to enable them to do that, or is this another area where the government is going to be tripping over its feet because the Liberal government has not figured out what they are doing in this area until they are stumbling through the process?

Mr. Speaker, I am returning as well to the issue of use in campgrounds. The comments made by the Minister of Justice at that time — on April 5, 2018, page 2440, the minister said — and I quote: "In any event, one of the major determining factors will likely be that an individual cannot interfere with the quiet use and enjoyment of another individual. Maybe this takes into account some of the earlier comments by the member opposite with respect to allergies or those kinds of things. Obviously we want to make sure that individuals are not having their quiet use and enjoyment of the Yukon great outdoors affected, but you know that certainly can happen without an intoxicant."

Again, I just want to also — if the government can explain how, considering the comments there, whether they feel that the approach they are taking with regard to campgrounds is consistent with the minister's comments in those areas and also the question of: If there is a situation — if this is the policy government has put in place — if there is an issue with someone at a nearby campsite either finding the use offensive or having their health affected by it or having children present — what, if any, recourse would they have to deal with the issue of their neighbours' usage affecting their own enjoyment and perhaps their health?

Again, recognizing that there are people on both sides of that issue, this will be an issue this summer, and if the government hasn't provided clarity, there are going to be problems and there will probably be conflict between campground users, so clarity on the part of government is important and necessary in this area.

Again, I should also note — as I have previously in bringing forward comments about this legislation and government's approach to regulating cannabis — that we do appreciate the work of public servants from multiple departments in dealing with the approach to cannabis. We recognize that the decisions that are made by Cabinet and the elected level of government are not ones they are responsible for. They act in accordance with the direction that they're given by Cabinet or the minister responsible. So I want to make it very clear to them that the criticisms that we make of government's approach to this are 100-percent directed toward the elected members of the Liberal government — the decisions that Cabinet and individual ministers have made in both the approach to regulating cannabis, the approach to retail and distribution of cannabis and the mistakes during the licensing process — the red tape that has been thrown up for the one company that has tried to go through it and has finally just managed to get a licence today.

It is my belief that if the government, at the Cabinet level, had been more proactive and clear in setting the rules and taking leadership on all these issues, we would not have seen

the problems we see today. If the government had taken the suggestions that we made about an approach to regulating the use of cannabis instead of digging in their heels and arguing against it, we would not be seeing the problems that we're seeing now.

I would note, as well, in talking about the structure of the approach to cannabis, that we did tell the government — we provided suggestions about how they could deal with this dating back to, in some cases, a couple of years now. With the comments we made to government, they have had ample time to deal with this. We suggested that they could have moved much more quickly on allowing private retail by doing a model more similar to that which is done in matters such as a YESAB review, where the onus is put on an applicant to demonstrate that they have a reasonable and appropriate plan for managing their operation in a way that protects public safety as well as that of the environment and so on. By putting the onus on the applicant to demonstrate that they have a plan — perhaps even proceeding with a temporary regulatory structure, with a clear condition to any applicant that government would be likely developing further rules as time goes on to ensure that it is better regulating this area — there were a number of options open to government to deal with this more expeditiously. Instead, they appear to have landed on one of the most cumbersome models for the private sector to deal with, creating uncertainty repeatedly through the application process — everything from government missing its own timeline for providing a product list to this local business by over 2.5 months, by the government changing the requirements around payment as well as requiring them to purchase more product than necessary.

It does seem like — whether through intent on the part of the government or simply through not understanding needs of small businesses — they are unnecessarily creating roadblocks and unnecessarily creating costs, and they are doing a good job — whether intentional or unintentional — of making it tough for small business to find their way through the maze of government red tape to actually successfully comply with the rules and operate in a lawful matter.

As I indicated earlier during Question Period, I think that it's really important to note that whether in this area or other areas of the economy, government should be trying to set up a structure where responsible businesses and responsible business owners are being encouraged to succeed and where government is taking steps to help them understand what they need to do to comply with the legislation and to operate in a responsible manner. They should not be penalizing the companies that are trying to be good citizens of the business community and good members of the overall community. While doing so, and by making life tougher — in this case for Triple J's — while they were doing that, the black market was proceeding largely unimpeded here in the territory — not following the rules. Government was, through its own fumbling, delaying competition that might displace the black market.

I think I have outlined in some detail the problems with the approach taken by government, the concerns with the

retoric coming from one Liberal member who seemed to be suggesting an almost promotional approach to cannabis, and suggesting that usage, as long as it was less than 1,500 pounds, was responsible. I do want to drive the point home before I move on — that it is important for government to come up with a better message about moderation in consumption than that brought forward by one of their back-bench members.

I would like to, at this time, bring forward a constructive amendment to this motion to improve it. The original motion reads:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with:

(1) the private sector to provide for the sale of cannabis via the private sector; and

(2) the Government of Canada to regulate the use of cannabis edibles.

That simply does not recognize the fact that the government has taken a flawed approach to regulating the private sector and has thrown roadblocks in the way of the private sector repeatedly and unnecessarily.

Amendment proposed

Mr. Cathers: I am pleased to move the following constructive amendment:

THAT Motion No. 423 be amended by adding the words “recognize that its plan to grow government through a government-run retail store and warehouse is flawed and creating unnecessary roadblocks for private sector businesses; and to” after the phrase “urges the Government of Yukon to”.

Speaker: I have had an opportunity to review the proposed amendment to Motion No. 423 with Mr. Clerk and can advise that it is procedurally in order.

It is moved by the Member for Lake Laberge:

THAT Motion No. 423 be amended by adding the words “recognize that its plan to grow government through a government-run retail store and warehouse is flawed and creating unnecessary roadblocks for private sector businesses; and to” after the phrase “urges the Government of Yukon to”.

As a result, the proposed amended motion would read:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to recognize that its plan to grow government through a government-run retail store and warehouse is flawed and creating unnecessary roadblocks for private sector businesses; and to work with:

(1) the private sector to provide for the sale of cannabis via the private sector; and

(2) the Government of Canada to regulate the use of cannabis edibles.

The Member for Lake Laberge, on the proposed amendment, you have 20 minutes.

Mr. Cathers: I am not going to go so far as to suggest that it is a friendly amendment, but I do think that it is a constructive amendment to this motion.

Again, we see that the approach that has been taken is problematic. We have also seen that there are a few other areas related to the government's claim that it is going to exit retail that the government needs to answer, such as what the plan is for the assets of the government retail store that they have set up. What are they going to do with them? Are they going to keep them? Are they going to sell them? If so, who will be able to have the opportunity to purchase them?

Is it going to be perhaps sole-sourced to someone or by invitation only? Or is it going to go to a competitive bid so that anyone will be allowed to bid on them? What is the plan in that area?

As well, it should be noted that what we've seen with the government's rollout of their retail store and warehouse is that the expenditure — I do have to remind the House that last year we spent a fair bit of time criticizing the government for spending \$3 million on setting this up and purchasing inventory. Now the government is proudly talking about having received \$2 million in revenue. Well, Mr. Speaker, we are talking about \$3 million in expenditure that we know of and \$2 million in revenue. I know that there is not a lot of small business experience on the other side of the floor with the Liberal government, but I do have to ask them this: If you are spending \$3 million and you are bringing in \$2 million in revenue, are you making money or are you losing money? The joke on the street from Yukoners about this is that only government could lose money selling weed.

I don't mean to be overly flippant about it, Mr. Speaker, but it is a serious point and is a joke that ordinary Yukoners have made about this. Government got into this area and it does seem that only government could lose money selling marijuana.

In discussing this proposed amendment and pointing out the flaws in the approach that government has taken, we are also looking for answers about what government is doing with the retail store and the assets after it's done. We understand that the space they have is a government asset and we're assuming will be used for other purposes, but for the assets they bought, we still don't have clarity from the government on what they are going to do with those assets after they exit the market.

It is also concerning, as I noted in outlining the problem my constituents have had trying to apply for a licence and, finally, after many months, being successful just today — we have seen a lack of clarity on the part of government about what the rules are. We have seen a situation that has created unnecessary roadblocks. It does beg the question about whether the government is deliberately creating roadblocks to make it harder to become licensed or whether they are simply that out of touch with what the world looks like when you're running a small business that they don't actually even get when they are creating costly roadblocks and uncertainty that causes a problem for somebody who is legitimately trying to be a good citizen, a good member of the business community, and a good member of the Yukon community. They are trying to follow the rules, but are having trouble finding out from government what the rules are, and when they get an answer,

they get a different answer just a few days or weeks after that. That is a lack of certainty and clarity on the part of government in their flawed approach to this. We are hoping government will listen to this and recognize that this is not just criticism coming from the Official Opposition, but this is a real problem with the approach that they have taken. This can be fixed. Government can do a better job of working with the one retailer who has a licence and smoothing out the process so that when future applicants and this retailer — Triple J's Canna Space — apply for a new licence the next time they go around, this process doesn't have to be as clunky, cumbersome and full of changing government red tape as it has been this time.

Another problem with the government's flawed approach — which is part of why we are bringing forward this constructive amendment — as I have noted previously in the House — and unfortunately that fell on deaf ears on the government side — that a problem with the government's approach is they were proceeding in a way that they weren't allowing private retail until well after legalization. The plan to have one government retail in Whitehorse and not allow applications from the private sector, either in Whitehorse or anywhere in the Yukon, to open a retail outlet means that rural Yukon still does not have retail options in their communities. That means that we have heard that this may actually be causing an increase in the black market in rural Yukon. Again, of course, statistics on black market sales are something that is a challenge for government and the police to actually understand what is being done illegally unless they have caught somebody in the act. But we are hearing anecdotally through constituents of my colleagues in rural Yukon that the problem seems to have gotten worse. They have heard reports that seem to be reliable of people purchasing from online stores other than the government's and receiving shipments of cannabis in violation of the law, but distributed by Canada Post through envelopes that are not clear about their contents. We have a system that this government has taken that is just not working well and there are solutions to this.

Again, the concern that I brought up over a year ago, that the approach being taken on legalization and the fact that the government was not only entering the retail market in Whitehorse but leaving it open in rural Yukon without the option for the private sector to become legally licensed in those areas was good for the black market but not good for the public. The government had indicated at the time, and I noted, that for the government to delay allegedly on the basis of taking the cautious approach, but enable the situation where it would be once down the road before a legal retailer can operate in one of the communities outside Whitehorse appears to enter a situation where consuming cannabis is going to be legal and thus it is much harder for government to determine the source of cannabis if somebody is consuming it in rural Yukon or is in possession of it.

That also brings to mind that another element of the flawed approach taken by government was the amount of packaging on the cannabis sold in the government retail store and through the mail. It is certainly not very environmentally

friendly or cost effective. We are pleased that the government has indicated that they are going to take some action in this area, but again, I have to note that this is a problem that they created — that they didn't recognize as a problem until the Official Opposition brought this problem forward and pressed the government to change its ways.

In talking about the government's flawed approach with the retail store and warehouse as well as selling it through the mail, note that these issues did not just come up. On April 5, 2018, for example, the Minister of Justice and I had a lengthy discussion around the legislation about displacement of illegal sales and the problem that I just referred to in rural Yukon. The minister, in responding to me, noted — and I will quote from page 2435:

"The Yukon Liquor Corporation is working on the e-commerce for safe delivery of cannabis by Canada Post, and Canada Post will ensure age and identification verification upon delivery, but Canada Post has been in the business in many jurisdictions for liquor delivery already and will be the delivery agent for cannabis in most jurisdictions.

"I need to note that not all Yukoners will be unfamiliar with this, because there is online sale and delivery available now via Canada Post with respect to the use of medical marijuana; it is done this way across Canada."

There was also discussion at the time — and the minister talked about the assumptions for displacement of cannabis and said — and I quote: "Our estimates are based on the assumption that we may capture up to 45 percent of the total illicit market — we hope, very soon into this process. In Colorado, where cannabis was legalized some time ago, after three years legal sales represent approximately 70 percent of the total, so we are hopeful that we will be able to reach for and achieve those goals. In Washington and Oregon, it's approximately 50 percent of legal versus illegal sales. Those are the jurisdictions that we know or have some information about that may be compatible with our own."

That brings me back to the fact that the minister and the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, in suggesting that their approach has been successful, pointed to the revenue from sales and did a per capita calculation. That is such an inaccurate way to assess it. It doesn't take into consideration — when comparing the Yukon, for example, to Prince Edward Island — what the average cost per gram of cannabis sold is. It doesn't take into account matters like the higher cost of shipping from government retail stores. We recall a situation where one local reporter — I believe it was from CKRW — had done a story noting the amount of packaging that was received with the marijuana that he purchased to test the system. He noted how much extra packaging there was and how expensive the shipping was. That expense is part of those total revenue numbers.

If the government is selling cannabis and, on average, is selling it for more per gram or more per gram once shipping is folded in than other jurisdictions, it is a completely inaccurate characterization to try to correlate the success. The reason we are bringing forward this amendment to the motion and pointing out the government's flawed approach — I have to

go again go to the claim made repeatedly by members of the Liberal government suggesting that an increase in government sales is somehow proof that there has been a displacement of black market sales. At this point in time, I think it is fair to say that government can't actually demonstrate that there has been any drop in black market sales. They simply don't have that information, to the best of my knowledge. It makes a nice talking point for them to say, "Oh, we have \$2 million. We are doing such a great job of displacing the black market with private sales." But they don't know how much of that is new consumers versus consumers who have chosen to shift from purchasing on the black market to purchasing it in a legal manner.

Bringing forward this amendment to the motion, we are trying to draw government's attention to the fact that the model they have taken with the government-run retail store and warehouse is flawed, that the process they have set up to date for members of the Yukon private sector for local companies to apply and try to become legally licensed is one that throws many roadblocks in their way. Again, I have to point out that, while responsible business owners had to fight to get a license, the black market continued on unimpeded.

In wrapping up my comments on this amendment, in the interest of allowing others to speak, I have to reiterate the points as ministers literally trip over themselves on the other side of the House. We saw a ministerial statement from government on this, but it was odd considering how badly they have mishandled this file. The government never needed to spend \$3 million getting into the business of selling cannabis. They could have taken a model similar to Saskatchewan's. Again, I have to remind members that we never suggested that the model be identical to Saskatchewan and pointed out — which I will not recap at this point — the ways in which we thought that structure should be different. But we believe that Saskatchewan had largely got it right in terms of their approach to legalization.

Early on when government was talking about this legislation — the first time the government brought forward a motion talking about cannabis, they were talking about legalization by June 2018. I recall ministers being very quick to dismiss my points about the fact that government would simply not be ready by that point in time. It turned out that governments across the country, not including Yukon government, it appears, implored the federal government to delay the legalization timeline. Ultimately, it was delayed till September of that year. The government's approach to entering into retail and distribution of cannabis is one that has been right in some ways but has had key flaws in it.

I do want, in bringing my remarks to an end, to note to government staff who have worked in various areas on this that there are many aspects of what the government and government staff have done in terms of the legalization of cannabis where they have done a good job, but the key and very glaring flaw in this process is the decision made by the Liberal Cabinet to go with a model that grew government rather than working with and supporting the private sector. The fact that we have seen a loss of 900 jobs in the private

sector under the Liberal watch while they have grown the size of government at an alarming rate across a number of departments is a symptom of the problem about this government's attitude toward the private sector and lack of understanding about the needs of the private sector and when government decisions or inaction cause problems for Yukon companies.

Those problems are not confined to the area of cannabis, of course. We are seeing similar problems within the placer mining and mining exploration sector. We have heard across the board from Yukon companies that are concerned about the government's carbon tax increasing the cost of doing business. Businesses were dismayed to find out that, despite being told by government that they would get all their money back, some companies are not eligible for anything. In that particular area, I would note as well that, as it pertains to agriculture — with cannabis and the potential — we have heard that there are Yukon companies looking at becoming licensed producers of cannabis. They are among the others in the farming sector who — because there is an exemption federally for a portion of the costs, according to what the Premier told me, they will not be receiving any carbon tax back and will not be eligible for a rebate. While I am not as concerned about that when it comes to the area of cannabis — though recognizing that those producers will be concerned about those costs, the impact on the food sector and margins — farmers who are already having difficulty making ends meet — it is a concern.

In wrapping up my comments and speaking to this amendment to the motion, I am doubtful that the government will support it, though I am hopeful that they will admit that they have made mistakes, recognize them, and take action to correct them. I would hope that they do see the error in their ways and we don't see a situation where we are talking about even more private sector jobs being lost in addition to the 900 jobs lost since this government took office.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am just acknowledging that, as the Minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation and now the cannabis corporation, I am standing to speak to this amendment.

I am looking forward to debating the motion once we get past this amendment. I really do want to talk here in this Legislature about the issues that we have in front of us. I want to thank the Member for Mayo-Tatchun for raising this motion. There are important things that it would be useful for us to discuss.

The Member for Lake Laberge has talked about — let me just back up for a second, Mr. Speaker. What the opposition has been doing in general — they talk about respecting multiple points of view of Yukoners, yet they voted against legalization of cannabis. Eighty percent of Yukoners said they were in support of legalizing cannabis — 20 percent were against — and so the opposition —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Member for Lake Laberge, on a point of order.

Mr. Cathers: The minister seems to be in contravention of Standing Order 19(g), imputing motives to another member, and is forgetting that the only reason the opposition didn't support the government motion is that the government wasn't willing to change the timeline from June 2018, and we said that was simply unrealistic and irresponsible.

Speaker: The Government House Leader, on the point of order.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: A point of order is not appropriately called for the purposes of the member opposite explaining what he thinks he disagrees with, with respect to what the speaker —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker: Order. I can't hear the Government House Leader. The Government House Leader can start again.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my submission to you, this is an inappropriate use of calling a point of order and therefore not a point of order — because the member has stood to explain what he disagrees with that is being said by the Minister of Community Services. That is not a point of order.

We have sat here for more than an hour listening to the comments of the member opposite. We expect the same respect for the Minister of Community Services.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: There is no point of order. This is, in my view — I can review Hansard and return, if necessary, but in my view, it is really just a matter of debate and dispute between members.

The Minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation can continue.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The members opposite voted against the legalization of cannabis. We also know that Yukoners expressed overwhelmingly that they were in support of the legalization of cannabis. Through this amendment, what the member opposite is proposing is that there is recognition around roadblocks — unnecessary roadblocks — for the private sector business. He gave some examples of those unnecessary roadblocks. He talked about whether the newly licensed licensee would pay by cheque or by direct deposit.

I have to tell you that, as the minister responsible for the cannabis corporation and the Yukon Liquor Corporation, I haven't had that very direct discussion about whether they pay by cheque or by direct deposit. I am sorry that, in my role as minister, I haven't been on top of that detail.

But when the member opposite talks about the fumbling, he is, in my opinion, therefore talking about the corporation, and I don't think that is a great thing to be saying, because I know how hard the corporation has worked in order to support

the private sector and I want to stand up and say thank you to them for that work.

He talked about delays, about getting product listings to the licensee — just this past Friday, I heard that same comment from the licensee and I will happily follow up on that.

He talked about the division of product into smaller quantities. He referred to it as “pallets”. I stood in this Legislature earlier today through a ministerial statement and said the \$2 million-plus in sales was roughly equivalent to 140 kilograms. That 140 kilograms — all of the cannabis that has been sold here in the territory — would fit on one pallet.

I appreciate that the member opposite is supportive of the private sector. In his presentation and his submission to us on this about how we should work to support the private sector better, he turned around and used Saskatchewan as an example again.

Let me just point out how Saskatchewan is doing. From Statistics Canada — they list that Saskatchewan had \$926,000 of sales in November. From the corporation, I know our sales were \$385,000. For the month of December, Statistics Canada lists \$970,000 for Saskatchewan; Statistics Canada lists our sales as \$403,000. For January of this year, they list Saskatchewan sales as \$960,000, and they list the Yukon sales as \$337,000.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is 30 times the size of the Yukon in terms of population. If we’re talking about how well this is working for Saskatchewan, I have to go back and figure out my new math. There is no way that is working as well for Saskatchewanites as it is for Yukoners — sorry.

It’s not about whether it is private or government — it’s really about whether there was an adequate supply of cannabis and the ability to get those stores in place. Let’s talk about the dollars that were spent in preparing for that cannabis retail. Let’s say that it was private retail — would we have to go off and purchase cannabis? Yes, we would. How much have we purchased? Around \$1.5 million in cannabis. How much do we have in inventory? Around \$1.5 million in inventory, because that’s the asset that’s there now — which would be there if it were in a government warehouse, which would be there if it were private retail or government retail. I’m sorry — it really is a moot point.

The Member for Lake Laberge asked a very relevant question about how we will deal with assets, and what I will say is that what we did in designing the government store was to make it so that we could dispose of those assets — and I’ll work with the Minister of Highways and Public Works in order to do this in a fair and equitable way that is appropriate for all. We did it in a way that we could dispose of those assets.

When we talk about growing government — I said in this Legislature that I thought the number of staff we were going to need — count them on one hand. I will say again that’s whether it’s private retail or not, because we do need to have inspectors, we do need to have the warehouse running, we need to have some finance folks — it is all needed there.

I said to count them on one hand — that is what’s happening.

When it came to the government-run store, what I said was that we put in place temporary assignments and short-term contracts. We did that so we would get out of the business. This is exactly going as we had hoped.

I will come back and speak more about it, but when we talk about the evidence that I have — and I think it’s important to share the evidence with this Legislature about what makes me confident about what we are displacing.

Here is a really simple point: I stood up and I said that 140 kilograms were sold so far. That is over six months. That is today — six months. Look at that — roughly 140 kilograms. That means that we are on track to sell somewhere over 200, probably 250 — maybe around 300. I’m hoping that the number actually goes up with private retail.

When that number goes up, let’s compare it against what we think we had for cannabis use in the territory ahead of us legalizing. We don’t have a really solid number, but our best estimates from bringing in third parties to do work for us — 600 to 1,000 kilograms. Okay.

We also have, Mr. Speaker, a quote from Statistics Canada. I’m quoting now from the *National Cannabis Survey, fourth quarter 2018*. This is the cannabis hub, where we are collecting all of this information. Unfortunately, with a population the size of the Yukon, we do not always have enough data to say exactly how it is going for us, but across Canada, this was the conclusion. This was released on February 7: “About 4.6 million or 15% of Canadians aged 15 and older reported using cannabis in the last three months. That was a similar percentage to what was reported before legalization.” In other words, legalization has not, in an overall fashion, led to a growth in cannabis use, and now you get at the numbers. So if cannabis use, overall, has not gone up, and if we have sold cannabis, then it is our best estimation that it is displacing the black market. Is it 100 percent correct? No, but it is a good rule of thumb — a very good rule of thumb.

As I have said, we will never have exact numbers on this. We have to work with our best understanding that we can have — and reasonable and rational estimates. We shouldn’t shy away from trying to work on it.

When the member stands up and starts talking about how he has heard through anecdotal information that the costs are going up in other places and that maybe this is increasing the use — that, for me, feels like presenting a fearful proposition to Yukoners. I do not think it is healthy for the Yukon. I don’t think that is the type of thing that we want to do as legislators.

I do not support the amendment. I am sorry. I appreciate that the member opposite wants to support private retail, and I do too. What I am saying is that we have been working hard as a government to do it. I want to give kudos to the Yukon Liquor Corporation for doing an extreme amount of work to try to support — have there been missteps? Yes. Should I take responsibility for those? Yes. I will happily follow up on all of the list. In fact, I will say again to the members opposite that when they hear these things — by all means, let me know. I

will get to work on them right away. What I would like to say is that the corporation has done an upstanding job at trying to move all of this forward in an expeditious manner in order to support private retail getting licensed by April 20, which was the date that our newly licensed proponent asked us to try to achieve.

I am so happy about the work that the corporation has done. I don't believe in any way that it was fumbling. I am concerned about those types of comments here in this Legislature from the members opposite.

I am not supportive of the amendment. I am so interested in getting back to the debate on this motion, because there are many things that we should discuss across all party lines about how we want to develop the future of cannabis in this territory.

Mr. Hassard: In speaking to the amendment brought forward by the Member for Lake Laberge, I want to quickly touch on a couple of things that the minister mentioned in his responses.

Firstly, I want to ensure that the minister understands that the Member for Lake Laberge was talking about the government itself fumbling, certainly not the department.

Another thing — when the Member for Lake Laberge was talking about the increases, those were numbers directly from Statistics Canada. They certainly are not numbers that he was just pulling out of the air, as the minister seemed to think.

A couple of other things that I would like to correct the record on that the minister said — he talked about the vote on the legalization. I think it's important that when the minister is up speaking that he be clear for Yukoners so that they understand that the vote on legalization actually happened in Ottawa, not here in the Yukon. The minister appears to be confused on that because we actually voted against the Liberals' approach to grow government — just to clarify that.

Something else that I think is a little concerning — maybe a lot concerning — is the fact that the minister stood here today and talked about how much cannabis the Yukon government has sold compared to other jurisdictions. I certainly find this disturbing because I hope that this isn't a competition. You know, "Hey, the Yukon sold 12 times as much as Saskatchewan." I don't necessarily think that is something that anybody would be necessarily proud of. Then he went on to say that he hopes that the sales go up. Again, this is disturbing because here we have the minister standing in the Legislature here today essentially promoting the purchase of cannabis. It was my understanding, when attending community meetings with the department and the Department of Health and Social Services, that they were actually out trying to educate Yukoners on the harms of cannabis use. So it is really concerning to see the minister here today essentially promoting it and proud of the fact that we are selling, in some cases, so much more than other jurisdictions.

Just to get back to the actual amendment — I want to highlight that I think it is an important amendment, because this government has a checkered past when it comes to

supporting the private sector — or to put it in simple terms: Their record is terrible.

The Minister of Community Services has mishandled this file from day one. Instead of helping the private sector, he has made life more difficult and is suffocating the private sector in red tape. That's why I felt it was important to speak today on behalf of this amendment.

First off, I need to say that the Liberal government's approach to this file has certainly not been surprising. Their main goal seems to have been to grow government right from the very beginning. We have seen that theme play out through pretty much every decision made by this Liberal government over the last 2.5 years. I guess that's why I thought it was interesting that they chose to do a ministerial statement about the private retail of cannabis earlier today. Where I come from, we call that leading with your chin.

As I have said, the Minister of Community Services and this government, quite frankly, have handled this file very poorly.

When the federal government moved to legalize cannabis we, the Official Opposition, took the position that the Yukon should use a model similar to Saskatchewan's where distribution and retail are done by the private sector and the government's role is just to be the regulator. Instead, what path did the Yukon Liberals take? They chose the "grow the government" option. Despite the Premier's claims that he wanted to get out of the business of doing business, he was actually designing a system that expanded the government into a completely new business. That's certainly interesting — but, again, not surprising.

Let's rewind to last year. The government needlessly spent \$3 million getting into this business — which they certainly did not need to do — but instead of supporting the private sector to allow them to take on the sales, they seemed to be just itching to grow government. I do truly believe that it was only because of the pressure that we put on the government that the Liberals finally agreed to eventually shut down the government cannabis store, even though we don't know if it will actually happen.

We acknowledge the work that Triple J's Canna Space and its owners have put into preparing their application for a licence and to actually get their doors open. It's quite clear that they had a better developed plan than the Liberal government well before the government even developed legislation, and they have done everything that they can to play by the rules. They have succeeded despite the series of roadblocks put in their way by the Liberals.

It's important to understand that the government changed or moved the goalposts many times on these individuals. They have also failed to come through on promises that they made, and in some cases, they seem to be actively trying to make things harder for this local business. I would like to just make a note of a few of those examples.

The government made a commitment to provide Triple J's with a product list by early this year, and that deadline came and went. Then, based on assurances from the government, Triple J's expected to have their licence in hand

and be open today, but no, it didn't happen. The Liberal government dragged its feet and Triple J's did not get their licence — hopefully tomorrow.

Now this —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Under Standing Order 19(f), it states that the member shall not refer to a matter that is "... pending in a court or before a judge for judicial determination..." I wish to state that the Cannabis Licensing Board is a quasi-judicial body that makes that determination. It is not our responsibility to interfere with that in any way.

Speaker: The Member for Lake Laberge, on the point of order.

Mr. Cathers: The minister is simply wrong about what that Standing Order says. It is referring to a court or a judge, not to quasi-judicial processes. Even if that were the case, considering that the licence has already been issued by the cannabis board, it is certainly not even before that board — which, again, I have to point out is quasi-judicial, not judicial. The member is confusing the court system and the government board system. He is just quite simply wrong.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: I would have to review exactly what the Leader of the Official Opposition said; however, I do agree that the plain language interpretation of Standing Order 19(f) does refer to "... any matter that is pending in a court of before a judge for judicial determination..." It seems like the plain language interpretation is just that — that it is a court or a judge. It does not talk about quasi-judicial or administrative bodies.

In any event, as I said, I would have to review exactly what the Leader of the Official Opposition said. I will return to the Assembly if required, but for now, there is no point of order.

Mr. Hassard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, this delay may seem like a minor issue, but in fact the owners of Triple J's told us that it cost them in the neighbourhood of \$10,000. I think that I just need to note and really express some concern on this point, because earlier today, when we raised this issue — the issue of a private business getting financially hit because of some government red tape — the Premier sat in this House and laughed. It is really concerning that the Premier would sit here in this Legislature and laugh at very real problems that a private sector business is facing.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Under Standing Order 19(g), it says that we won't impute unavowed motives. This is unavowed. So the member opposite is saying what the Premier was thinking or doing. I just believe that he is attributing a motive that isn't there.

Speaker: The Member for Lake Laberge, on the point of order.

Mr. Cathers: The minister seems to be mistaking the Standing Orders. I would point out that what he just said contradicts what the Government House Leader said earlier. In fact, my colleague the Leader of the Official Opposition was simply noting what the Premier did in response to comments that were made. That is a fact, not an imputation of motive.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: I have heard enough, I believe, on this. We have various issues. Obviously we all know that, although it would be an interesting process for the Chair to be involved in determining the facts of debate, that is not the Chair's role.

But, in my view, this section — and I can come back with the comments that I provided to the House before with respect to Standing Order 19(g). Generally speaking, the false or unavowed motives generally refer to something like financial gain by virtue of a government decision or some sort of unjust enrichment that may have occurred by virtue of a government decision or by virtue of the office that some members have.

My sense is that the minister is trying to put a square peg in a round hole with respect to the applicable Standing Order. I may be mistaken. As I said, I will review Hansard, but my recollection as to how the Speaker has reviewed this and received guidance from the Clerks-at-the-Table on this is that Standing Order 19(g) does generally refer to some sort of imputation or allegation of a member having received financial gain or some sort of unjust enrichment by virtue of their office. This is clearly not the case with respect to whatever exchange is happening here.

I believe it is open. The Member for Lake Laberge talks about the determination of facts. Well, it seems to me that members will characterize what other members are doing in the House, and members will thoroughly disagree with that characterization, but that is up to the members to disagree as to the characterization of what members have said, their gesticulations or laughter or their demeanor.

That is, once again, a very difficult thing for the Chair to make any sort of determination on.

I apologize for being somewhat long-winded on this, but I will review Hansard and I will come back to the House as might be required.

Mr. Hassard: It seems to have touched a nerve, so we will move along.

Just to go back to some of the concerns that have been raised in this instance — as we mentioned earlier, the company had set up preauthorized payments with the government, but then the government again moved the goalposts and demanded a certified cheque for the first order.

On top of that, the government, at the time, refused to even tell Triple J's how much to make the cheque out for until they had a licence in their hand from the government. Of course we know, Mr. Speaker, that it didn't happen until this morning.

It is interesting — if the Liberals had the concerns of the private sector in the forefront, then maybe we would have seen them act somewhat more quickly on this.

Earlier today, the minister mentioned the Be a Responsible Server training required as part of Triple J's licence. It is also interesting to note that it wasn't until this week that the government even informed Triple J's that their staff would be required to have this type of training.

I should note that this is typical behaviour of this Liberal government because they certainly do not seem to understand the realities of small businesses. We are left wondering whether this Liberal government is actually trying to make life harder for this local small business because it certainly looks that way. It's disturbing, because it looks like the minister is actually trying to set private retail up for failure so that this government can continue to run the cannabis retail store.

I think I should mention too that this Liberal government's record with private sector growth certainly isn't very good. We know that since the Liberals have taken office, the Yukon has lost 900 private sector jobs. I know that the Premier probably doesn't like to hear it, but the reality is that his government is a big part of this problem. Carbon taxes, more red tape, and growing government — these things all make life more difficult for people to do business here in the territory.

When you have this Liberal government growing the size of the public service so much, they actually end up competing against the private sector for employees. We know that not a lot of small businesses can compete with government wages and, as a result, they have difficulty hiring and certainly have difficulty retaining employees. This is just another example of how the Premier's approach of growing government is hurting the private sector.

With that, I will just once again highlight the importance of this amendment. I think that the government's approach so far has been flawed. It has hurt the private sector. I think that the government needs to re-think it so that we can actually get the government out of the business of doing business.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I wasn't going to enter the fray this afternoon, but I have heard so much codswallop in the House from the Official Opposition that I felt I had to weigh in.

First, we know that the members opposite have long advocated the Saskatchewan model of cannabis distribution and sale. We know that, six months after legalization, the Saskatchewan model has become a case study in how not to do it. In Saskatchewan, the government is not in distribution or retail, as the members opposite noted. Some have noted that it is not raising enough money to train its workers in the safe distribution of the substance. According to a report on CTV, "A union representing government workers has said the province won't take in enough revenue to offset the costs of cannabis-related training and enforcement." Failure.

I have also noted that cannabis sales in Saskatchewan are the lowest of any jurisdiction in the country, as has been noted this afternoon. According to CBC reporting on Statistics Canada research: "In the first months after the legalization of cannabis, sales at cannabis stores in Saskatchewan were lagging behind every other province in the country..."

"Saskatchewan cannabis stores sold just under \$2.5 million in product in that time, below Prince Edward Island's sales of just under \$3.4 million."

It bears noting that "P.E.I.'s population is about 150,000 people, compared with Saskatchewan's population of just 1.2 million... In comparison, people in Saskatchewan spent \$227.7 million at beer, wine and liquor stores in the months from October to December."

Some working in the industry have said that the Conservative government in Saskatchewan's approach has driven the public to illegal sources of marijuana. According to CBC: "Recreational cannabis has been legal in Canada for six months, but licensed retailers in Saskatchewan say they are still struggling to compete with the illegal market... According to Statistics Canada, marijuana users who buy their product legally are paying, on average, almost 57 percent more than those who buy it illegally." A failure — Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan model is clearly a failure.

"Across Canada, \$151.5 million in cannabis was sold from the date of legalization... cannabis stores sold just under \$2.5 million..." in the period of time, as noted.

As my colleague the Minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation has said, Saskatchewan is 30 times larger than the Yukon — 30 times, Mr. Speaker. Its sales are way less per capita than ours. So it seems that, unless you support the illegal market, Saskatchewan's system just doesn't work. I for one am proud about the way the Yukon has implemented the legalization of cannabis. I am proud of the Yukon corporation for doing that. I am proud of my colleague for his thoughtful and diligent approach to this very tricky file.

The member opposite, the Leader of the Official Opposition, has spoken about disposal of assets. Well, this government, this Cabinet, this caucus has worked thoughtfully and planned with a view to the future on how to implement the sale of cannabis in the territory. I was in the discussions early. I can say that there was no relentless pressure on the part of the opposition that has led us to do this. That's utter codswallop. As I said earlier, that's not what happened. What happened is that my colleagues on these benches worked very hard with an eye to the future, something that has been rare in the territory over the last 15 years — to have a view to the future, to work diligently and thoughtfully, not fast and loose, but with an eye to the future — and that's what we have done.

My colleague and I worked very closely to come up with a plan and a retail outlet that could be rolled up at the end of our foray into the sale of cannabis fairly easily.

We looked at having our structures all easily disposed of. The store itself is on a temporary lease; the employees themselves are temporary. They are not permanent employees, so we can roll them back and actually get out of the business of business, which is exactly what we're doing just six months

after the legalization of cannabis. How did we get there? By forethought, planning and strategic procurement.

Now, I want to take the members opposite back to the findings of the Procurement Advisory Panel — their panel — which reported in May of 2016. This is an issue we may get to discuss this afternoon. I mentioned the Procurement Advisory Panel because the key finding of the committee was that the government did not understand procurement, did not understand its use in achieving the strategic goals of the government — in this case, the launching of private sales of cannabis in the territory.

We did the procurement strategically using the tools at our disposal to launch a retail establishment on behalf of the government to get cannabis legally sold in the territory with an eye to the future — the strategic goal to roll back and get out of the way once that had been done and once the private sector was ready to take on that role.

Six months later — just six short months — we're now getting out of that business and we're able to do it thoughtfully because we used the procurement models; we used the HR roles that made sense. Going back a few years, government didn't even understand how to do that. That's the findings of its own Procurement Advisory Panel — the government didn't understand procurement or its strategic use. This government does. We used the tools at our disposal to get out of the business of doing business.

I heard the Leader of the Official Opposition work very hard to walk back their criticism of the hard-working civil servants in the Liquor Corporation and in Justice and in Highways and Public Works — all those departments that have done an exemplary job rolling out this very complicated change in society in a thoughtful and methodical way. Of course, we want more sales of cannabis because we want to displace the illegal market — that's the goal; that's what my colleague the Member responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation has said. It makes total sense, but it's lost on the Leader of the Official Opposition, who is befuddled: Why would you want more sales? Well, because, unlike Saskatchewan, we want to get the sales out of the illegal market and into the legal market, so we want those sales to increase — but that thought is lost on the Official Opposition, clearly.

Let's be clear: We do want more sales. My colleague in Health and Social Services is going to be running the public awareness campaigns about the perils of cannabis use, but we do want to get those sales up so we get it out of the illegal market.

Lastly, the Leader of the Official Opposition talked about growing government. So let's go there for a minute this afternoon. We have not grown government, Mr. Speaker — not on this file. We have from the start worked very hard to launch cannabis in the territory with a view to getting private sales and moving out of that business within six months. Look at that, Mr. Speaker — six months later, we are there. Promise made, promise delivered. My colleague hit the mark. Private sales are now happening before 4/20, just as the industry wanted. Again, promise made, promise delivered.

I will note that the Official Opposition knows very well about growing government. They were experts at it, Mr. Speaker. In 2003-04, they increased the size of government by roughly 12 percent. In 2009-10, they grew the government by roughly 11 percent. In 2013-14, they grew the government by almost 14 percent. As we know from the diligent analysis of the Financial Advisory Panel, they spent \$1.50 for every dollar they collected. We also know that was never sustainable. We have been working very hard to curb that trajectory and trim the growth in government. We have been relatively successful in continuing services while curbing that growth. We have done that through our diligence and thoughtful attention to the strategic goals of this government — attributes that my colleague the Minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation has in spades. That includes getting out of the business of business. As to the sale of cannabis, six months after legalization, we now have private sales of cannabis in the territory.

We do not support the amendment as presented, Mr. Speaker. With that, I am going to leave it to the vote.

Mr. Kent: Like others who have spoken to this amendment, when it was initially moved — obviously, I support it — I wasn't planning on speaking to it, but comments by the Minister of Highways and Public Works in particular have led me to want to provide a few comments here this afternoon.

I am pleased that the minister was given such a wide-ranging opportunity to speak about procurement and other things, because I think when it comes to the wording in the amendment about creating unnecessary roadblocks for private sector businesses and then, from that, extrapolating that they are getting out of the business of doing business, we have seen several examples recently of both of those issues. The Minister of Highways and Public Works is certainly not immune to some of those transgressions that we speak about with this amendment.

Again, earlier this afternoon, the Minister of Community Services made a statement suggesting that the Official Opposition had voted against legalization. My colleague from Pelly-Nisutlin, the Leader of the Official Opposition, indicated at that time that is inaccurate information. The minister should know that the vote on whether or not to legalize cannabis happened in Ottawa. It did not happen here in the Yukon, so it would actually have been impossible for us to vote against the legalization of cannabis.

MLAs in this House are supposed to come to this Legislature with accurate information, so when they share inaccurate information with Yukoners, it is very disappointing. Mr. Speaker, it is falsehoods, to be quite frank with you.

Perhaps he is just trying to deflect from how poorly he has handled this file.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker: It is not a point of order.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: I don't necessarily have to hear you, but, yes. The Minister of Community Services, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, just a moment ago, the member charged me with uttering a deliberate falsehood.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: No, he didn't, in my recollection. He advised that there was inaccurate information and that what was said from the government benches was a falsehood.

If the members wish to hear my comments about deliberate falsehoods, I have them prepared if you wish to hear them again.

Just briefly then, for the benefit of the members: It is significant that Standing Order 19(h) prohibits members from accusing other members of uttering a 'deliberate falsehood.' To quote annotation 494 of the sixth edition of *Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms*: 'It is not unparliamentary to temperately criticize statements made by Members as being contrary to the facts; but no imputation of intentional falsehood is permissible. On rare occasions, this may result in the House having to accept two contradictory accounts of the same incident.' In other words, members are not to be called to order because they assert that another member has furnished the House with information that is false, inaccurate or wrong. Members are called to order when they are found to have accused another member of having deliberately furnished the House with information that is false, inaccurate or wrong. This distinction is important because the Chair is trying to maintain a debate dynamic and atmosphere in the House where members can, in an orderly fashion, exercise their fundamental privilege as Members of the Legislative Assembly: that of freedom of speech.

Mr. Kent: The quote — again, what I mentioned — was that when MLAs share inaccurate information with Yukoners, it is very disappointing. I did use an exact quote that the Government House Leader used previously in this House — that it was falsehoods, to be quite frank with you — and that is an exact quote from that minister and that Government House Leader.

Perhaps the minister is just trying to deflect from how poorly he has handled this file. We saw that today with how he has created a bunch of roadblocks for the private sector. What we did vote against were the Liberals' flawed plans to grow government with a new government-run retail store. I think that just speaks again to how flawed this Liberal plan has been.

It also speaks once again to how badly the Minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation has handled this file. We saw a private sector retailer run into huge roadblocks because this minister bobbled the file. That is why I think it is very important for us to support this amendment today. I would encourage the government to support this constructive amendment as well.

Now just to speak a little bit more about the particular point in the motion with respect to creating unnecessary

roadblocks for private sector businesses — I think it is important to highlight some of the recent examples that this government has created. As I mentioned, I was pleased that the Minister of Highways and Public Works had some latitude to touch on procurement and other issues when speaking to this amendment because I would like to do the same.

There are a couple examples in particular that I would like to highlight. The first — and again, this government uses the catchphrase "getting out of the business of doing business" quite often, but they don't walk the walk, they just talk the talk. When you look at the new housing development that is going into downtown Whitehorse that the Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation has talked about — whether it is mixed income or mixed use — we haven't determined that. It has been referred to as both — one in a news release and one by the minister on the floor of the House. But that said, I think the important aspect that we need to touch on — that the minister did confirm to my colleague during debate — that there will be market rental units in that building. That is competing directly with the private sector. Private sector landlords have many rental units throughout the City of Whitehorse that they use. That is not getting out of the business of doing business — it is directly competing with the private sector, and it is a direct roadblock for private sector businesses.

Using government money — using taxpayers' money — whether it is Yukon money or money from the Government of Canada, it all belongs to the taxpayer — to compete against the private sector is not okay. It is something that this government should take a serious look at with respect to that model for that mixed-use/mixed-income development that they are doing.

Mr. Speaker, the other example that I wanted to cite was one we talked about earlier today in Question Period — that is the *Public Airports Act* and the regulations that we are looking to develop. I know that we have spoken in this House before and we have talked about the government getting into a trap of paralysis by analysis, and that certainly seems to be the case here. The minister today in Question Period didn't even remember who initiated many of these studies that have been undertaken. The Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport 2040 study — the tender closed two years ago in May, under this minister, but for some reason he accused the previous government —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Member for Porter Creek Centre, on a point of order.

Mr. Gallina: I am failing to see how this is relevant to this specific amendment. I am quoting Standing Order 19(b)(i) — the question under discussion. I am failing to see how the Erik Nielsen airport and the housing project that the member opposite is referring to is relevant to the amendment being debated.

Speaker: The Member for Copperbelt South, on the point of order.

Mr. Kent: The amendment speaks to creating unnecessary roadblocks for private sector businesses, and we feel that market rentals in a housing development downtown create unnecessary roadblocks for private sector businesses — as have the actions and the studies of the *Public Airports Act* that I am speaking of.

Again, as I mentioned in my remarks, I was pleased that you gave the latitude to the Minister of Highways and Public Works to talk about procurement, because I felt that gave me the latitude to talk about these other roadblocks that we are seeing from this government.

Speaker: Briefly, the Member for Porter Creek Centre.

Mr. Gallina: As you have stated, members are bringing the points of order forward; it's not necessarily the Speaker who is bringing the points of order forward, and I respect that the member opposite has suggested that there was some latitude given in the minister being able to raise certain projects that he spoke to — but at the end of the day, it's the members who are bringing forward the points of order.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: I agree that it wasn't specifically the Chair who was providing the latitude. The issue about whether a Yukon Speaker currently, in the future or in the past, has been or ought to be more interventionist — I suppose we can have that discussion with House Leaders as to whether that's the preference of the members, as I am a servant of the House. That's a different issue.

I agree that I did not provide specific latitude. With respect to the Member for Copperbelt South — I would say that his comments with respect to government housing competing with the private sector are likely tangentially related to the proposed amendment, as it talks about unnecessary roadblocks for private sector businesses. Yes, there's a tangential relationship. I fail to see, at least at first blush, the connection with the debate about the airport issues.

In any event, it's a split decision, I suppose.

Mr. Kent: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker — pardon me; just for clarification — I am okay to continue on that line of my debate with respect to the airport act?

Speaker: I'm sorry; I'm not convinced about the airport portion of that. I see your point with respect to downtown mixed-use government rental housing, yes. I see that point. So I would move on to another area, if you have one.

Mr. Kent: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for that. I'll move on and I will perhaps address that in a future Question Period before the end of the Spring Sitting — with respect to the airport issue.

Just to close then, maybe I'll talk a little bit about procurement, because I know the minister was talking about that. I recognize that the minister has been in his position for almost 2.5 years and feels that he has made great strides with respect to improving procurement and improving things like highway maintenance. We have heard a lot about that here in the Legislative Assembly. But I think it does a bit of a disservice — well, it does a major disservice, I think — to the

public sector officials who work in procurement on a daily basis and have done so long before this minister, did so long before my time as minister and my colleagues' time — going back decades. It's a disservice to them to suggest that procurement wasn't done properly or the procurement was done poorly under them or that highway maintenance wasn't done properly or that the highway maintenance was done poorly under them.

Again, I know that after the minister's statements on some of these issues last week, colleagues heard from former public sector individuals who were involved in those files, and they were certainly disappointed with the minister's remarks when it comes to what was done in the past and how it was done.

I just wanted to caution the Minister of Highways and Public Works on that. As I said, procurement has been happening in this territory long before he and I were ministers, and it will continue to happen long after our time here is done. I would hope that, out of respect for those professional public servants who deliver on things like procurement and highway maintenance on a day-to-day basis, the minister — and indeed all colleagues in the House — show those individuals the respect that they deserve.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on the proposed amendment to Motion No. 423?

Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Disagree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Disagree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Disagree.

Mr. Gallina: Disagree.

Mr. Adel: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Disagree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Disagree.

Mr. Hutton: Disagree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Disagree.

Ms. White: Disagree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are six yea, 11 nay.

Speaker: The nays have it. I declare the amendment defeated.

Amendment to Motion No. 423 negatived

Speaker: Is there further debate on the main motion?

Ms. Hanson: So the trajectory back to the main motion — as I recall, the Member for Mayo-Tatchun had moved:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with:

(1) the private sector to provide for the sale of cannabis via the private sector; and

(2) the Government of Canada to regulate the use of cannabis edibles.

So I just wanted to touch on a couple of things. The Member for Mayo-Tatchun made a number of important points, I thought, with respect to the issues and the fact of how we have approached consumption, use, and regulation of alcohol versus cannabis. Much of what he said, I would tend to agree with. I think that it is important to point out that in fact there are still some legitimate concerns about cannabis, and we all accept that, but we also know, as with alcohol, there are clear social uses and medicinal uses of cannabis.

I wanted to say that I am hopeful, having heard the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, that he will maintain that fervor and passion that he expressed this afternoon with respect to the deleterious impact of alcohol in the communities and in this territory when we get to talking about some of the issues that will arise as a result of the Government of Yukon's review of the *Liquor Act*. There have been serious issues and concerns raised by many people over the last couple of years, particularly since the expansion — in August 2016 I think it was — of the hours for off-sales — from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. Certainly, in my riding, that has a huge impact when we see the difficulties that has created when municipalities — particularly in Whitehorse — were not aware and then have to deal with the impacts for businesses. When we see what is essentially the privatizing of alcohol sales for almost 24 hours a day, you begin to wonder what is driving that. This really does go to the really strong obligations that government has with respect to not talking about social responsibility, but acting on it.

The reason I raise this, in respect of this motion with regard to the private sector and sale of cannabis, is because it is my assessment that there is a very strong pressure to privatize liquor sales entirely, not just as much as we have done through the off-sales side of the market. We currently have off-sales premises that are advertising as liquor stores. Well, that is one thing. That should be a surprise to us, but it seems to be just accepted as “business as usual”. I think that is a real concern.

The Government of Yukon started with a really brave exercise a couple of years ago when it took the initiative — in terms of exercising social responsibility — when the Minister responsible for the Liquor Corporation in November 2017 announced, to great fanfare, the initiative of working on the northern territories' alcohol study and looking at putting on labels saying that the chief medical officer of health advises alcohol can cause cancer, including breast and colon cancers and to reduce health risks, to drink no more than two standard drinks a day for women, three for men — they were affixed

on bottles. Then that suddenly collapsed because of the pressure from the lobbyists for the alcohol industry.

One of the things, when I read this — and I'm going to keep coming back to social responsibility, because it applies equally as hard with respect to cannabis as it does to alcohol. When I was sitting here all afternoon listening to the back-and-forth on various issues and points of order, I was reminded of the article by André Picard, who is a noted national public health journalist who has received many awards in terms of his public health reporting.

In an article in *The Globe and Mail* on January 2, 2018 — the article was called “Removing warning labels from Yukon liquor is shameful”. It goes on to talk about the fact, as the Member for Mayo-Tatchun mentioned, that alcohol misuse kills more than 5,000 Canadians annually. I believe the member opposite had quoted something similar. He quotes: “The research that shows alcohol increases the risk of a number of cancers, including breast and colon cancer, is solid. Excessive drinking can cause a wide range of other chronic health problems, such as cirrhosis of the liver.” As the Member for Mayo-Tatchun pointed out: “Impaired driving is the leading cause of criminal death in Canada.”

As Mr. Picard pointed out, there's nothing defamatory in saying so — those are facts — solid research. “The claim that placing health warnings on products that pose a risk to the public is somehow a trademark infringement is complete popycock.”

There are lots of concerns that happen as a result of government getting into the business of selling and marketing, and the conflict is between marketing — making a profit — and having some social responsibility. I think the Member for Mayo-Tatchun did point out that Yukon has one of the — it's interesting, because we have one of the highest rates of substance use disorders in the country, but we also have one of the highest rates of abstinence. About 35 percent of Yukoners don't use any intoxicants of any kind, compared to 24 percent across the country.

Mr. Picard actually used a phrase that I think is something that we need to think about in this Legislative Assembly. “Research published earlier...” in 2017 “... in the Journal of Substance Use and Misuse found that provincial liquor boards put far more effort...” — and I would say Yukon liquor board, by the same token — “... (and money) into marketing than they do into health messaging.”

That is a perversity in a country where alcohol misuse costs the economy \$14.6 billion annually in lost productivity, direct health costs, and enforcement.

Mr. Speaker, I agree entirely with the issues that the Member for Mayo-Tatchun raised with respect to the challenges we face with alcohol management and marketing and how we are going to deal with the serious consequences of expanding that. Well, we can't expand it a hell of a lot more than we have already done, but it's happening.

One of the things that the member's motion does not mention is the fact that edibles are not legal until October 2019, so this is obviously a future — well, it's not so obvious in terms of the way the motion is drafted, but I'm not planning

to put any sort of amendments forward. I just wanted to make the point that edible cannabis, cannabis extracts, and cannabis topicals will not be available for legal sale until October 17, 2019 — so at some point after that in the Yukon, I would imagine.

One of the challenges that we face — not solely in the Yukon — is that in the rush to go to market and expand this sector, the regulatory side of this, in terms of the health of the product, has been slow to catch up. Health Canada was very slow to put in place regulations and oversight mechanisms with respect to the use of pesticides in the growing of cannabis. There is currently a class action suit — and I say this because I think it's incredibly important that people be aware of the dangers. I will come back to this when I get to the illicit sales aspect of this. There are 23 registered pesticides that are permitted by Health Canada for use on cannabis as it is being grown. It took until this last year for Health Canada to put in place a mechanism for unannounced inspections. They had taken the position up until the class action suit by a small group of people in the Maritimes against OrganiGram — I say this because I have a sister who has used medicinal marijuana from that very source, as have veterans and people who are suffering from all sorts of medical issues. They started using this and started having side effects, including paralysis and a litany of side effects of a drug called myclobutanil, which Health Canada, until 2016, was allowing medicinal marijuana producers to use.

We know that Health Canada has put in place a form of regulatory oversight for the licensed producers. What we don't know is what people are using on the illicit market. This is why it is so imperative that we get a handle on the illicit market in this territory. The Member for Mayo-Tatchun touched on this as well. I said this afternoon that we were told in the briefing at that time that the government had, I think, sold about \$1.8 million through their store and about \$40,000 through the website.

I will continue to say that the reason why this number is so telling is, as the Member for Mayo-Tatchun said, it's the only way for Yukoners in communities to access cannabis legally, unless they drive into town, and not that many people are driving into town.

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order for a moment, please. Just a quick reminder for the Leader of the Third Party to, from time to time — as I have suggested before — address the Chair. As I have suggested before, you can just pivot from time to time. But if you could direct or redirect your comments through the Speaker from time to time, that would be appreciated.

Ms. Hanson: I would love to pivot. Thank you.

There are still, we think — and I would agree with the Member for Mayo-Tatchun — a large number of people in Yukon purchasing from the illicit market. I do believe that this has to do with availability, but when you are in the communities, there is a cost factor here. A recent Stats Canada report documented that Canada-wide, across the country,

illicit cannabis prices are 32 percent cheaper than legal sales. If you get it cheaper, you may be getting flawed product or you may be getting something that is laced with pesticides that will kill you over time — but it is cheap.

If one of the outcomes in terms of responsible sales that this government has is to ensure that people are getting safe cannabis, then every effort should be made now — not over time — to expand the access to legal cannabis. We wouldn't sell moonshine in our liquor stores, because we wouldn't know whose still it came from. We regulate the production of alcohol pretty carefully.

When you include the shipping cost, Mr. Speaker, for cannabis in Yukon — because when you order online, it can cost you up to \$12 to get it shipped to you in Mayo or Ross River. Do we believe that this is a factor in increasing the likelihood of people seeking out the illicit cannabis market? I'm not an economist, and I do not pretend to know the best way to price out the black market, but perhaps the Government of Yukon should consider lowering prices to better compete with the illicit market in these early stages. I'm not saying forever, but if the intention of this legislation and the intention of these regulations is to push out the illicit market, then the government has at its hands a variety of options and a variety of tools. We would urge the government to do so. I would continue to urge the minister opposite to develop greater rigour in our data gathering on this matter and their analysis of it.

Mr. Speaker, we wholly support the underlying premises of the motion put forward by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, and we look forward to its speedy and rapid passage.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: In speaking to the main motion now, let me turn back to address some of the comments that I have heard from members opposite and then try to get to a few other pieces here that the Member for Mayo-Tatchun has raised through the motion.

First of all, what was the purpose of our act? If the federal government legalized it, what was the purpose of our act? Here it is — I am reading now. I am quoting from the explanatory note of the *Cannabis Control and Regulation Act*. This is how the act starts — and I quote: “This enactment complements federal legislation that creates the framework for legal access to cannabis by establishing prohibitions relating to the importation, sale, distribution, possession, purchase, cultivation, propagation, harvesting, and consumption of cannabis, and to public intoxication. For the protection of public health and safety, in particular by discouraging access to cannabis by young persons, the enactment provides for the imposition of serious penalties for those who engage in illicit activity in relation to cannabis.”

That is what the opposition voted against. Pardon me, Mr. Speaker — that is what the Yukon Party, the Official Opposition, voted against.

Overall, we have stated over and over again that our principles have been to promote health and safety, especially around our youth — to inform them and to discourage them from using cannabis early in their lives while their brains are

still developing — and finally, to displace the black market. It is important to displace the black market. I will start where the Leader of the Third Party finished off.

To that point, I will say again that I am so glad that we did not take the advice of the Official Opposition to use the Saskatchewan model. The Saskatchewan model has not been successful at displacing the black market.

We may not have all the information that we want, and to the Leader of the Third Party's point, we do need to get more information. We do need to be more diligent about it and we are working with Statistics Canada. I want to put a call out to all Yukoners to please use the crowdsourcing for Statistics Canada, because you need a certain threshold of response in order for it to be statistically significant, in order for them to provide the information back to us. I am happy to talk with our own statistics branch to get all the information we can. I love getting information — I believe in it.

Why did we start with a government retail store? It was for several reasons. The first reason was that we wanted to establish those principles early — the principles of promoting health and safety, of displacing the black market, and discouraging youth. By the way, I bring to the floor of the Legislature — I can table statistics on how many people we have turned away for lack of identification because we are tracking that.

We also wanted to introduce a government store because we wanted to deal with some of the legitimate fears that Yukoners had. This is a large change for everyone. Some people are totally comfortable with it; some people are not.

We wanted to address those fears and concerns. We wanted to help Yukoners to see this as something that can be normal, not promoting irresponsible use, but rather can be normal. I kept hearing the members of the Official Opposition refer to people as “users”. I think that we should get rid of that word. That word relates to illicit drugs, and I would like to refer to them as “consumers” just like I would if they were consuming alcohol. We need to normalize these things somewhat. We deal with the fears, and I am concerned that the Yukon Party is promoting fear. That is what I hear from them in their words opposite —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Member for Lake Laberge, on a point of order.

Mr. Cathers: The Minister responsible for the cannabis corporation I know has been feeling frustrated this afternoon, but I think he is in contravention of Standing Order 19(h) or possibly Standing Order 19(i): “... abusive or insulting language...” when he accuses members of this side, the Yukon Party, because we use the term “user” versus “consumer”, of promoting fear is clearly insulting language if not imputing false motives to another member.

Speaker: Are there any further submissions on that?

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: You are certainly not praising each other. I would concur with that; I would agree with that. Perhaps the minister could avoid that turn of phrase in this context today. It is perhaps in context today likely to create disorder.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I will rephrase, and I thank you for your direction.

I hear the members opposite raising fears and I believe that the context of those points that they are raising are unfounded and inaccurate. Therefore, I don't think it's a healthy thing. I think it is important that we change the culture around cannabis. It is now moved to being a legal or licit situation, and so we need to not be judging Yukoners for their use.

This was one of the important points when we opened the government store, to try to establish that out there. A few weeks afterward, I was thinking about how the legalization of cannabis had rolled out here in the territory. Do you know what it reminded me of? The year 2000 — Y2K. There was a lot of concern leading up to Y2K. “Oh, airplanes are going to come out of the sky.” There was a lot of worry, and then it happened and everyone was like, “Oh, okay, not so bad.” That is how I have interpreted it.

That is not to say that there aren't still lingering concerns that we need to address; there are. We also established a government store in order to work out the kinks with the supply to make sure that we had our programs and processes in place. Do you know what? I think it was about one or two months after the government store had opened, I was having one of my several conversations with the owners of Triple J's, talking with them about their work to introduce Canna Space. Again, I am very happy that they now have their licence in place.

What I heard from the owner was, “You know, I'm happy that it was the government that went first and dealt with some of those problems. I'm glad that got out of the way. I'm looking forward to when we get to legalization. Can you please get it done by April 20?” I'm sorry, but I think the members opposite give me too much credit when they talk about my job as minister and knowing things like whether Triple J's was able to pay by cheque or direct deposit, whether there were delays on the produce list — they raised a number of concerns. I'm going to go back through Hansard to try to find those concerns and talk with the corporation and work through them, because we definitely want to make sure that we're supporting the private sector.

I'm sure the first group that comes forward will forge the way through and they will find where our bumps and warts are, and I want to make sure we fix those things. My direction to the corporation has been to do whatever they can to support the private sector. I don't agree that they are fumbling. I think they are doing very well.

I just want to talk for a second about competition. I am not in any way — nor did I hear my colleague the Member for Mayo-Tatchun try to promote the irresponsible use of cannabis in any way. What I heard was that we were talking

about trying to displace the black market. How do you do that? You increase your sales. By the way, I hope Triple J's sales go through the roof. I hope they do great. I want them to do well in order to displace the black market. I also encourage all Yukoners not to overuse any intoxicant, not to drive with any intoxicant, to try to consume responsibly.

When Triple J's talked about the amount of money that they lost for the day the Cannabis Licensing Board didn't get the decision to them in time, it was \$10,000. When I look back at what the government store sells every day, it's \$10,000, more or less — \$10,000 and change — and that's great. I would love it if we have two stores selling \$10,000 each because that's twice as much that we're going to take out of the black market.

I don't agree, as I said — and I quoted from the national survey — that the black market is increasing. By the way, there are other ways that the black market might be decreasing, but it's tough to get a handle on. For example, there's the ability to grow your own plants, and again, I hope that Yukoners are taking advantage of that — again, responsibly.

I'm just very concerned that there was some reference that we were creating red tape with the Cannabis Licensing Board. No, that is not correct. What we are doing is ensuring the safety of Yukoners and having a diligent process. Why did we ask that they give us their financial statements for the past several years? In order to ensure that the black market is not the folks who are coming in and starting to sell legally. That would kind of defeat the purpose.

I have one more thing, Mr. Speaker: I tabled a document in this Legislature — I believe it was in October of last year. That document was the *Canadian Substance Use Costs and Harms*, with a Yukon infographic. They released a national report and I reached out to them to ask about the Yukon-specific information. They gave it to us — thank you very much to them. I tabled it here in this Legislature. Let's talk about that for a second because there is information and there is evidence.

When I look, the costs of harms in this territory on an annual basis — and this is based on 2014 data — of alcohol are \$41 million a year to Yukoners. It is incredible. Tobacco, by comparison, is \$17 million of harm. Opioids come in at \$4 million of harm. Cannabis is at \$3 million of harm, and over one-third of that is due to the criminal justice system — which, by the way, in 2014, cannabis was illegal; now it is not. Of course, there is still the black market. There still will be criminal cases, I am sure. But generally speaking, simple use is not what we're worried about. We are just trying to deal with the black market.

What that says to me is that there really is an issue that needs to be addressed here. I thank the Member for Mayo-Tatchun for pointing out those differences. Alcohol and cannabis are not the same thing, here in this territory. I tabled that information here and I think that we should all have it at our disposal.

I want to just make a couple of quick comments. Online sales across the country have been very low and very small.

The percentage basis might be a little different from here, but generally speaking, it's not how consumers of cannabis are purchasing their legal cannabis. They are going to stores. They want to look at the product. They want to see it, judge it, and then buy it. So it's not an online type of choice, so that's what has been happening — but it is important that we provide the opportunity for Yukoners to purchase their cannabis online if they wish.

We definitely want to work to lower prices. I think that is an excellent suggestion. That is why I said in my ministerial statement that the cannabis corporation is looking to have no net profit. We don't want to raise the prices. We don't want to use this to increase revenues to the government. We want to get the prices as low as we can. Can we go lower? Sure, but I think that we are going to have to do that by working with the private sector. That is the point. I am so looking forward to when we have a couple of private retailers out there, because we will sit down with them and talk about this. It will take us all working together to do it.

Again, I encourage all Yukoners to please use a legal source. It is safer and it is better for all of us.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I just want to talk about when edibles become legal. It's coming. On November 7 of this last year, Yukon Brewing announced that they are brewing a beer that has cannabis in it, but not with THC. So the real question that is going to come for us as a territory is: What happens when we get alcohol and cannabis together? What should we do? That is what I was hoping we would debate here today. I haven't heard it from the members opposite, but this is our chance to talk about those things.

What I will say — I will just put it out there, Mr. Speaker — I am so happy if members of this Legislature have opinions — please share them, because as we head into the next six months leading up to the legalization of edibles, we need to tackle that question and I'm looking forward to having that conversation with Yukoners.

Speaker: Is there further debate on the main motion?

If the member now speaks, he will close debate.

Does any other member wish to be heard on Motion No. 423?

Mr. Hutton: I will keep my remarks fairly brief. I do want to correct for the record the very interesting spin that the Member for Lake Laberge put on some information that I put before the House. I quoted from a drug enforcement agency of the United States of America chart that said that the lethal dose for 50 percent of the population that is being tested is 1,500 pounds of cannabis in 15 minutes. The Member for Lake Laberge somehow interpreted that to mean that anybody who smokes any less than that amount is just fine. That is just bizarre, Mr. Speaker. I will just leave that alone.

I was only trying to make the point that it takes 13 one-ounce shots of alcohol to kill 50 percent of that same population. The comparison was about how toxic alcohol is compared to cannabis. Cannabis is not harmless, but it was down on the end of the harm spectrum compared to alcohol.

Alcohol is without a doubt at the very top of all the most dangerous drugs in this country and in the world. It takes a death toll accordingly. That's the point that I was trying to make.

I would not encourage any Yukoner to smoke cannabis and get behind the wheel of their vehicle and drive. It is not only illegal — it is a foolish act. We have enough people dying on our roads from alcohol-impaired driving right now and we certainly don't need any more out there from cannabis. We really need to focus on the 72,000 alcohol-impaired drivers who are out there, versus the somewhere between 1,000 and 3,000 who were impaired with cannabis, plus every other drug combined.

When you have a problem with people being killed with guns, Mr. Speaker, you don't pass a law against knives. That is the point that I'm trying to make.

I totally agree with my colleagues across the way about social responsibility. It is absolutely imperative that we be more socially responsible. Canada, as a country, didn't get into the business of dealing drugs on October 17, 2018. In 1920, when they legalized alcohol, Canada became the biggest drug dealer in this country, and they should have accepted the social responsibility that goes along with it. The fact that they don't call it a drug doesn't mean it's not a drug. You can call it alcohol, drink it, and call it a beverage — it is still a mind-altering psychotic drug that has extreme consequences for those who abuse it.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. 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.

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

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

Motion No. 423 agreed to

Speaker: The time being 5:30 p.m., this House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

The following sessional paper was tabled April 17, 2019:

34-2-93

Allegations of Wrongdoing in the Delivery of Group Home Care — Final Special Investigation Report under the Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act (April 10, 2019) (Speaker Clarke)

The following legislative returns were tabled April 17, 2019:

34-2-207

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Ms. Van Bibber related to general debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 210, *First Appropriation Act 2019-20* — community recreation active living budget (Streicker)

34-2-208

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Ms. Van Bibber related to general debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill No. 210, *First Appropriation Act 2019-20* — clean water and wastewater fund (Streicker)