



# Yukon Legislative Assembly

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## HANSARD

Tuesday, April 17, 2018 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

# YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

## 2018 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
<b>Hon. Sandy Silver</b>	Klondike	Premier Minister of the Executive Council Office; Finance
<b>Hon. Ranj Pillai</b>	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
<b>Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee</b>	Riverdale South	Government House Leader Minister of Education; Justice
<b>Hon. John Streicker</b>	Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes	Minister of Community Services; Minister responsible for the French Language Services Directorate; Yukon Liquor Corporation and the Yukon Lottery Commission
<b>Hon. Pauline Frost</b>	Vuntut Gwitchin	Minister of Health and Social Services; Environment; Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation
<b>Hon. Richard Mostyn</b>	Whitehorse West	Minister of Highways and Public Works; the Public Service Commission
<b>Hon. Jeanie Dendys</b>	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

<b>Ted Adel</b>	Copperbelt North
<b>Paolo Gallina</b>	Porter Creek Centre
<b>Don Hutton</b>	Mayo-Tatchun

### OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

#### Yukon Party

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

### THIRD PARTY

#### New Democratic Party

<b>Liz Hanson</b>	Leader of the Third Party Whitehorse Centre
<b>Kate White</b>	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**  
**Tuesday, April 17, 2018 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

*Prayers*

## DAILY ROUTINE

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

## TRIBUTES

### In recognition of National Volunteer Week

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to recognize and pay tribute to Yukon's incredible community of volunteers in honour of National Volunteer Week.

Here in the Yukon, we have countless dedicated volunteers, and this week, we celebrate their enormous contributions to our territory. Nearly every community event needs volunteers, and all non-profit organizations need at least four board members. Whether you realize it or not, Mr. Speaker, each one of us has been supported in some way at some time by volunteers.

Volunteers make tremendous contributions to protective services. Across the territory, there are 141 emergency medical service volunteers in 15 rural communities and over 150 volunteer firefighters.

There are 36 Whitehorse-based volunteer responders for the special operations medical extraction team, more than 100 ground and inland water search and rescue volunteers, and 50 Yukon Amateur Radio Association volunteers.

Volunteer boards run all territorial sport-governing bodies. Volunteers coach and support our children's athletic endeavours. When a Yukon delegation goes to an event like the Arctic Winter Games, the Canada Winter Games or Canada Summer Games, the adult contingent that attends — they as well are largely volunteer-based. They support and run sport and cultural events that otherwise couldn't be possible — for example, the Yukon Native Hockey Tournament, the Kluane Mountain Bluegrass Festival, any of the year-end soccer tournaments, Yukon Sourdough Rendezvous, the Klondike Road Relay, the Yukon River Quest and the Dawson City Music Festival, just to name a few.

There are over 100 volunteers who lend their time to support activities through local care facilities. Whether it is playing cards with residents, assisting with community outings, working as clerks in facilities' in-house stores or just taking their dogs in to visit residents, volunteers help to enrich the daily lives of residents in care.

Nearly 1,000 Yukoners participate in the work of over 100 government boards and committees, and that is not to mention the non-government organizations or the non-profit societies and service organizations right across the territory.

Not only do volunteers donate their time and energy, but the funds that they raise are used to develop infrastructure in our community — for example, the pool at the Canada Games Centre, the splash park at Rotary Park, outdoor skating rinks in local neighbourhoods and the recently rebuilt Harvey's Hut at the Mount McIntyre ski facility.

Although our population is small, Mr. Speaker, the hearts of our volunteers absolutely are not. Approximately 50 percent of Yukoners over the age of 15 are involved in volunteering at an average rate of 130 hours per year. This represents an impressive total of 1,700,000 volunteer hours. Volunteers truly are the lifeblood of our territory. Without their support and engagement, so many of the activities, events and services simply would not be possible.

To our community-minded volunteers across the territory, your contributions do not go unnoticed. We are extremely grateful. Thank you for your support in making Yukon vibrant and beautiful and the welcoming place that it is.

*Applause*

**Ms. Van Bibber:** I rise today on behalf of the Official Opposition to pay tribute to National Volunteer Week, which takes place April 15 to 21 this year. This week, we have the opportunity to give a huge thank you to the Yukon men and women who make incredible contributions to their communities through volunteering.

The theme of this week is: "Celebrate the Value of Volunteering — building confidence, competence, connections and community". We encourage people of all ages to step forward and volunteer; find something that you think you would like to be part of and say, "Yes, I can do this."

It is proven that people who volunteer have a positive attitude and also make positive contributions to their communities. As well, it improves life satisfaction and may even improve health.

Helping out gives one life skills that later on look great on a resumé. You meet some amazing, giving people who would otherwise not cross your path.

Volunteers are so important in many organizations across the territory. They are the heart of most communities and we all know who they are as they work to promote, coach, fundraise, educate, inform, translate, build and assist. They support and bring their many talents as well as learn new skills through the cultural, recreational, social and sporting events for which they volunteer.

The Conference Board of Canada released a paper on April 5, 2018, and it states that the value of service by Canadians is almost immeasurable, but they have gathered information and they state that 12.7 million people volunteered in 2017. That provides two billion hours that are given to Canada as work effort, and that equates to a value of \$55.9 billion. How amazing is that?

This is the perfect time to thank all our volunteers and celebrate their service. Let's shine a light on volunteers this week and throughout the year, and also on the causes that inspire us to give time and energy to the many wonderful

things that need doing in our territory. Sign up as a volunteer to help behind the scenes at a local festival, spend time with seniors, sell raffle tickets for a local fundraiser, and the list goes on.

We all have the power to make a difference. No act is small. Find a purpose and make some meaningful change by volunteering. I encourage all Yukoners to help out in some way. This will continue to make Yukon the best place in the world to live.

*Applause*

**Ms. White:** I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP caucus to pay tribute to the hundreds of thousands of Yukon volunteer hours. The territory would not function without volunteers. Government could never afford to replace similar services or the hundreds of thousands of hours donated by volunteers — it just wouldn't be possible.

If you think of government like a bike frame, it's sturdy and has the bones of what a bike will be, but it's the hundreds and thousands of hours put in by volunteers that are the wheels, the seat and the handlebars. You wouldn't get very far on just a frame alone but, with a whole bike, you can go anywhere.

Today, we thank the volunteers who make Yukon what it is and help to get us to where we want to go. We thank those early morning hours put in by coaches, people who are often out of bed before the birds start to sing encouraging kids with their love of sport. We thank those late-night hours put in by emergency response volunteers while we're safe in our beds — these volunteers who give their time to fire, EMS and search and rescue, to name but a few. It's these volunteers who make sure we're safe and secure in our communities.

We thank those special people who volunteer with hospice at the hospital and our care facilities, giving comfort in times of greatest need. We thank all those volunteers who put their time and effort into sport, arts and recreational pursuits, from snowboarding to theatre performances, lawn bowling to the all-city band, basketball to synchronized swimming and everything in between.

Every extracurricular activity for the young to the old is run with the help of volunteers. Economic drivers like music and arts and cultural festivals wouldn't be possible without the countless volunteers who support these important threads that join our communities together. Nothing joins a community together like a celebration, and Yukoners give of themselves freely to make those celebrations happen.

We thank the organizations or groups that embrace those who have fallen on tough times, from the volunteers at soup kitchens and food banks to church groups — our neighbours and volunteer organizations that tackle tough social issues. These folks are a smile, a bowl of soup or a hug in our time of greatest need.

We can't forget our friends and neighbours who shovel our driveways when we aren't able, bring us food when we're sick, offer us support in our times of need and stop to help change tires on the side of the highway. All of these actions are given freely and help to strengthen our communities.

Mr. Speaker, there are far too many groups and individuals to list, but we feel their contributions to our communities each and every day. These contributions of time, energy and effort are a large part of what lures people to the Yukon to visit, but it is what convinces them to stay.

*Applause*

### In recognition of Law Day

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government and the New Democratic Party to recognize Law Day, which this year is today, April 17. It has been celebrated on this date in most of Canada every year since 1983, which was the one-year anniversary of the date the Queen and the first Prime Minister Trudeau signed the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* into the Canadian constitution.

Today marks the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Law Day in Canada. The Canadian Charter that we celebrate today applies to all Canadian laws. It guarantees us an array of rights, including: the right to vote; the right to move and work throughout the country; it assures comprehensive legal rights, including the right to life, liberty and security of the person; the right to legal counsel; and the right against self-incrimination. Section 15 guarantees equal treatment before and under the law and equal protection and benefit of the law without discrimination.

There is something very important to Yukoners in our Charter. Section 25 states that the Charter does not derogate in any existing aboriginal rights, including treaty rights. Our guaranteed rights include: freedom of religion; freedom of thought, belief and expression, including freedom of the press; and the freedom of peaceful assembly. At the 35-year mark here in Canada, there may be a tendency to take our Charter rights and freedoms for granted, but we cannot — and must not — allow ourselves to do so. Scholars of the law admire it as a model of correctly balancing competing legal interests in a modern, multi-cultural society.

According to a 2012 *New York University Law Review* article — and I quote: “Canada is a constitutional trend-setter among common-law countries.” Canada is a leader. The fact that South Africa, New Zealand and Jamaica have all borrowed aspects of and looked at our Charter as a model is a tribute indeed.

Mr. Speaker, you may say that this all sounds very lofty, but what does it mean to Yukoners? The fact that you can vote in elections, that you can love whomever you want, that you can peacefully protest and the fact that you have significant rights before the law is unavailable to many citizens of the world. Today, we celebrate a living, breathing document that codifies what rights and freedoms we enjoy simply because we are lucky enough to be Canadians, but here in the Yukon our spring has not really cooperated this year.

Organizers of our main celebratory event, the Law Day Charity Fun Run and Walk, were well informed and scheduled it for early May, when the weather hopefully improves enough for people to walk, run and roll over their lunch hour for charity. As always, this year's event is a fundraiser for a local

organization. The event is run entirely by volunteers from the Canadian Bar Association, Yukon branch and the local legal community. It will be held on May 4 at noon, and the theme of this year's run is a vitally important one: "Consent". The Fun Run will donate all of its proceeds, as it does every year, to a local organization, and this year to the women's transition home. You are all invited and encouraged to participate to support this great cause. I know we all have lots of t-shirts from participation over the years — not only in the fun run, but from other events — but this year's t-shirt for the fun run was designed by local First Nation artist Blake Shaá'koon Lepine — not likely something you have in your collection, so even more incentive to participate.

While you are completing the course, give a thought to the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and how it protects and serves Canadians.

*Applause*

**Mr. Cathers:** I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to Law Day in Canada. The annual initiative includes events across the country to allow Canadians to gain knowledge and understanding of the law and the role of lawyers and judges in our legal system overall.

Every year in the Yukon, community members join those in the legal profession to lace up their sneakers and take part in the Law Day Charity Fun Run and Walk. This year's event takes place on May 4 at 11 a.m., beginning at the Whitehorse visitor information centre. Proceeds of the event will be donated this year to the women's transition home.

The women's transition home offers safety and support to women and children who are fleeing violence at home. It is a dignity-preserving organization that is committed to providing essential services and a positive social response to every woman and child who seeks help in leaving violent or abusive situations. Kaushee's Place is an emergency shelter which is free of charge for women and children, and Betty's Haven is a 10-unit complex which serves those clients of Kaushee's Place who need a place to stay if they require longer recoveries.

Thank you to the volunteers and the organizers from the women's transition home for their role in this year's Law Day Charity Fun Run and Walk as well as for the organizers in supporting this NGO. Law Day is made possible each year through the efforts of hundreds of people across the country who donate thousands of hours of volunteer time to organize and run events from coast to coast to coast.

I would like to congratulate all members of the Yukon Bar, as well as those volunteers and organizers who work to organize the run and to celebrate Law Day in the Yukon. Since I see one of the long-time volunteers and runners in the gallery, I would just like to recognize Tom Ullyett and indeed all of those who have been part of organizing this year's Law Day and past, for their good work on behalf of the territory.

*Applause*

**Speaker:** Introduction of visitors.

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** We have some folks in the gallery today for Volunteer Week and I am going to apologize in advance for mispronouncing last names, starting with my dear friend Renee-Claude Carrier. It's the first time I have ever said her last name and I have been working with her at the Dawson City Music Festival as a volunteer for years — over a decade. Thank you for being here today, Renee, but also we have Bruno Bourdache, who is the executive director of the Volunteer Bureau. We also have Doug Caldwell, president of the Volunteer Bureau and Mildred Peñaranda, who is the project manager with Volunteer Yukon as well.

Please everybody, welcome them.

*Applause*

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** I ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming Renee-Claude Carrier, who is also here doing double duty — as all volunteers always do — as the manager of Kaushee's Place, the women's transition home — who is, of course, the recipient of this year's fundraising event with Law Day. We also have with us Tom Ullyett, the Acting Public Service Commissioner, CBA past president — I can't even start to list his CBA volunteer jobs — organizer of Law Day for many, many years for the fun run and I daresay probably the one person in the territory who has run in every Law Day Charity Fun Run for 26 years, I think — something like that.

Also joining us today is Kelly McGill, past executive director of the CBA Yukon, past Fun Run organizer for many years and a brilliant young lawyer here in Yukon.

*Applause*

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

## TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

**Hon. Ms. Dendys:** I have a legislative return: Yukon gender-inclusive diversity analysis — GIDA — action plan, related to the Member for Takhini-Kopper King's question in general debate on Vote No. 11 for the Women's Directorate in Bill No. 206, dated back to March 29, 2018. Details can be found also in Hansard, page 2345.

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** I have for tabling a legislative return, which is the response in answer to a question asked by the Member for Copperbelt South during the main estimates debate.

I also have for tabling two letters, both written by me to the Member for Copperbelt South — again, responses to questions that were asked during the main debates.

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

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

## NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Minister of Environment to respond to e-mails sent over 230 days ago, requesting the minister to address matters of health and safety in campgrounds in southeast Yukon, including:

- (1) trees in danger of falling on campsites; and
- (2) road safety.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to work with the governments of Alberta and British Columbia to ensure that the Yukon is not negatively impacted by the trade war between these provinces, including any restrictions on fuels shipped from Alberta through British Columbia to the Yukon.

**Speaker:** Are there any further notices of motions?  
Is there a statement by a minister?  
This then brings us to Question Period.

## QUESTION PERIOD

### Question re: Carbon tax

**Mr. Hassard:** Today, we learned that the carbon tax scheme that the Premier signed on to will cost the City of Whitehorse \$328,000 a year. To pay for this, the City of Whitehorse will potentially be forced to look at cuts to services or tax increases. This means that not only will the people of Whitehorse be hit by the Premier's \$26-million carbon tax scheme, but they could see their property taxes go up as well.

In the fall, the Minister of Community Services indicated that municipalities will not be getting their money back. Will the government change course and exempt municipalities from the carbon tax?

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** I appreciate the question from the member opposite. It is important to keep in mind that the price of doing nothing in regard to climate change is a lot more extensive than putting in a federal carbon-pricing mechanism, one that the Yukon Party signed on to in the Vancouver Declaration. Carbon pricing will remain revenue neutral in Yukon, meaning that all revenue will be returned throughout a rebate mechanism, and we do look forward to providing more information on the rebate mechanism in the upcoming weeks.

With respect to our partner governments, we will respect our partner governments. We anticipate having an announcement about municipal rebates at next month's Association of Yukon Communities AGM in beautiful downtown Dawson City, but make no mistake, Mr. Speaker — we will have a rebate system that will be in place for 2019 when carbon pricing comes into effect.

**Mr. Hassard:** We're 30 percent of the way through this government's term, and the Premier is still short on details on how the carbon tax scheme that he signed on to is going to work. We do know that this new \$26-million tax is going to

force communities to make tough decisions — as cuts or tax hikes. This will be compounded, of course, by the fact that the Liberal government is changing cost-sharing on community infrastructure to force them to pay 25 percent of the costs. At the end of the day, this means that our municipalities will have less money and will be forced to pass these costs on to citizens.

Will the Premier commit today that all municipalities will get 100 percent of their money back from the carbon tax so they aren't forced to raise municipal taxes?

**Hon. Mr. Streicker:** I did have a conversation with the Association of Yukon Communities in the fall when I talked about carbon pricing and said that we had designed our rebate to be 100 percent back to Yukoners and Yukon businesses. Following that, in further conversations with them, I invited them to put in a proposal to us, which we have received. I'm pleased that we will be providing an announcement at the Association of Yukon Communities AGM, and I thank them for coming to us.

With respect to infrastructure funding, we have more infrastructure funding coming to all of our communities, including all of our municipalities. We have, over 10 years, \$163 million in gas tax; we're just finishing up \$68.5 million in the clean water and waste-water fund; we have \$342 million over seven years with the small communities fund; and we have \$31 million over five years for the low carbon economy fund; we have the Gateway project; we have housing investments; and we have, soon to be finalized, the Investing in Canada infrastructure plan. So I think there is a lot of money that is going to all municipalities and I'm happy to answer further on this. I think it's great to acknowledge all the investment that we're able to make into our municipalities.

### Question re: Carbon tax

**Mr. Cathers:** The \$26-million Liberal carbon tax scheme that the Premier signed on to is going to make life more difficult and more expensive for Yukoners. The average household in Old Crow, according to the government's own documents, is going to pay an extra \$1,275 per year. Yesterday, I asked the Premier how increasing costs on families is going to do anything but make life more difficult. In response, he strangely started talking about Saskatchewan and didn't answer the question.

Will the Premier tell us how forcing every single household in Old Crow to pay an extra \$1,275 per year due to the carbon tax is going to reduce Yukon's emissions?

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** Yes, I did mention Saskatchewan and, yes, I did answer the question yesterday. Yesterday, we did speak — and I will speak again, to the fact that Yukoners need to know that there are direct costs and indirect costs when it comes to carbon pricing.

Our groceries that come up right now and our commodities that come up from our four major hubs, which are Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia and Alberta, already have carbon-pricing mechanisms, so you're already feeling the indirect costs of the carbon-pricing mechanism. However, the direct costs that will be felt at the pumps as of January —

100 percent of that money — 100 percent — will be given back to Yukoners and Yukon businesses.

I don't know how else to get this to the member opposite, as far as the cost breakdown — costs that are already being felt by other jurisdictions — and also the direct costs from this government, of which 100 percent will be given back to Yukoners. Again, that was the point of our four-page supplementary to the federal government's review of Yukon and the carbon pricing.

We keep answering the question; members opposite keep telling us we're not answering the question.

**Mr. Cathers:** Mr. Speaker, we keep saying that the government isn't answering the question because they are not, and Hansard will clearly show that for anyone who wishes to read it.

The information the government finally relented on providing that the Premier is pointing to was out of date and weak on detail. The \$26-million carbon tax the Premier signed on to, according to the government's own documents, will force the average household in rural Yukon to pay \$825 more in taxes and some will pay more than \$1,100 in an extra tax bill per year.

So a simple question: Will the Premier commit that every single resident in rural Yukon will get all their money back following this carbon-tax hike — yes or no?

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** I think there is an echo chamber over on the other side there, Mr. Speaker, because we have been very clear in the campaign, whereas the Yukon Party wasn't clear what their plan was, other than to stick their heads in the sand. We have been very clear that 100 percent of the money that is collected in the Yukon as a direct cost will go back to Yukoners and Yukon families.

I would love to be able to give more details, but we're still waiting on some details from Ottawa that go back to the very first document that was ever signed committing Yukon to a carbon-pricing mechanism, which was the Vancouver Declaration, which the former Premier of the Yukon Party signed on to. It's interesting that now we keep hearing from the members opposite that we didn't get enough details — that we're not getting enough details. We keep answering the questions; we keep telling what that number means in direct and indirect costs, yet we still hear the member opposite saying we're not answering the question.

Again, we agree that some of the details in the documentation from Ottawa — we had to make sure we put our documentation with it to say that these numbers, whether for transportation or the GDP considerations or what have you, do not consider the fact that 100 percent of the direct costs at the pump in the Yukon will go back, revenue neutral, to Yukon businesses and Yukon individuals. I'm not sure how much clearer we can be as a government.

#### **Question re: Children in care**

**Ms. White:** In 2014, the Auditor General of Canada recommended that transitional case plans should be developed for youth who were in the department's care and custody, and that the plan should be in place for these youth starting at age

16 until they leave the department's care and custody. It also noted that, once they leave care, the now-adult can still receive support until the age of 24.

The government agreed to this plan, yet I spoke with a youth who was about to age out of government care. They're worried about where they go when they turn 19 and can't live in a group home anymore. In a meeting to plan this transition, it was suggested to this young person that the emergency youth shelter might be their best bet.

Mr. Speaker, does this government think it's acceptable that youth aging out of government care have no housing support offered other than the emergency youth shelter?

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** The transitional support services policies and procedures have been in place for some time with the amalgamation of the residential youth treatment services and support programs. We have looked at deficiencies within the department. Clearly, the member opposite has raised some significant concerns and questions. We have also heard that the objective of transition units and our young children who are in our care — it's essential that we provide them proper and efficient transition supports as they transition out of our care into independence in our community.

We have taken efforts with the Wann Road project and have really tried to elaborate around the transition supports, the wrap-around supports, for our young adults as they transition into adulthood. The project and initiative there are really intended to do just that.

We have undertaken that this year. Health and Social Services most certainly welcomes input and to look at our progress as we evolve. We know we have taken child protection concerns and goals as our key priority and we will continue to do that as we evolve. I look forward to this second supplementary.

**Ms. White:** We want to know what is happening on the ground today, because something isn't working right now.

In the Safe at Home plan from September 2017, it stated that the Skookum Jim emergency youth shelter is often at capacity and many local youth are relying on couch-surfing and the support of friends to get their shelter needs met.

It went on to say that advocates and social workers have also identified that youth transitioning out of foster care can find themselves struggling to find stability. A 2016 study found that 32 percent of those identifying as homeless in Whitehorse experienced homelessness for the first time before reaching the age of 20 — homeless before 20.

Many of these individuals are aging out of government services with little to no support and little to no preparation for life on their own. What is this minister doing to ensure that youth leaving the care of this government are not ending up on the streets?

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** I would like to start from the fact that we are working with our communities. We have just opened up some mental wellness hubs; we're opening up another two. The objective is really to reduce the number of children we have in care. We have reduced that significantly. We now only have 20 youth in our group homes, down from 30 a few months ago. We will continue to work with our families and

our communities. We will continue to look at policy adjustments to align with the care that's needed in each one of our communities.

It's really essential that we look at the wrap-around services in all of our communities. We have also looked at responding to the child protection concerns that have come to our attention. It is our goal, wherever possible, to keep our children and our families together in their communities.

We continuously look at improving our out-of-home placement programs; we look at services and we are advancing the transition units, which we have not ever seen in the Yukon before, where there are transition units for young adults who are transitioning out of our care. We hope to see that evolve and be very successful. That is an initiative that the department has taken with our partners and communities.

**Ms. White:** I don't even have a response. Transitional plans are not happening; that is the problem.

On Friday, the government had the media briefing on youth group homes. Attendees were told that seven reviews of Child and Youth services had occurred since 2010 and, somehow, Yukoners are expected to believe that the eighth review is the one that will fix the problems that the first seven reviews didn't.

One of these reviews was the Auditor General's report. The Auditor General clearly identified the lack of planning and support for youth who age out of government care as a concern.

Can the minister confirm whether or not all the Auditor General's recommendations are being implemented four years after that report?

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** For clarification, we are continuing to support and fund the Skookum Jim Friendship Centre. We are proceeding with effective transitional plans and each individual child who is within our care has a transition support team wrapped around them. We will ensure that we successfully provide them the essential services they need because every child matters to us.

We are looking at the mandatory recommendations that have evolved since 2010 to what we now know in the last six months, which has come to our attention. We are looking back and we are assessing all of the recommendations to ensure that we have effectively implemented the rules that have been imposed for us or recommendations that require us to adjust policies.

We are internally doing that; we have the Youth Advocate Office assessing the services that they are obligated to and will report back to this Assembly. We also are looking at the family and children act review process; those are essential with respect to policies and legislation.

Significant improvements in the area of child protection — I can assure the member opposite that we will continue to do our good work and the staff within Health and Social Services is working very hard. We have over 90 employees within the group homes who are doing their very good work and I want to acknowledge them as well.

### Question re: Carbon tax

**Mr. Kent:** As of this morning, the cost of diesel in Dawson City was \$1.61 per litre; the carbon tax scheme that the Premier signed on to will increase the cost of diesel a further 13.7 cents per litre.

Placer mining operations rely heavily on diesel to operate their equipment and their businesses. There are several placer mines in the Klondike that use approximately one and a half million litres of diesel per season. As a result of the carbon tax, one of these placer mines will be forced to pay an additional \$205,000 per year.

Will the Premier exempt placer mining from the carbon tax scheme that he signed on to — yes or no?

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** I do appreciate the question from the member opposite.

To be clear, in designing the rebate mechanism, the Yukon government will consider how to address the principles established in the pan-Canadian framework that were not already addressed by Canada. We are waiting for these things to be addressed; namely, carbon pricing policy should include revenue recycling to avoid a disproportionate burden to vulnerable people and to indigenous groups, but also, carbon pricing policies should minimize competitiveness impacts and carbon leakage, particularly for emission-intensive trade-exposed sectors.

No one would like to give more information on those two issues than I would. We have been talking about this with the Council of the Federation for years now, to tell you the honest truth.

However, the design of the rebate cannot be finalized until the specifics are known for how the federal backstop will be applied in Yukon and what considerations to protect industry competitiveness and vulnerable groups will be built into the tax-collection mechanism itself. Again, great question from the member opposite — we are working on it but, again, the ball is in Ottawa's court as it is Ottawa's carbon-pricing mechanism.

**Mr. Kent:** This \$26-million carbon tax scheme that the Premier signed on to is going to make life more difficult for Yukoners and, of course, for Yukon placer miners. Earlier this afternoon, we talked about how this carbon tax may force municipalities to make cuts or increase property taxes. We also talked about the effect of the carbon tax on Yukon families. Now we have found out that the tax will increase the costs on a placer operation by over \$200,000 per year. The Premier campaigned on rebating Yukoners 100 percent of the carbon tax money, and when he signed on to this scheme in December 2016 — he has also had plenty of time since then to tell us exactly what he is doing.

Mr. Speaker, will every single placer miner get 100 percent of their money back as a result of the Premier's carbon tax scheme — yes or no?

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** It's interesting how that question is phrased — that the opposition now only knows the effects of carbon pricing for the placer industry. During the campaign season, we all knew about that. We went door to door to the placer miners and we heard their concerns about these issues.



That's why, for years now, I have been saying that carbon-pricing mechanism should not penalize those who cannot otherwise change behaviours. You cannot buy a D8 Cat. I believe the member opposite has heard me say that many different times.

This conversation, I guess, is lost on the Yukon Party, but it's not lost on the placer miners. It's not lost on the communities. It's not lost on Ottawa. It's not lost on the other premiers who hear me saying this over and over and over again.

Again, we would love to have the design of the rebate completed today. I know that the opposition loves to ask this question. It's about the only question that we've heard, really, over and over again. We keep on answering the question from the opposition, but the specifics of this still have to be considered by Ottawa.

The Vancouver Declaration started us down this path. We then went to the pan-Canadian framework, which we signed willingly in Ottawa with the rest of the premiers. I will let the Leader of the Third Party speak when she has her turn, if she lets me speak now.

But again, we have to make sure that we know the rules and procedures from the federal carbon-pricing mechanism before we can actually do our part of the rebate side.

#### **Question re: Carbon tax**

**Mr. Cathers:** During the election, the Premier told Yukoners not to fear the Liberal carbon tax because they would get their money back, but, since then, we have had platitudes, non-answers and very little in the way of details from this Premier. Here are the details that we have so far on his carbon tax rebate scheme.

The Trudeau Liberals, in partnership with this Premier, will take \$26 million out of Yukoners' pockets. The Liberals say that they will give Yukoners that back through a rebate, but the Premier refuses to tell Yukoners how that rebate will actually work. He won't tell us who gets what or whether Yukoners will even get their money back, as he claims they will, and how.

I have an easy question for the Premier: If one of my constituents pays an extra \$1,100 as a result of the carbon tax scheme, will that same constituent get their \$1,100 back — yes or no?

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** The way that the question is phrased really tells us that the members opposite do not understand carbon pricing whatsoever. Again, we keep on giving answers and they keep on saying that we're not giving answers. I will be clear again — in designing the rebate mechanism, Yukon government will consider how to address the principles that were established in the pan-Canadian framework — which I urge the member opposite to read — namely that carbon-pricing policies should include revenue recycling to avoid disproportionate burdens on vulnerable people and indigenous groups.

Also, carbon-pricing policies should minimize competitiveness impacts and carbon leakage, particularly for emission-intensive, trade-exposed sectors. While there are

likely to be opportunities to address competitive concerns within the design of the carbon-pricing mechanism itself, the rebate should offer a secondary mechanism to address the remaining concerns.

We have been very clear that we intend to refund 100 percent — 100 percent — of the money that was collected from the federal carbon-pricing mechanism. I do admit that we don't have the details yet, but we keep telling the Yukon Party — and they keep not listening — that we need those questions answered from Ottawa, and we are patiently waiting for those answers.

**Mr. Cathers:** Well, this is becoming a theme with this government — patiently waiting for Ottawa to tell them what to do. We understand the details of this tax grab. The Premier is fond of saying that Yukoners will get all of the money back that they pay as a result of the carbon tax scheme, but he refuses to provide proof or to say whether people will actually get back what they pay. It is becoming evident that it looks like only some Yukoners will get their money back while others will be left out in the cold — at least to some extent.

Mr. Speaker, we know now that GST will be charged on top of the Liberal carbon tax, which will further increase the financial impact on Yukon families, even more than the Premier has admitted. Will the Premier commit that Yukoners will get 100 percent of every single dollar that they are paying as a result of the carbon tax, including the GST, back as a rebate, or will Yukon families be even worse off as a result of paying a tax on a tax due to this Liberal government's support for the imposition of a carbon tax?

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** I think what is becoming clear here is that we now know why the Yukon Party didn't have a plan during the election campaign. It is because they don't understand carbon pricing. They don't understand it whatsoever, Mr. Speaker. If the question actually is — 100 percent of the money out of one person's pocket, and 100 percent going back into that same pocket. If that is actually the question from the Yukon Party, I do not believe that the Yukon people are that naïve. I don't believe that the Yukon people are going to stand up for the Yukon Party trying to make it seem like Yukoners don't understand carbon-pricing mechanisms. It is just simply not true.

I will tell you what I will do for the Member for Lake Laberge, though. I will send him some information on what a carbon-pricing mechanism is — revenue neutral, Mr. Speaker. What it is supposed to do is — every individual will consider how much they spend and the rebate. In considering that, people will have a nod toward non-fossil fuel alternatives, and it will give a nod to the nation, it will give a nod to the international community, and, hopefully, we can do something for man-made climate change. Hopefully we can turn a page and move forward to renewable resources.

I hate to say it, but again, the Yukon Party is absolutely on the wrong side of history on this issue.

#### **Question re: Children in care**

**Ms. McLeod:** Yesterday, I highlighted how confused the Minister of Health and Social Services has been on the

issue of allegations of abuse in government-run group homes. As I pointed out yesterday, in the course of a single day, the minister gave Yukoners several different and contradictory answers on whether or not the government is conducting an internal review of the serious allegations that the minister became aware of in February. Yet, despite the minister being unable to answer these questions, the deputy minister was able to give a straight answer to this simple question last week, which makes us wonder why the minister was unable to.

With all of these different answers coming from the minister, it is clear that she does not have a handle on this issue, and even the government appears to be losing some confidence in this minister. Yesterday, when I asked this question of the Minister of Health and Social Services, the government got the Minister of Highways and Public Works to get up and answer the question.

Can the minister tell us on what day this internal review of government-run group homes was launched?

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** Very interesting — I have responded to the question numerous times. Perhaps the member opposite does not want to hear what we have to say. We are taking the allegations that have been brought forward seriously. We are taking a one-government approach to addressing issues and concerns that come to our attention.

The Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission is responsible, as well, for working with our staff and working with the whistle-blower legislation. We have an obligation and we are proceeding with that.

With respect to the confidence that the member might not have in me, I do believe that we have full confidence with our staff. The staff will do the work that is required. We have the members of our community who have participated. We are working diligently with our communities. As well, we are making sure that we address all of the allegations that have come forward and respect the messages that are coming to us.

The deputy minister is responsible for managing the department. He takes the direction from me as a minister with respect to the mandate that I have been given, and that is to ensure that all Yukoners — every child is given an opportunity to have a safe place in our society.

The members opposite may not want to speak about those — perhaps have never done that historically — but we are willing to do that and we are going to take this matter very seriously and do something about it.

**Ms. McLeod:** And yet, no answer to the question.

Will the internal review, referred to by the deputy minister, be made public?

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** I would say that everything that we are doing within the department with respect to all of the reviews — the mandatory reporting around child abuse that has come to our attention since 2010, which perhaps the members opposite hadn't done anything about — perhaps the auditor's report or the fact that we have made significant improvements in the area of child protection, that we have reduced our children in care fund — 200 to 113 — and that we have reduced the number of children in our group homes from 30 to 20, the fact that we have necessary supports within

all of our communities and the extended care family program agreement. The reports from the transitional support team with respect to the reviews that are being conducted in the department will be assessed and we will make that determination at that time — whether or not we can or are able to release some of the significant or confidential information — not possible, but we will do our utmost to ensure that the public is always made aware of the progress that we are making.

I would be really happy to highlight some of those right now. We have looked at many things within our department — the direct operating grant, for example, working with our children in our communities, and the *Child and Family Services Act* review. Those are significant things that we are doing for children in our communities.

**Ms. McLeod:** I'm sure the daycare centres are quite happy about the direct operating grant.

The minister has told us that she became aware of specific allegations of abuse within government-run group homes on February 15. The minister did not report these allegations to the RCMP. Since February 15, can the minister tell us what changes have been made to the policies or practices by which group homes are managed?

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** The question from the member opposite is perhaps completely not true. She has made some uninformed recommendations that perhaps are not correct.

**Some Hon. Member:** (Inaudible)

#### Point of order

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

**Mr. Cathers:** The Minister of Health and Social Services clearly contravened Standing Order 19(h) by accusing the Member for Watson Lake of uttering a falsehood, and I would ask you to have her retract that statement and apologize for it.

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

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** I think the point of order is being made on the basis of the words “not true”, which I understand this House to have determined is contextual, and I would suggest this is a dispute among members and that the minister should be permitted to finish the answer to the question.

#### Speaker's ruling

**Speaker:** In my view, it's more in the nature of a dispute about the facts. As all members know, section 19(h) does modify “falsehood” with “deliberate”. In my view — and I will review Hansard and report back to the House, as necessary — members should be aware that the House, in its wisdom, at some point, determined that the rules should have a modifier of “deliberate” and, in my view, the comments made do not rise to that level of utterance.

In any event, in my view, at this point, there is no point of order.

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** What I do want to say is that we are looking at the full confidence of the advocate office. We are working with our team to address all the concerns that have been brought to our attention. If there are allegations brought to our attention, with respect to the confidentiality of each file, we will not reveal that in this Legislative Assembly. That is left to the authorities to conduct the investigation, and I will not answer the question with respect to when we report it, if we report it at all, to the RCMP. That is a confidential matter and will be addressed through due process.

I will say that all the allegations that have come to our attention are very important and that we will continue to support the staff who have come forward. We will continue to support the children who are also raising concerns, and we are looking at an internal review of our processes and looking at the reports that directed the former government to make some significant changes that perhaps they have not implemented. We will ensure those things happen.

**Speaker:** The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

## NOTICE OF GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** Pursuant to Standing Order 14(4), Wednesday, April 18, 2018, is designated as a day when government private members' business has precedence under the Orders of the Day. However, the government private members have chosen not to identify motions for debate on that day. Therefore, the House will proceed to government-designated business under Orders of the Day tomorrow.

**Speaker:** We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

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

*Motion agreed to*

*Speaker leaves the Chair*

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

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

The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 16, entitled *Technical Amendments Act, 2018*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

*Recess*

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

## Bill No. 16: *Technical Amendments Act, 2018*

**Chair:** The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 16, entitled *Technical Amendments Act, 2018*. Is there any general debate?

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** Mr. Chair, if I could ask the officials to join me today.

With me today is Lesley McCullough, the Acting Deputy Minister of the Department of Justice, and Sheri Hogeboom, who is legislative counsel with the department. I thank them very much for being here today.

Mr. Chair, I appreciate the opportunity to speak with the Committee of the Whole with respect to Bill No. 16, entitled *Technical Amendments Act, 2018*. I would also like to thank the officials for being here with me today and for all their work on this bill, which has been extensive.

I would like to spend a little time today to outline why we have brought this type of bill forward and what we expect it to accomplish. As the Minister responsible for the Department of Justice, I have recommended amending several acts through this bill to address identified issues, omissions or a lack of clarity found in legislation that is either administered or enforced by the Department of Justice.

Some of the issues included in this bill were identified by key stakeholders, and I would like to thank them for their role in bringing them forward to ensure that Yukon laws remain accurate, equitable and as consistent as possible. Specifically, I would like to thank the Land Titles Stakeholder Advisory Committee and the drafting advisory group for taking time to work on the *Condominium Act, 2015* and regulations to make sure they are workable, accurate and comprehensive. We are following best practices in Canada to ultimately support a vibrant real property market and enhance economic development opportunities in the territory. We appreciate the time and commitment they have made working with us on this legislation.

The amendments to the *Condominium Act, 2015* will address five issues. The first amendment will ensure that the term "surveyor" is defined and consistently used in both the *Condominium Act, 2015* and the *Land Titles Act, 2015*. The amendments will also make certain that developers provide appropriate information in the case where a purchaser enters into a purchase agreement before the condominium is registered. By clarifying what information is required in a particular circumstance, this amendment supports developers in obtaining project financing during early development stages while condominium purchasers stay protected.

The Third Party asked why it's important to provide purchasers with copies of the condominium application, the declaration and survey plan or equivalent information — a good question. The declaration and the survey plan contain a great deal of the information that is pertinent to any purchaser. The survey plan defines the boundaries of the parcel that a condominium is located on and of the units in a condominium, which is what the purchaser is buying.

This includes information like the number of units in a condominium, their size, their location vis-à-vis each other, the common property, including spaces such as parking spaces and recreation areas and infrastructure such as electrical and plumbing facilities.

The survey plan provides the visual and the mathematical information as to the interest that a purchaser is buying. The declaration sets out the fundamental information in respect of the nature of the condominium — is it phased or is it a bare-land condominium or is it a conventional condominium — all of which are very important in respect of the rights of the member of a condominium. It also sets out the unit entitlement associated with each unit, which is important in respect of the eventual fees that a unit owner will pay and the percentage of any special levy that they may be responsible for. The declaration and the survey plan provide bedrock information.

Our goal with this amendment is to ensure that in situations where it is not possible to provide that information because the condominium has not yet been registered, the purchaser receives equivalent information from the developer to provide them with the comfort and security that they need to proceed with a purchase agreement.

We have also made an amendment to the section of the act that speaks to the power of the condominium board to set rules around leasing or renting. It came to our attention that the act needed to be clear that condominium boards have the authority to place limitations on renting or leasing condominiums. This power was included in the act based on original stakeholder feedback and we are amending section 106(1)(b) to make that authority clear. The amendments to the *Condominium Act, 2015* also streamline the process for creating and amending condominium forms, which are required under the act.

As I have mentioned during second reading, removing the requirement in the act to proscribe forms in the regulations will help streamline government processes, allow the Land Titles Office to be more timely and responsive when amending forms and at the same time ensure that this is done by those with the technical expertise.

We are also amending the *Condominium Act, 2015* so that a condominium qualifies as pre-existing if it is substantially advanced before the *Condominium Act, 2015* comes into effect and is registered within 30 days of that effective date. A condominium designated as a pre-existing condominium is able to register certain documents in accordance with the preceding *Condominium Act* — or the current *Condominium Act* — rather than the *Condominium Act, 2015*.

This amendment will ensure that a developer who has been preparing to register under the present *Condominium Act* does not find that they have to rework all of their documentation to meet new requirements under the *Condominium Act, 2015*. We believe that this provision is essential to ensuring that stakeholders are not treated unfairly by the new legislation coming into force and effect as they were nearing the completion of their projects.

The original section of the *Condominium Act, 2015* identified the date before which the condominium had to be substantially advanced as the date of first reading of the *Condominium Act, 2015*. As the members of this House are aware, that date has come and gone without the legislation coming into force and the provision with the first reading trigger now provides no benefit.

This amendment to section 239(3) of the *Condominium Act, 2015* will restore that benefit.

As we can see from the technical nature of these amendments, the *Condominium Act, 2015* is a complex act, but it is a very important piece of legislation. As such, we will continue to work closely with our stakeholders on the regulations over the coming months to address any issues that may come up, and to ensure that both the act and the regulations are fair and achieve their intended outcomes.

As I stated earlier, if new issues are identified that make implementation more challenging, or which, if not addressed, would have the effect of reopening actions or agreements that had already been completed, they will be addressed in regulation or, if necessary, in further amendments to the *Condominium Act, 2015*.

To that end, I would like to table a letter that I recently sent to one of our stakeholders in relation to additional concerns raised about the *Condominium Act, 2015*. Unfortunately, due to timing, a more extensive review and consideration of some of the concerns — it is not possible to allow for inclusion in this technical amendments bill. If determined appropriate, the assessment still needs to be done. So I have clearly indicated in this letter, which I have now tabled, our intention to continue the conversations to ensure that there are no barriers for existing projects to continue.

I would also point out that the letter clearly sets out that it is our intention that the enforceability of agreements for the purchase and sale of condominium units that are signed and delivered by the parties, prior to coming into force of the *Condominium Act, 2015*, will continue to be governed by the current *Condominium Act*. I hope that reassurance is well-received.

I also wanted to mention that I know there have been concerns raised about when this act and regulations will come into force — that being the *Condominium Act, 2015*. I want to be very clear that our government is committed to ensuring that the *Condominium Act, 2015*, with its package of regulations, comes into force on a day that reflects the interests of all stakeholders.

Given the time that it may take for all stakeholders to be ready to implement the provisions of the new act, I would anticipate that it would not come into effect before January 1, 2019, and we have conveyed this to many stakeholders. The exact date will be a product of our consultation with stakeholders and the general public, and we will provide considerable advance notice on it, but it is our goal at this time to have this project completed over the next several months.

I also want to follow up on another point made by my colleague across the floor the other day, when she said she looked forward to a plain language conversation with respect

to condominiums. As I did previously, I want to acknowledge that this is a challenge. Condominiums are a very technical, legal arrangement and are not at all intuitive. When you throw in the specific survey requirements that are so essential to establishing a condominium, it becomes even more challenging.

However, I agree with her that we commence consultation on the regulations and that we work to bring the *Condominium Act, 2015* into effect, and, as we do so, the Department of Justice will ensure that this conversation takes place in plain language so that Yukoners who own, or are interested in owning or developing a condominium understand the legislation and their rights and obligations under it.

There are several amendments included in this bill. The title change of the senior Judge of the Supreme Court to the Chief Justice is a change that will take place in all three territories once the federal amendments are brought into force, as it is based on amendments to the federal *Judges Act*. I know that all three territories are working as necessary to address the federal amendments.

The federal amendments also resulted in a variation from the previous seniority-based appointment for the senior judge to one that is merit-based. As a result of these changes, Yukon's legislation needed to have consequential amendments. Some of the members of this House may recall that just last spring, we repealed this not-yet-in-force amendment to the *Supreme Court Act* in the Yukon *Supreme Court Act*, in that it had been on the books since 2005. The decision to repeal that amendment was made based on an indication that we had received from Canada that they had no plans at that time to change the title of the senior judge, at least not then in the foreseeable future.

That obviously changed over the summer months and we were advised of a plan to proceed in late August by Canada to make this name change. Yukon has long supported the title change and we are pleased to be able to finally move forward with completing this amendment in this Sitting. Once our Legislative Assembly has passed these amendments, we will work with the federal government to bring all of the relevant federal and territorial legislation into force.

This bill also contains an amendment to an act that the Department of Justice is responsible for enforcing. The *Motor Vehicles Act* has been amended to ensure clarity that a standard speed limit of 50 kilometres per hour applies to every highway in the territory unless there is a government regulation or a municipal bylaw varying that standard speed limit.

Finally, we have amendments to two other acts included in this bill. As I indicated during second reading, we are making an amendment to the *Judicature Act* to ensure that non-Yukon corporate bodies are able to hold property in joint tenancy in the Yukon Territory. Currently only Yukon corporations can hold joint tenancy in Yukon and there is no legal or policy reason to make such a distinction.

We are also repealing the *Lord's Day Act* with this bill. This is a cleanup of outdated legislation that no longer has force and effect. My friend in the Official Opposition queried

whether our government was confident that the *Lord's Day Act* was unconstitutional. I can confidently say that we are. The *Lord's Day Act* proscribes certain activities from taking place in a municipality on a Sunday, the Christian day of worship. Unless pursuant to a municipal bylaw, which is enacted after a vote by municipal voters, there is no secular justification for the choice of Sunday for the day upon which these activities are restricted and, just as the Supreme Court of Canada found in the Big M Drug Mart case in 1985, that means that the legislation fails the purpose of test.

The lawyers in the Legal Services branch have advised that the same features that made the federal *Lord's Day Act* constitutionally invalid would in fact make the Yukon *Lord's Day Act* also invalid. The act has not been enforced in Yukon for at least the last three decades and, frankly, probably longer than that. Keeping this legislation on the books when it is not enforceable and when even before it was found constitutionally invalid there was no interest in enforcing it undermines the rule of law and raises issues as to the enforceability of our statute book.

If it is not valid law, it should not be presented as such in the Yukon statute book. As the Minister of Justice and the government's Attorney General, I am responsible for ensuring that the legislation that governs Yukoners achieves acceptable standards for equity, fairness and respect for the rule of law. That is what we are doing by repealing the *Lord's Day Act*, Mr. Chair.

I do have one more point that I would like to respond to. It was raised the other day by my colleague in the Third Party — the possibility of using a technical amendments act to make changes to legislation to ensure that legislative language reflects the legality of same-sex marriage. The legislative review for the *Gender Diversity and Related Amendments Act* sought to identify potential discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation. While the amendments that the Department of Justice and the Women's Directorate are bringing forward this spring focus largely on gender inclusion, this does not mean that we are less committed in any way to addressing the discrimination facing lesbian, gay, bisexual and queer Yukoners or that we view this issue as any less important. For example, while not in the *Gender Diversity and Related Amendments Act*, our government updated its registration of marriage form in June 2017 to be inclusive of same-sex spouses.

While I cannot say that the avenue of modernization will always be through technical amendment statutes, I can say that modernizing statutes so that they meet the acceptable rules and social standards for LGBTQ2S+ non-discrimination and equality is a priority of this government.

With the *Gender Diversity and Related Amendments Act*, you will see us taking steps to meet this equality goal. As we move forward, I believe that you will notice the degree to which we are drafting new legislation and amending old legislation to ensure LGBTQ2S+ equality and non-discrimination. We work in a reality of finite legal resources and can only work on so much at one time, but it still must be emphasized here that this work is a priority for our department

and for our government. We remain committed to our overall legislative goal of LGBTQ2S+ non-discrimination, and we will consider bringing forward other legislative changes as needed in the upcoming sessions.

I would like to thank the members of this House for their time and for their consideration of this bill. I am happy to answer questions the members may have. Thank you for the opportunity to address Bill No. 16, the *Technical Amendments Act, 2018*.

**Mr. Cathers:** In rising to speak to this as Official Opposition critic for Justice, I do appreciate the new information that the Minister of Justice has provided. I would point out that most of that almost-20 minutes was a repeat of the second reading speech that we heard from the minister and was probably not the best use of this House's time for us to hear the same speech a second time, but I do appreciate the information. The minister did answer one of the specific questions that I put on the record at second reading, which was whether the *Lord's Day Act* had been found by Justice to be unconstitutional. Based on the minister's indication that the department's legal opinion is that it is unconstitutional, then I have no concerns with that.

If that had not been the case, I think it would only have been fair to consult with Yukoners on it, but if it is simply cleaning up a matter that is unconstitutional, then that is simply cleaning up Yukon's legislation to reflect a binding court decision.

Most of the changes included within this legislation are not substantive in nature and, at this point in time, we don't have any other concerns or questions.

**Ms. Hanson:** My able colleague from Takhini-Kopper King responded in the first instance on Bill No. 16. I just wanted to reiterate how important we think the amendments to the *Condominium Act, 2015* are. I say that as somebody who has just relatively recently entered into the life of a condominium owner. It is a challenging legal world, and it is perplexing at times for owners and associations to understand the responsibilities that go with this. It's very different from owning a house.

We appreciate the minister's responsiveness to the concerns that were raised with respect to the ability of ensuring that developers can proceed with financing and, at the same time, providing protection for purchasers. I'm happy to hear that we can anticipate regulations by January 1, 2019, because I think that's also really critical to the effective operation of condominium associations. Having sat through the legislative debate, even with our little group, in the back of my mind I was thinking that we have to do this and we have to do that, but we don't. Some of those are very important to the effective running of a condo association because you're living under one common roof and have common liabilities that, if not dealt with properly, are significant. Those regulations are going to be very important.

I just want to go back to the general comments with respect to the purpose of technical amendments. I would ask the minister — when she talks about the importance of addressing the fact that technical amendment bills address

technical substantive policy issues that may have arisen since the enacting of the statute, one of the things that the NDP has asked repeatedly over the last number of years as bills have come forward is for assurance that there is a review of all territorial legislation with respect to consequential amendments to ensure that they reflect the language contained in Yukon First Nation self-government agreements, as opposed to referring to bands or *Indian Act* bands. As we know, there are still three *Indian Act* bands in the territory, but when we're talking about lands, we're not talking about *Indian Act* reserves in the territory or that kind of thing — so I'll look for confirmation from the minister on that.

My colleague had raised the question that we have also raised a number of times with respect to the implications of not changing the language in a variety of acts. I think the minister, as well as previous ministers and certainly us, as opposition, have received correspondence over the years from groups seeking to see amendments — as my colleague had said — to the *Land Titles Act, 2015*, *Family Property and Support Act*, *Marriage Act*, *Married Women's Property Act*, *Evidence Act* and *Spousal Compensation Act*.

I appreciate that there is a commitment to make these outstanding amendments. I guess I will be looking for a time frame on that.

This is going to sound a little picky, but I actually had to look at some of this legislation because I had never looked at the *Judicature Act*. But when I looked at that act — if the purpose is to make these amendments consistent or correct, then I noticed that, in the *Judicature Act*, section 34 deals with trade orders and then they talk about the *Agreement on Internal Trade* — so my question is: Why wasn't that changed to the *Canadian Free Trade Agreement*?

I will just leave it there for now.

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** I think there are three topics to address here. I'm happy to do so.

The first that I see is the question about reviewing the provisions of current legislation, or certainly legislation as we can change it, or new — I would say that basket includes new legislation to make sure that the First Nation agreements — the language in those agreements — are being respected in that legislation. I would go even further to say that our lens of reviewing legislation — and certainly new legislation, to that end — also includes making sure that the LGBTQ2S+ language of gender inclusivity is also appropriate or correct, if I can say that — up to date.

Yes, we are doing that, and when I get to the answer about the *Judicature Act*, I will make reference to this again — but yes, that is something that we are trying to do as we go along, certainly with respect to new pieces of legislation and secondly with respect to anything if it is a possibility that we are opening in order to deal with some technical amendments. An example that I will give in this particular bill is the specific change to the *Motor Vehicles Act*. This does not permit us to look at broader language changes in the *Motor Vehicles Act* — and probably — nor should it. That requires a more impactful assessment.

Yes, in this particular case, we are making one specific, strategic change to the *Motor Vehicles Act* but that doesn't mean that — in answer to the question — we are not using this opportunity and all opportunities where we are looking at legislation to make sure language is accurate and appropriately culturally respectful.

With respect to the other changes that have been suggested to particular pieces of legislation — and we have had several discussions here about it — I have made the commitment — and I know my colleague, the Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate, has also answered questions about this. We are certainly interested in doing that. As a matter of fact, the deputy minister and I had a conversation about this — it might have been today but I think it was yesterday — about the timetable for doing this.

Our goal is to bring some of those language changes forward for the fall of 2018, but I must say that it is not as simple in some cases as wording changes. In some cases it is, and in all cases we need to assess whether or not there is any substantive impact in changing that language, and that work is ongoing.

I think there was a mention of the *Land Titles Act, 2015*. I will mention that, in the *Land Titles Act, 2015*, there is no gender-specific language. Those changes have been positively adopted in that piece of legislation, so it is done.

With respect to the *Judicature Act*, I too puzzled over this question when I received it previously in a note from the Leader of the Third Party. The *Agreement on Internal Trade* and the *Canadian Free Trade Agreement* do not specifically replace one another. Certainly one is now in force and effect going forward, but the assessment that was made of the *Judicature Act* in bringing these amendments forward indicates that there is still an issue of enforceability with the *Agreement on Internal Trade*, so the decision was made in this case to make this change and to do that assessment as to whether or not we need to.

The *Canadian Free Trade Agreement* is incorporated by virtue of its existence, but specifically with respect to the effect of this act, we need to make sure — if it needs to be added, or if the *Agreement on Internal Trade* needs to be taken out or they both need to be there, based on the fact that they affect different parts of the law and different responsibilities for individuals. That is why we have not made the change in the *Judicature Act* right now, but it is certainly one of the items that we are looking forward to addressing because, as the member opposite has said, it is critical that our laws are as accurate as they can be and as consistent as they can be, and that they address issues of equity.

I think I have answered all of your questions.

**Ms. Hanson:** I appreciate the minister's responses. I am curious about the AIT and the Canada free trade one, because I just thought one had supplanted the other — the latter had supplanted the former.

The key amendment that is the focus of the conversation today for the *Judicature Act* — I guess I don't understand the benefit, or why it's necessary, to provide for non-Yukon corporations to hold property in joint tenancy in Yukon. When

I read the act as it is now — it means a body corporate formed by or under Yukon law. We now have corporate bodies that are not resident in the Yukon but are formed under the Yukon *Business Corporations Act*. I don't understand what this is, so could the minister explain why it's necessary, what the intent and advantage is of making this amendment, and what the disadvantage is of leaving it as it is, as arcane as it is?

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** The question regarding the corporations — let me just start by saying it this way: Corporations can come into being under federal law, under other provincial or territorial law, or under Yukon law, and be registered here in the territory as body corporates. Let me just back up to say that body corporates can own property. They can own property on their own or they can own property in conjunction with either another body corporate or an individual, et cetera.

The legislation that currently exists, which we are trying to amend with this technical amendments act, prohibits body corporates registered in the Yukon from owning property as tenants in common, and there's simply no policy reason why that would be the case.

We can look into it further, but we understand from the information we have with us today that it was a change that was made in the *Land Titles Act, 2015* that seemed to be an error. It was a limitation on body corporates that probably should not have been done at the time. We are simply trying to level the playing field by removing that prohibition and having our law be consistent with other laws across Canada that allow body corporates to own property as joint tenants, not only as tenants in common. That is the distinction between — as you probably know, maybe, being a new condo owner, the ways in which individuals can own property as joint tenants or as tenants in common has an effect on individuals when one or the other parties ceases to be, whether it is an individual who passes away or whether it is a body corporate and it ceases to be. It was a limitation and a prohibition on owning property in that manner that simply is not supportable by the law across Canada. We are trying to be consistent.

**Chair:** Is there any further general debate on Bill No. 16, entitled *Technical Amendments Act, 2018*?

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

*On Clause 1*

*Clause 1 agreed to*

*On Clause 2*

*Clause 2 agreed to*

*On Clause 3*

*Clause 3 agreed to*

*On Clause 4*

*Clause 4 agreed to*

*On Clause 5*

*Clause 5 agreed to*

*On Clause 6*

*Clause 6 agreed to*

*On Clause 7*

**Ms. Hanson:** I am curious as to the language “on the in-force day”. I have never seen that before. Can the minister just say why we choose that?

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** I hesitate to say that the member opposite and I may be closer in age to each other than we are to the drafter of this particular provision. I have never seen anything quite like it either, but I understand it to be the convention of skilled legislative drafters, and it was put in the draft in 2015.

It is no longer relevant because that day has come and gone, but I do appreciate the question, because I had the same one. It's not a common use of a piece of legislation coming into force and effect, but it's certainly one version.

*Clause 7 agreed to*

*On Clause 8*

*Clause 8 agreed to*

*On Clause 9*

*Clause 9 agreed to*

*On Clause 10*

*Clause 10 agreed to*

*On Clause 11*

*Clause 11 agreed to*

*On Clause 12*

*Clause 12 agreed to*

*On Clause 13*

*Clause 13 agreed to*

*On Title*

*Title agreed to*

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** I would like to take the opportunity to thank my colleagues.

Mr. Chair, I move that you report Bill No. 16, entitled *Technical Amendments Act, 2018*, without amendment.

**Chair:** It has been moved by Ms. McPhee that the Chair report Bill No. 16, entitled *Technical Amendments Act, 2018*, without amendment.

*Motion agreed to*

**Chair:** The matter now before the Committee is Vote 7, Department of Economic Development, in Bill No. 206, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

*Recess*

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

### **Bill No. 206: *First Appropriation Act 2018-19* — continued**

**Chair:** The matter before the Committee is Vote 7, Department of Economic Development, in Bill No. 206, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

Is there any general debate?

### **Department of Economic Development**

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** First, Mr. Chair, I would like to welcome the Deputy Minister of Economic Development, Mr. Justin Ferbey, back to the Assembly today and it's also a great pleasure that I get to welcome Rebecca Harrison, who is our director of finance and information management. I want to just thank Rebecca for her support and patience — again, for the patience of sitting and helping me understand the very technical work that she undertakes in our department.

With that, I will just begin by sharing a little bit of a preamble and then we can dig right into questions about this year's departmental budget.

Mr. Chair, honourable members and visitors, I am pleased to rise today to table the Department of Economic Development's operation and maintenance and capital budgets for the 2018-19 fiscal year. These budgets will serve to develop a prosperous economy that benefits communities, First Nations and Yukon as a whole. The Department of Economic Development will allocate funds and supports that grow local investment, innovation and the knowledge economy, open up trade, strengthen entrepreneurial opportunities for Yukon First Nation development corporations and improve business competitiveness.

Before we look at the numbers, I would like to revisit the department's focus areas. At the local level, Economic Development offers advisory and funding services to Yukon businesses of all sizes, helping to diversify the economy and provide rewarding jobs. At the regional level, we help communities to get the skills and tools they need in order to grow their economies. Economic Development also supports specific industries, such as media, technology, telecommunications and natural resources.

All of our activities are based on the principle of partnership. We work with a wide range of partners, First Nation governments, development corporations, industry associations and community organizations — to name a few. Together, we work toward a diverse, competitive economy that will help Yukoners thrive.

Our operation and maintenance budget for the 2018-19 fiscal year is \$16.8 million with a capital budget of \$14.8 million. With these funds, we will continue to build a healthy, vibrant and sustainable economy and provide good jobs for Yukoners.

I will now outline some of the department's planned programs and initiatives. The Department of Economic Development represents the territory on the national and global stage to advance Yukon's economic interests. Work is ongoing on a number of trade agreements, including supporting negotiations on the *North American Free Trade Agreement* and implementing the *Canadian Free Trade Agreement*. Canada believes that the modernized *North American Free Trade Agreement* should include stronger labour and environment provisions, as well as new chapters on trade and gender and indigenous peoples. With this in mind, Economic Development continues to represent Yukon at every negotiating round and closely monitoring Canada's negotiations.



Economic Development is also working on the *Canadian Free Trade Agreement*, which came into force this past summer. The agreement allows Yukon businesses to get the same access to Canadian markets, investment opportunities or tenders as foreign businesses do across Canada. Economic Development is supporting all Yukon government departments as they implement the agreement in their sectors, ensuring that Yukon businesses have a clear path to investing and selling their goods and services. The trade files are overseen by the policy, planning and communications branch. The branch will benefit from a \$2.1-million budget for 2018-19 to support this work, among other activities.

Economic Development seeks not only to promote growth in business but also to support economically self-reliant regions and communities. The Regional Economic Development branch provides funding and advice to First Nations, local governments and other organizations to carry on this work. The branch will benefit from a \$3.8-million transfer-payment budget this year. Direct financial support is available to Yukon communities through the community development and regional economic development funds. The community development fund is a popular tool that provides financial assistance to projects and events bringing long-term economic and social benefit to Yukon communities. For example, last year, the fund helped Teslin Tlingit Council cover the labour cost of converting 10 community building heating systems to biomass boilers. The conversion generated approximately 12 months of employment for 23 people during the construction phase. Of the \$3.8-million budget available, \$2.95 million will be directed toward the community development fund's work as well as many other programs and events across Yukon.

The regional economic development fund will benefit from \$800,000 to help communities identify opportunities and make plans for their economies. The fund aims to create jobs, encourage an inclusive workforce, and bring wealth and diversity to local economies. Through this fund, we helped to finance a study for the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations looking into the feasibility of building a tourist resort on settlement land near Kathleen Lake. We're continuing to support the project with additional due diligence.

Through close working relationships with First Nations, I believe we can also build a strong economy that protects the environment, provides socio-economic benefits to Yukon communities and respects First Nation rights and interests. This year, the regional economic development fund helped to support a mining and energy conference run by the Yukon First Nation Chamber of Commerce.

We are also partnering with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in to help the First Nation increase its capacity to engage strategically with industry and Yukon government in relation to mineral industry activities within its traditional territory. There are significant mineral industry activities taking place within Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in traditional territory. We are committing up to \$300,000 over a three-year period to help Tr'ondëk

Hwëch'in maximize the benefits from these activities, which, in turn, will help boost the economy of the entire Yukon.

Moving on to Business and Industry Development, Economic Development will make a \$7.5-million O&M budget available to the branch this year. I will now outline some of the programs and funds covered by this budget.

The strategic industries development fund is one of the main tools used to boost the growth of our private sector. The fund will make \$800,000 available for projects related to research, innovation, commercialization, tourism, culture and natural resources. For instance, the fund is providing support to the Chu Níikwän Development Corporation for business and strategic planning and land development. This project identifies and addresses barriers so that Kwanlin Dün First Nation can generate revenue from its lands.

Economic Development has budgeted \$771,000 toward investor relations for this fiscal year, focusing on sectors such as natural resources, including mining. The Government of Yukon is raising their territory's profile through presentations to investors at the Vancouver Resource Investment Conference and the Prospector and Developers Association of Canada, also known as PDAC.

We also work with the industry partners to attract investment to Yukon and present a unified message. This year, we partnered with the Yukon Mining Alliance to bring investors to Yukon for a conference and to visit leading projects in mines. We will also support the Yukon Mining Alliance presence at a number of mineral investment attraction events in 2018. We look forward to working together with our industry partners as we continue to showcase Yukon's mineral potential in Canada and worldwide.

Bringing investment to Yukon is important, but talented people are the true drivers of our economy. This year, responsibility for immigration has moved from the Department of Education to Economic Development. Immigration from all corners of the globe continues to bring richness to our territory, both economically and socially. Transferring the immigration unit to Economic Development will help us to better support companies requiring skills and labour and support experienced professionals who want to work or set up businesses in Yukon.

The move makes sense for business but also for new Yukoners. For many immigrants, finding a job is central to becoming part of the community. A budget allocation of \$437,000 will allow our department to continue with popular immigration programs, such as the Yukon nominee program and the Yukon business nominee program. Many local businesses claim that they would not exist without the skilled staff who join them through the nominee program. The program allows Yukon employers to find foreign workers who have the training and experience needed in our local labour market.

The Yukon business nominee program is designed to attract and retain skilled international entrepreneurs who want to invest in an existing business, create a start-up or build partnerships in the current business environment. Such

programs contribute to the growth and diversification of our economy. We at Economic Development are proud to be taking the lead on immigration. This is not a new allocation, but a transfer from the Department of Education. You will also see these figures recorded in my esteemed colleague's budget.

Building or expanding a business is no easy task and Yukoners are looking for support in bringing their vision to life. Our Business and Industry Development branch can help small- and medium-sized enterprises to reach their full potential with direct financial assistance.

We also provide access to a network of non-governmental organizations and industry associations that can supply business development support and advice. To continue this important work, Economic Development will provide the Enterprise Development Services unit with a total transfer-payment budget of \$1.1 million.

In 2018-19, the department continues to partner with the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce to deliver the Yukon business development program. The program helps companies in a wide range of sectors to meet their full potential through expert advice and coaching. The Enterprise Development Services unit also runs the enterprise trade fund. The fund supports a range of businesses — for instance, in manufacturing, mining, culture, media and services. This year, we are committing \$360,000 to the fund. This money will help companies and media professionals in export-related operations to open new markets, develop their presence in existing markets and implement projects that develop business activities. For instance, they may choose to develop a marketing plan, attend a trade show or gain new skills to support the growth of their businesses.

Technology and communications are essential to a competitive and innovative economy. The Technology and Telecommunications Development directorate will continue to serve the territory with a transfer-payment budget of \$1.4 million this year. The directorate has been working to provide Yukoners with access to fast, affordable and reliable telecommunications infrastructure and services.

Digital connectivity is important, but to allow our economy to truly reach its potential, we need a space where business professionals can connect in person and exchange ideas. Existing projects that bring professionals together, such as (co)space and Yukonstruct, have been extremely successful and demand for such space continues to grow. That is why we are partnering with CanNor to fund a Yukon innovation hub. The hub will support the development of innovation and entrepreneurship through a physical location providing business assistance, collaboration, mentorship and networking opportunities. It will bring existing business support programs together in one location — programs such as the Canada business services centre, a service that helps entrepreneurs and businesses to navigate the resources and government services available to them. The mentorship and networking opportunities will also encourage the development of new programs that can address other business skills gaps and needs. Through this streamlined support, we expect the hub to

attract more start-ups and entrepreneurs and help our small businesses to grow. We are committing \$1.9 million in capital funding toward the construction of the Yukon innovation hub to make this vision a reality.

The Technology and Telecommunications Development directorate also sponsors the Yukon Innovation Prize, in partnership with Yukon College, to encourage a vibrant economy in which Yukoners deliver innovative products and services. This year's theme is "Social Entrepreneurship". Participants enter an innovative product or service that solves a social issue or helps people to live better lives. In total, \$100,000 will be awarded to innovators, helping to support our local talent and bring new products and services to the market.

Continuing on the theme of innovation, in 2018-19, Economic Development has budgeted \$835,000 for Cold Climate Innovation and Technology Innovation, managed through Yukon College. The programs provide funds and supports for companies as they move their ideas through research to commercialization. By promoting growth in specific industries, such as technology, telecommunications and media, we can encourage broader economic success across the territory.

In 2018-19, Economic Development has identified a \$819,000 transfer-payment budget for the Media Development unit. Between April 1, 2017, and January 8, 2018, Media Development approved 25 film and sound projects, with approximately \$1.2 million in funding. The investment has helped to expand economic opportunities for the industry in Yukon and beyond.

The unit provides direct funding to Music Yukon, Screen Production Yukon Association and the Yukon Film Society. We will be reviewing film funding and sound recording programs over the course of the year. We continue to work with Screen Production Yukon to develop the terms of reference for the funding review. This appraisal will support continued growth in market-driven media programs.

It is important to equip Yukon's content creators with skills, experience and the exposure they need to compete on a national and international stage. That's why, in the 2017-18 fiscal year, Media Development took six Yukon businesses to BreakOut West, a Canadian music festival and conference in Edmonton. Attendees had the opportunity to gain new skills through workshops, panels and presentations on industry topics. The festival also gave them exposure to record labels, festival organizers, venue managers and agents. Four Yukon acts showcased their talents at the event and two Yukoners were nominated for the Western Canadian Music Awards. We also funded a project enabling Yukon film producers to attend the European film market in Berlin this past fiscal year.

By helping our film and sound community to realize its business potential, we can grow jobs and open up new economic possibilities for Yukoners. We plan on continuing this good work in 2018-19. Finally, effective program delivery is essential for our fund and service users. Corporate Services will benefit from \$1.8 million to provide the leadership and

essential support needed to keep our programs running successfully.

In my mandate letter, I was tasked with developing a thriving, prosperous and diversified economy, one that provides well-defined benefits for all communities, First Nations and Yukon as a whole, while at the same time managing and safeguarding the environment. The budgets that I have set out today reflect this. Our operation and maintenance budget of \$16.8 million and capital budget of \$14.8 million will encourage job creation and economic diversification.

The work that we undertake using these funds will responsibly and measurably help to create the economic opportunities that Yukoners need to succeed.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will hand it over for questions.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I want to start by welcoming the officials and thanking them for all their hard work in providing support to the minister. It's good to see the deputy minister here again today.

I'll start my line of questioning right away here. I know we have had some discussion in the House about the diverse fibre project. We know that the budget is \$77.8 million. The figure of \$77.8 million seems to align closely with the cost of the northern route along the Dempster. Can the minister confirm if the northern route has been selected?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** The Government of Yukon understands the importance of a diverse fibre connection to support Yukon's commercial and business activities and to enable reliable delivery of other services important to Yukoners, such as health and education. Fibre connection outages have a costly impact on Yukon businesses and impact our ability to attract new business interests and investment, especially in the technology sector.

As Yukoners are well aware, we experience periodic Internet outages, with a more significant and impactful outage approximately once a year. However, the potential exists for catastrophic damage to the line — for example, from a forest fire or other natural disaster. This could result in a prolonged inability to repair the line, meaning that Yukon could be without Internet access for several days. Any prolonged interruption has significant, immediate and negative impacts on Yukon's business community. On an ongoing basis, the threat of service interruption raises significant issues of confidence for business owners and impacts Yukon's ability to fully participate in the expanding digital economy.

The diverse fibre line has been under development for a number of years now. Over the past 18 months, we have undertaken additional due diligence on the project, including seeking expressions of interest on both the northern and southern routes to further define opportunities.

We remain committed to ensuring fibre diversity in Yukon. The project continues to move forward and funding has been included in the budget for the 2018-19 fiscal year, as the member opposite has identified. Work is underway to finalize some project details, including discussions with the federal government.

We look forward to announcing further information in the near future, once this work is complete.

Reliable and stable Internet access is crucial to our emerging innovation and knowledge economy. Today, I know this would be an anomaly within our budget from a standpoint of a dollar figure. It makes complete sense that it would garner immense attention. We have had opportunities within the Legislative Assembly to discuss this.

Certainly, it has probably been, to some extent, inappropriately frustrating for the opposition and for others — that we have not been able to speak in detail about this project — but what we're trying to do is respect our bilateral agreements and relationships that we have with our partners. We believe that, within the next four to eight weeks, we should be in a position to openly define the route that has been chosen and, in detail, explain the model that has been put forward.

I believe that the members opposite have probably come to understand that, by going further than that at this point, it would be disrespectful to our partners. Yes, it has been stated — that there is a route. We are waiting to close up the final bits of work, and from there we will be able to have a fulsome conversation and, at that time, be open and ready to answer any other questions that would come from the detailed information that we would be providing and that would be forthcoming.

**Mr. Istchenko:** From the minister's answer, I was going to ask about timelines. It sounds like the project will be announced — and he can correct me if I'm wrong — in four to six weeks. I am just wondering then, for this year's construction season, if there has been any work on YESAA and if any construction will begin this year.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Really, at this point, I anticipate that as long as our partners can complete — and us, we can complete our work and agreements — I would like to see that and anticipate that work completed over the next couple months, and that would be my hope at this point. The early work that needs to be completed focuses on the preparation of documentation and planning for assessment. It takes into consideration the conversations that need to be had with impacted parties and then really taking a look at the overall requirements that have to be identified and taken into account. Really, at this point, I see it as project open and from a project management perspective — project open — so really, that front end is where a tremendous amount of total percentage of work that would be completed in a project such as this. I would be looking for us to do the phase 1 work this year — work that is just as important as laying fibre really at the end of it — making sure we get it right and that we have those good conversations with our partners, but also that we do the appropriate planning so that we can get this project right.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I thank the minister for that. The minister spoke about partners, so I guess I would ponder a question if there are third party contributions to this project. Also, last year the government put out I believe two RFQs, one for the Skagway and one for the Dempster. I'm just

wondering what the results of that exercise were and how do they play into what we're discussing today.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Just to be clear, I am going to get the member opposite just to repeat the question one more time.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I'm just wondering if, when the minister talks partners, that means that there will be third party contributions to this project. Then I asked also about — last year, the government put out two RFQs, one for Skagway and one for the Dempster. I just wonder how they play into this exercise or what we're discussing here today.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** There will be third-party contribution and both processes that we undertook helped us define a final decision, so absolutely — both the work that we did on the early work to define direction — that work that we undertook certainly was effective in defining a final decision, so yes, third party and yes, it did help. We used that as a tool to make a final decision.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I thank the minister for that. Last April, the minister and I were discussing foreign investment in the territory. I want to quote the minister: "Certainly there is going to be foreign investment that comes in and there is a place for government and then there is a place where government has to stand back and let private business grow as it should. There are some interesting infrastructure projects that we will have discussions about in the Legislative Assembly and that will potentially have massive impact — good projects. Certainly the people who are coming to the table at the early stage are foreign investors. We are going to have to have those challenging discussions."

Would the minister be able to elaborate a bit further on this? What projects are foreign investors currently looking at? Has the minister had any discussions with representatives of other countries regarding our investment rules in the territory when it comes to investment in the Yukon?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** At this point in time, when I look at the overall investment portfolio in Yukon, if I look at the mineral sector, I would say that there is the potential for two types of investment when it comes from foreign investors. I might be using the wrong terminology. I would say there is investment potential by individuals or high-net worth individuals or trusts, but more independent type of investment. The interest of that investment has truly been spurred on mostly by the mining sector — the leaders in the mining sector reaching out to us as a government and requesting that we help to garner those relationships with Yukon.

That would be more looking at western European high-net worth individuals who would really have an interest in investing in Yukon, either in specific projects or in a broader sense.

Over and above that, when you talk about country-specific — for us, I think, the only countries in the short term that I have had discussions with have been two separate events I attended at the PDAC — which is the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada. One was China Mining, which I attended, taking into consideration what I have been taught here in the Assembly from both the Third Party and the opposition about the history of foreign investment. We took

that as an opportunity to specifically touch upon the importance of respectful relationships with all individuals in our community and to really focus on the values and value proposition that we're putting forward for anyone who wants to do work in the territory.

We felt it was as much an opportunity to talk about the great opportunity and potential in the Yukon as a chance to educate the foreign representation, or the international representation, that was there.

We also had a discussion with — we were requested to meet with the minister of mining from India. That particular individual met with ministers of mining from across the north — I know my counterpart in Northwest Territories. I saw that potentially as an opportunity for companies in the Yukon to look at outward bound technical contracts.

The industry there is about \$1.6 billion per year — that is the expenditure — and the government undertakes most of the geological survey work and a lot of the exploration work. With that in mind, there was an interest that we saw as an opportunity — when you think about the great companies in Yukon — whether it be some of that early-stage exploration such as GroundTruth or Archer Cathro, or our prospecting community — or above that, when you think about companies like Kluane Drilling with their support from Quantum Machine Works or Midnight Sun or New Age or the many other amazing companies that exist in Yukon, would there be an opportunity to export our expertise and talent?

Within that, we had a brief meeting with the minister and his counterparts and then we reached out to representatives from the Yukon business sector specifically in that technical expertise area in mining and mineral development, and we tried to provide them with an opportunity to meet with the representatives from the other countries. For the most part, that has been the conversation.

That doesn't mean that there haven't been other interested parties. We have had others reach out — there have been times where the members from the Chinese consulate have come here and the Japanese consulate — but really focusing more on tourism. Those conversations didn't focus on mining. Really, when you think about this internationally, these are the things you have to take into consideration.

When you think about what is happening in Yukon now concerning Kudz Ze Kayah and when you think about how Gold Corp. funds their projects, when you think about Victoria Gold, when you think about most of the projects in Yukon, if you trace dollars, inevitably there will be an international fingerprint and footprint on those dollars to some extent. Whether it is coming from hedge funds or whether it is coming from a personal trust — I guess I would say that although individuals may not know that, there is international money at all times that is flowing within our economy and certainly helping to drive what we see now.

When it comes to infrastructure projects at this time and when I think about the bigger projects that are in front of us, there could be interest, and there certainly is always interest — primarily American — where there are a lot of dollars right now that belong to pension funds and to large trusts where

people are looking to invest in large infrastructure projects because they feel comfortable in that sort of blue chip, government-used infrastructure. What you are seeing is money being allocated from the Canadian Pension Plan and teachers' pension plan to different contractors, for lack of a better term — investment houses — and then private equity players who are then searching across North America and looking for those opportunities.

That is really what I was getting at. You can look at these projects and figure out ways to have bilateral relationships with the Canadian government and use those opportunities, tools and funds to build new infrastructure like you see in many jurisdictions now — primarily Northwest Territories, I guess, where at least their hospital right now is P3. There are other players like that who are going down that route.

Some of those stories are pleasant and some of those stories have a lot of challenges with them. Going back to those original comments, those are the tough decisions. If you want to have other players at the table, you have to take into consideration the risk that comes along with that, and the challenges as well as the opportunities.

**Mr. Istchenko:** This begs a couple more questions.

In some of these meetings, were there any concerns raised about our current rules on how we do business, basically, and were any of these governments or different countries looking for changes? It also begs the question of whether the minister is planning on any trade missions. He spoke about China, India, and Japan. Is there is anything like that in the future?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** In conversations that I have been party to, there has been no request for changes in how we operate. Our approach — we tend to take these interactions as an opportunity to politely educate. But even the groups that I have identified — the sophistication of these entities and the due diligence that they do — they have a very good understanding in many cases. Previously — I know it has been shared with me that there have been some awkward or challenging conversations concerning requests for amendments to rules previously. I haven't experienced that over the last 16 or 17 months. They have been pretty straightforward conversations in that light.

First and foremost, when it comes to trade missions — no. At this particular time, personally, when I look at the work that we did over the last year, the schedules of FPTs, concerning the responsibilities that I have, leads to — and I think those are important meetings and I think my colleagues across the way would say that there is value in those meetings. They are important.

I did attend PNWER last year. It was about five days long. I felt that there were some good elements there, but I will not be attending this year. We don't have, at this particular time, any scheduled international travel — really, I don't think any international travel at all.

Last year, I also attended the precious metals show in Colorado. We have some people attending both of those events, but I will not be and, at this point, I don't believe there is any international travel. It's mostly regional in Canada, and one trip — the energy and mines ministers meeting this year.

Probably our furthest trip this year is to Iqaluit. That's not to say that there wouldn't be, in the next number of years, a strategic approach to looking at some opportunities. I think that probably something that tends to come up often is the fact that, when you look at the tourism opportunity in the Asia market, there is truly some great upside, but certainly I haven't, in my role as Economic Development minister, booked any travel.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I thank the minister for that. I guess this segues into — the minister was talking about bilateral negotiations. I'm curious about the status of the negotiations with NAFTA — how they're going — and I guess one of the other things is that the Yukon had indicated to Canada that they wanted certain things changed in the agreement or that certain things are protected in the agreement, so can the minister give the House a bit of an update on that also please?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Maybe just before I start on this one, I would like to take the opportunity to thank our director of policy, planning and communications, Barb Dunlop, who has been of great help and support on this file. I would also like to thank our senior policy team of Christian Nordin, Currie Dixon, Kevin Hannam, Aletta Leitch and also our senior economic research analyst Mary Devlin and also I would like to thank Caroline Derkatch for her help in always preparing me here. We have a great, very talented group of people in the department.

We have had one contract in place and it's a longstanding contract for expertise on the trade file, but what we've been doing is ensuring that the individuals who are in the department — for the most part, each one of our key individuals on that team has taken on specific trade files. On the NAFTA file — just in response — in partnership with other provinces and territories, we have provided input to Canada on the *North American Free Trade Agreement* negotiations. We have provided representation at all negotiating rounds to address issues of significance to Yukoners, including trade and indigenous peoples, investment, small- and medium-sized enterprises — SMEs — and government procurement.

We are continuing to engage with Canada on an even more regular basis over the last month as the pace of negotiations has increased. We are working to ensure that Yukon's reservations secured under other international trade agreements are protected in a modernized NAFTA.

I will maybe just add as well that we have been, I think, quite responsive and respectful to the other members of the Assembly who have provided guidance and requests. I know that the Member for Kluane — there have been a couple of things that certainly have been tabled concerning Shakwak, which we still take as a very important file, but from time to time we may not get to discuss it. The team doesn't get to discuss it there, but certainly it is something we keep on our radar.

Also, most appropriately, a big concern that the member opposite at another point touched upon was the Porcupine caribou herd. We have talked about that as well, though not so much on this file table, and even when there were discussions

from General Andrew Leslie, who had an opportunity to sit with the chamber of mines, there was some concern about how these — I think it was an exception about export and how that would play in Skagway and the infrastructure in Skagway. We have always followed up on all of those things with complete respect, and certainly we will take that direction.

I hope we have done a good job of ensuring that we have briefed, when we can, on this topic. It has been something where, for the most part, I think — and the members opposite are aware — you can imagine — I will say politely — an amazing ride for anybody who has been at these meetings and watching what is happening. I feel that we could have a promising next couple of months. That is what I am getting from the team. Certainly, we continue to stay true and stand behind some of the specific pieces that we wanted to see going forward. Whether we will get the traction that we hope on some of those chapters is yet to be seen, but certainly we continue to take any opportunity we can to voice that.

Once again, thanks to the team. I am appreciative of the fact that we now have a group of people — partially, in closing, what we are trying to do is ensure that, over time, we have the negotiation capacity in-house among a number of very bright individuals who can then ensure that from time to time they can take that lead, and we don't always have to defer to an external contractor.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I thank the minister for that. I do understand that probably some of the negotiation stuff is probably confidential, but I would hope that once things come to fruition and we see this finished, we could have a detailed copy of what was done.

Moving on, can the minister confirm the rate of GDP growth in the year 2016 please?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I don't have it in front of me, but I can certainly come back to the Assembly and provide the GDP for 2016 — we are waiting on 2017— and the forecast for the member going forward. That is not a problem — absolutely.

**Mr. Istchenko:** With the adoption of the *Yukon Biomass Energy Strategy* in 2016, plans were made to develop the biomass energy sector in the Yukon. It sounds like a good opportunity for economic diversification in the territory. I agree 100 percent with that. Can the minister provide us with some more detail on the development of biomass in the territory and the future opportunities that might exist?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** That is certainly a multi-faceted conversation. First and foremost, let me say that I agree with the member opposite. I think there is a tremendous opportunity. Our government believes there is a tremendous opportunity. We are committed to using the tools that we have available to us to ensure that we support municipalities, development corporations, community groups — whoever feels that they want to take on those new opportunities in the Yukon.

I want to briefly touch on — because I want to be respectful of the question — outside of Economic Development, I want to thank the Forestry branch. Part of what has to happen here first and foremost is that if we are not

going to look at the import of product to run our biomass, we are inevitably trying to have a completely grassroots, holistic approach to this, which would take into consideration a chip-feed and the work that's being done by the branch in Energy, Mines and Resources in Haines Junction, in Dawson, in southeast Yukon or in the Teslin area. It's extremely important as a starting point.

Secondly, we're working with our partners inside government to ensure we can support some of the communities that are moving forward very quickly, which is Teslin — we have talked about it here — but also continuing to look at how we're going to support biomass in the Watson Lake area and potentially in Haines Junction.

When we talked yesterday — when the Yukon Development Corporation witnesses were here and then, previous to that, we had that long exchange and an opportunity to talk about the IREI fund, which is the \$1.5 million annually in the Yukon Development Corporation budget — we see that as some of the money that can be used to help plan and support the work. That's where we see one of the main avenues.

We're hoping we can see a greater magnitude of funds available to us through infrastructure funds that are being negotiated — we have almost finished that process — with the federal government. There is other regulatory work we're still undertaking. I hope that is helpful in some sense.

When I go back to the CDF list, I will just touch on it quickly. I believe we had at least one of our projects under the community development fund — yes, a small-scale primary sawmill and district biomass heating unit. In our previous year, there was \$150,000 from the department that was provided. We'll do a better job at sharing this information.

We're pretty excited. Last year, we undertook a project with a local business person, where we had the Agriculture branch team up with Economic Development to help secure infrastructure. What we were actually undertaking was using biomass and trying to support the great work of some individuals from the Kluane riding who are really trailblazing when it comes to chip production and providing an opportunity for chips from the Kluane region to come into Whitehorse to fuel biomass, which would then, in turn, provide a heat source for greenhouse infrastructure, where we would be producing food 12 months of the year. We also negotiated within that so that a portion of the food that was produced through that new process would be allocated to the food bank, and we also integrated into that an educational component, so Yukon College could have students — I think it was up to six students per session per year — who would then have the opportunity.

In the communities, we are looking at biomass and a more full-scale approach to even food production and food security. All of these pieces are moving at the same time, but we are certainly looking toward putting dollars behind some of these projects on the capital expenditure side so they can get off the ground.

I think you are absolutely correct — if we do this right and we have each portion or each block that we need moving

in the right direction and with the right motivation and plan, we can really impact our economy in the right way.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I thank the minister for that.

The minister talked about the community development fund, which is one of the well-subscribed funding mechanisms of Economic Development. Not only do the projects brought forward and funded through CDF create a wealth of economic benefits within Yukon, they also tend to create social benefits, build or upgrade infrastructure and encourage community involvement by allowing not-for-profits, community associations, other businesses, municipalities and First Nation governments the opportunity to access this funding for projects that they may otherwise not be able to undertake. It is a wonderful way to see our communities flourish, and I have sure seen it in the riding of Kluane over the years.

There was an increase from 2016-17 to 2017-18 of \$132,000 in the CDF. This year, however, we saw a decrease from last year of \$16,000. Can the minister please comment on the reason for the decrease of the CDF in this budget?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Mr. Chair, we have kept a consistent CDF community development budget; it hasn't changed. Sometimes, depending on how we allocate dollars, potentially — I will go back here quickly. Just conferring, I believe it is \$2.95 million usually, and we are sticking with the same budget that we have had for the last number of years.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I thank the minister for that. Sticking with funding, there has been a decrease since the 2016-17 funding year to the strategic industries development fund. I am wondering if the minister could elaborate on this fund decrease and provide a bit more information on this fund. Maybe it is because it is not fully subscribed or the number of applicants has gone down since 2016-17.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I am just going to get the member opposite to repeat that. I didn't see that there was a decrease in our allocation once again, but I may be missing something and I certainly can confer. I know that there are some areas that we have increased funding but certainly I haven't seen that. I'll leave that.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I believe it's on page 7-12 of the budget.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Once again, Mr. Chair, I think the actual expenditure previously would have been over the \$800,000, but there has been no change in our budget allocation for that specific fund.

**Mr. Istchenko:** It had changed from \$959,000 that year to \$800,000. I understand.

Moving on, with respect to the movement of the Immigration unit from the Department of Education to the Business and Industry Development branch in Economic Development, can the minister confirm how the transition has been so far and whether there are any changes anticipated — like funding or personnel increases?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I will just maybe take this quick opportunity to talk a little bit about that change. First of all, the member opposite asked about the transition. We talked about it in our preamble. Transferring the Immigration unit to Economic Development will allow immigration programs to

better support the development and diversification of Yukon's economy. We recognize that attracting enough skilled and qualified people to meet the territory's labour market needs is essential for sustainable economic development.

We are working to support Yukon small businesses, and supporting the Yukon business nominee program will allow us to attract experienced business people wanting to start a business and become permanent residents of Yukon.

The Yukon nominee program, the Yukon business nominee program and the Yukon nominee express entry program are delivered in partnership with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, which views these as economic programs. The Department of Economic Development has previous experience managing the Yukon business nominee program. The Department of Economic Development is best positioned to ensure that these programs are coordinated with Yukon's goals of broadening our economic base, building local capacity and enhancing the competitiveness of Yukon's businesses. We want to ensure that we use immigration as a tool for economic growth.

There have been no changes in capacity or personnel capacity. Essentially, we have transferred over the existing budget and personnel to the department. Other than that, there have been no significant changes at this time.

**Mr. Istchenko:** It sounds like things are going well — that's good. Can the minister let us know how much of an envelope has been set aside for the business incentive program this year?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** There has been \$1,058,000 allotted for the business incentive program this year.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I thank the minister for that. The mining sector continues to be a significant component of the Yukon's economy, despite its challenges over the last few years. From a tourism perspective, a particularly helpful driver to the economic value of film activity and mining together has been the funding of the reality mining television programs, such as *Gold Rush*. That series in particular has exposed people around the globe to mining life in the Yukon and been a significant contributor to Yukon's GDP and employment numbers. The economic impacts have been significant to Dawson City. The production was estimated to have contributed more than \$1 million in GDP and supported the equivalent of 51 jobs just in the 2014 season alone. Between 2012 and 2014 — over these seasons — *Gold Rush* has estimated to have contributed over \$4.9 million to Yukon's GDP and supported the equivalent of just under 100 full-time jobs. This is extremely helpful to the industry and to the territory as a whole.

Can the minister confirm what support there is, and that this support will continue and is ongoing to the programs and the supports to the film industry in the Yukon, including shows such as *Gold Rush*?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** We continue to support the Raw TV production. We take into consideration the positive impacts that it has on our industry and our economy, and we will continue to support this program.

Certainty is quite important when you take into consideration these programs. If you look at jurisdictional scans from British Columbia to Ontario to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in the film sector, it is important when you are funding these programs that, if you want to be a destination for spending by production houses from Outside, or even being able to shoot feature films, you ensure that the programs that you have in place are consistent.

This particular program has led to some impacts and some challenges too. For anybody who happens to have the Economic Development portfolio and the Energy, Mines and Resources portfolio, there is always interesting dialogue with different individuals whom I represent in this type of work. It has certainly been spectacular in its ratings from an international perspective. I know I have a meeting in the short run with the team that will be in Whitehorse for further dialogue. I think what is more exciting when you talk about film — the example I would give is that there is a tremendous amount of local talent. I see that as the important way forward.

There are people who have worked on Raw TV on their project and then have in turn built their skills and capacity, but they are now doing their own independent work, so that is really where it is coming from when you see the accolades that this territory is getting from the film industry. It is coming from locals who have taken on their own projects. They are starting to produce; they are at Banff Mountain Film Festival and they are at independent film festivals. That is why we touched upon — last year was almost a banner year for us in the amount of projects that were supported through the media team. That seems to be really where I think we can put our work.

From my experience working in this industry, I would say that when a feature comes to Whitehorse and you have that talent pool — and I think that most people would be in agreement, whether it is VI or other organizations, that when you have that chance to work with top-notch key grips and your PAs get on the site and see the conduct, protocol and safety elements on some of these bigger films that are coming — I'm talking about films that come in and shoot for 15 or 20 days and then go to British Columbia or Alberta — it is still important to have programs — to have those productions come in. We have had some interest and we hope to be able to see some of that interest move into real investment dollars over the next year or two from fairly significant production houses.

I think if you speak with most people in the industry, they are really excited about the independent industry here — Yukoners making great content. At the same time, we will continue to be open for business for companies that want to come in, whether they want to shoot children's movies or they want to shoot different content, which could be web-based content or traditional film content. There is exciting opportunity, but you also have to have the right programs in place and you have to listen keenly to industry, which is part of what we're doing as well. We're just about to undertake an

extensive conversation with the industry and take their advice on how we can become more competitive here in the Yukon.

**Chair:** Do members wish to take a brief recess?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

#### *Recess*

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

The matter before the Committee is Vote 7, Department of Economic Development in Bill No. 206, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

**Mr. Istchenko:** Welcome back everyone. The previous question I asked before we went on break — I highlighted the GDP and a little bit of the economic impacts and the benefits. I just have another question for the minister.

There is another show that is on a different channel — National Geographic — and it is *Dr. Oakley, Yukon Vet*. I have seen the definite economic benefits in the riding at Kluane and I think we have seen this, so I'm just wondering if the department has had any opportunity to look at that side of the economic values of that — if they have done any work on that. Also, has the minister had an opportunity to have a conversation with the stars of the show and/or the film company?

I might add that it's different from the mining industry. This show really does show the beauty that we have in the Yukon and the animals. I believe that the Department of Environment could be working better with the show because there were a lot of successes in some of our species of animals that we should be proud of across the world, but it does show that other side of the Yukon and I think it's a great opportunity. I have heard of a lot of people travelling the north Alaska Highway who have decided to come because they have seen that. I will leave it there.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Just in starting, before I answer the question, as we're talking about the work of the media development unit, I just want to take an opportunity to thank Iris Merritt, our manager, and Andrew Seymour, our media officer, and also Catherine Millar, our sound media officer, for their work in supporting all of these programs. I have to say that I am going to endeavour to get specific economic impact numbers from the show to the area, so I will work with the department to get a production of impact. I know that we have some standard impact numbers that we can look at.

I haven't talked to the stars in the context of the show. I haven't talked to them specifically about their experience with the show. I would say that my — but I certainly could reach out. Nothing against the star of the show, but my favourite episode is when the husband of the star and his daughters have an axe-throwing competition in the Kluane region — that's my favourite episode. I see it does a great job of presenting the beauty of the Kluane region and all of Yukon and it's a great show with a great group of people who are amazing



Yukoners. What an opportunity in a world where you don't have the multitude of talents that they have — both mom and dad and the children — so yes, absolutely; I'm in agreement.

What a great way to showcase all the good things concerning the Yukon, but I will endeavour to get the economic impact numbers and do a bit more research on what is happening exactly with that program right now and what the future is as it pertains to Yukon with the shooting of that.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I thank the minister for that. Axe-throwing has been a competition with the father of that show and me since we were about this big, I would gather.

During the election, the Premier promised to undertake a red tape review of the regulatory burden facing Yukon businesses. Can the minister let us know where the government is on this commitment?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** We are working with our provincial and territorial counterparts to harmonize and reduce regulatory burden through the implementation of the *Canadian Free Trade Agreement*. We are working with other Canadian jurisdictions to design and implement an online portal that will provide simplified access to information about business permits, licences and other requirements needed by Yukoners to establish, operate and grow their businesses.

We know that other departments are also working on this issue, including our partners in Community Services who have launched improvements to the Yukon corporate online registry to enhance e-services for Yukoners and Yukon businesses. We believe that minimizing regulatory burden and streamlining requirements for business is a key enabler for competitiveness and we will continue to collaborate with relevant partners, including the CFIB, on tackling red tape.

The Department of Economic Development's strategic plan that was in place upon taking on this role is coming to an end. We are now in a position to work with our department and stakeholders to define the path forward. First and foremost, I want to work with our department and the key individuals who have been part of that department for a very long time to endeavour to look at our path forward.

Part of those discussions that I will be having is: How do we look at red tape reduction? My discussions with the deputy minister have touched upon some other jurisdictions that did good work previously. Our neighbours to the south under the previous government in British Columbia really focused on red tape reduction, and we have talked about it — in looking at some of that work. Also, my colleagues will be reviewing the WCB and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* as well — to modernize. These are all key undertakings to ensure that we reduce red tape.

I have had some good discussions with the leadership at the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce. We have a number of initiatives that we are working on with the Yukon Chamber of Commerce as well.

This comes up a lot because of the CFIB. I think that this year, certainly our grade — and the grade has been pretty consistent over the last number of years in Yukon and it has been a bit of a challenge.

We have had some discussions with some of their previous principals who have now moved on. They focus on a specific way of moving on regulation and reduction when something is added. We spoke with them about some of the changes that we have made and some of the government policy that we felt streamlined processes a bit and that didn't seem to move the dial, but that doesn't mean we're not going to continue to work on this.

It is identified in my mandate letter. It talks about working with the Minister of Community Services to identify and work to remove regulatory and service impediments to competitiveness.

So it is key. It will be along the lines of how it pertains to the resource industry, to tourism, to a number of things. It's always a challenge. Part of what I see as the role of the Minister of Economic Development is to take that perspective of reducing red tape to the table every time they have the opportunity, and to question any new changes in regulation and legislation and ensure you have that lens.

I think that's the appropriate way to approach that. I'll leave it at that, Mr. Chair.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I thank the minister for that. I believe that this Thursday, the Supreme Court will hand down a historic decision regarding trade barriers between the provinces and territories. It's called the Comeau case, regarding whether or not government can prevent or limit the import of alcohol across provincial and territorial borders.

Can the minister let us know how this case affects the Yukon, and if the government has given any interventions into the case? If not, maybe the minister can elaborate on why not; if yes, maybe he could let us know what those interventions were.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Yes, I'm aware of the case. I know it's coming to a conclusion. We felt from our perspective — I was briefed on it early on — that it was not in our best interest at that particular time to intervene on the Supreme Court case.

I can get back to the Assembly with broader information on it. The impacts of the case and how we move forward, or how it affects us, are yet to be seen. My experience to date has been, on any of these files, that you would wait until the conclusion of the case and then you would have an opportunity to have a broader discussion on that case.

Other than that, it's a very interesting case. The magnitude of the decision is quite interesting. I know that the Minister of Justice and I have had an opportunity to have at least one discussion with some of the individuals who are involved around it.

There is confidentiality of the individuals who are representing or are part of that process — information that can't be shared with us, but it is interesting. The most interesting part is, I think, that the lawyer who is representing the industry in the case has a very strong relationship to the Yukon — was here in the Yukon visiting not too long ago. His roots go back to the gold rush. I know that it was shared through the Member for Copperbelt South and me — through our relationship with the Governor General's Canadian Leadership Conference. He was a member of that as well and

had a fond story about how his great-great-grandfather, during the gold rush in Dawson City in his placer miner days, had to hide in a moose to get out of the cold weather and then found himself frozen in that moose after he burrowed into its belly. He then had to wait for two days for the weather to warm up and crawl out of that moose. That is in their family history.

That is all I know about the Comeau case at this point in time, but I will certainly endeavour to get some more information for the Member for Kluane.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I thank the minister for that. It makes me wish that I had moose meat. I love moose meat.

Earlier, we talked about trade missions and I had asked about China, India and maybe Japan, and the minister had given me a bit of an answer on that. I wanted to delve down a little bit more into investment forums, trade shows and conferences. I know he had spoken a little about PNWER, but I'm just wondering if any of these conferences — if there are any plans for the minister to be going to any of these. It does encourage private sector growth and it attracts foreign direct investment, and that is critical to the growth of the Yukon resource sector. We have seen it over the years. I am just wondering if the minister can comment on some of these other ones. Also, just to add to it, are there any specific projects that the government will be promoting at any of these forums?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Since we're on the topic of engagement in investment attraction, which is really also focused on some of the work that we do — from a standpoint of communications, I would like to take the opportunity to thank our communications manager, Shona Mostyn, our communications advisor, Jason St. Leger, our communications advisor Amelie Quirke-Tomlins. Also, I want to wish Juliann Fraser good luck in her new role with the Council of Yukon First Nations. It is great to have Lily Gontard on board as our marketing specialist. I had an opportunity to work with her in her role at Parks Canada — and what a great addition to our team.

The first thing we tried to do when it came to this investment attraction process was to look at some of the standard schedules that many individuals go to, and then try to see if there were ways to streamline our activity or look at other opportunities that may exist. First of all, our work has been hand in hand between Energy, Mines and Resources and Economic Development in the sense of defining or identifying some of these platforms.

This year, we did attend the Roundup conference in Vancouver and, from there, moved on to attend the PDAC conference in Toronto. We will endeavour to do at least one or more trips to Toronto over the next year, where we will do what we did in that sense last year — to have conversations with the investment community and have opportunities for our First Nation partners to talk about their perspective on investments. I know that we are working right now with the Yukon Chamber of Mines and the Yukon Mining Alliance to try to do a day in June when essentially the three groups come together with Economic Development and we have an afternoon of showcasing the Yukon Mining Alliance members to the investment industry.

I know the questions were specific about what I was attending, but I think that it is important to note that conferences, such as the precious metals show, which the previous government attended — and many find it was a valuable show — although I may not be attending that conference, but others in government from our team will be. We have some key people right now. Coming up, we have the London mining show. That is not something that fit with the schedule of the Legislative Assembly, but we have the Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and one of our key individuals from Economic Development who will be attending, as well as other industry individuals.

That is what we are looking at now. Last year, Energy, Mines and Resources sent individuals to a couple of other shows, or opportunities. There was one, I believe, in Alaska and other one in Reno, Nevada. In both cases, it was the same staff who would attend the Roundup conference or PDAC, doing some really due diligence at those conferences to see if they were of great value.

Some of the opportunities change from time to time, and how you want to approach investment. We are going to continue. We do have some of our team — some of our ministers — who will be going on the Canada-China Year of Tourism, the mission to Beijing in June. That is stuff that I touched on — not myself, but the Minister of Tourism and Culture. That has really worked well — and I think my colleagues across the way would agree. The YMA's work on investment attraction continues to be of real interest across the globe.

Of course, Dawson City will be a hub of activity in the third week of June this year. We have great support from our caucus, Cabinet and industry. We will be in Dawson for a couple of days and then, of course, there will be some site tours. That is something else. What we have tried to do from the start — year one — was to really get out there and ensure that everybody who we sat with — whether it was an investment analyst or a major that now had a footprint in the Yukon, or an investment house or a fund — was to tell them that if they really wanted to understand the opportunity, they should come to Geoscience.

Last year, we tried to ensure that our department, as well as the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, took dollars that would normally be spent outside the Yukon at Roundup and diverted those numbers. We reduced our budget for Roundup by almost 45 percent or something like that. We almost cut it in half because we believe it's better to take those dollars and work with the Chamber of Mines to ensure that Geoscience is as impactful as it can be.

Geoscience had record numbers last year, I believe, in trade show participation, and we have told everybody that, if they want to be working in the Yukon, they should come and take part in that activity. It's a special place. We want to draw people and attract investment that way.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I had a couple more questions, but I think I'll wait for another time. I want to thank the officials for being here today and the minister for his answers. I look

forward to growth in the economy of the Yukon, and the Department of Economic Development being part of that.

I'll turn the floor over to the Third Party.

**Ms. Hanson:** I thank my colleague from Kluane and welcome the officials here today, and I again thank them for the briefing that they did provide and for the background material, including the organization chart, which we do appreciate.

I will probably go back to a couple of areas, but my questions will focus on perhaps a slightly different angle than my colleague's did.

If we could look at the area of business and industry development, the minister spoke to that and I have some specific questions with respect to the innovation hub.

Could the minister provide a cost breakdown — so we have \$1.9 million for a capital investment here. My understanding is there will be some Economic Development staff relocating to the hub. If that's not correct, maybe he can correct me or, if it is true, maybe he can confirm that and the number of FTEs that may be located there.

What is the time frame in terms of the investment by Yukon government in the innovation hub, and is there an evaluation framework that has been established to determine whether this is an ongoing investment or not by Yukon? \$1,900,000 — if he can just reaffirm if that's entirely from Canada or if a portion of that is from Yukon.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Just to start, we wouldn't have the opportunity to have the innovation hub in place if it wasn't for Steve Sorochan, our director of technology, and Jason Rayner as senior business advisor were instrumental in this work — so I think that's key.

I hope I don't miss anything on this one in particular.

So the \$1.9 million that we have identified is Yukon government money. That's not flow-through from the federal government. I believe the federal government's contribution is \$1.6 million for a total of \$3.5 million. The TPA end date is October 31. I believe that we understand from the (co)space lead team that the majority of the work is to be completed by summer's end, but it might go later than that. We don't have any FTEs from Economic Development moving into that space. That doesn't mean that, as a team at Economic Development, we're not going to have a discussion with some of our key people — like our director of human resources Charmaine Cheung or our human resources consultant Pam Lattin or our administrative assistant Catherine Millar or Donna Widdis — but we will be looking at how we can ensure that Economic Development has a better reach to the community. If that means that some of our staff from time to time or areas within our department are there, that's a possibility, but certainly, at this time, we haven't made that decision. Also, I just want to take a quick moment to recognize Mr. Steve Rose, a long-time ADM in our department who is with us today watching down, ensuring that we don't get anything wrong in his first year in retirement as we present our budget.

**Ms. Hanson:** I'm not sure the minister answered my question. I got the cost breakdown — I get that between the

feds and Yukon. I can't believe that it's only in place until October; so is it a multi-year arrangement for the hub? I didn't get that from what he said. Is there an evaluation framework to determine whether or not Yukon will continue to invest in the hub?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** It's a one-time capital contribution. It's not go-forward O&M.

**Ms. Hanson:** Just to confirm and then I will ask another question — it will be a short answer on this one. There were no other contributions then from the Yukon government toward the hub, other than what would nominally have gone through (co)space and YuKconstruct, which are currently funded separately — and they'll continue to receive their separate funding, I would imagine.

So while we're on the same area on this page of the budget, the minister had spoken a bit about the issues associated with ultimately making an announcement on the fibre optic decision — whichever decision has been made — to be announced. I just want to know — there are only two public documents on the Economic Development website and one is dated 2014; one is dated 2015. The minister made reference to other studies that had been done and surely there must have been something else in the interim to inform the next steps.

Is there nothing else that is public on the Government of Yukon website with respect to further elaboration? What we have learned since 2014-15 is that there have been substantial discussions with folks doing research in terms of discontinuous permafrost and the impact with respect to the northern route, so surely there must be that kind of information. Is it not available for people to be able to get a sense of this, whenever the announcement is made — to have a backdrop as to what they are?

The other studies were fairly comprehensive, but they didn't touch on — at least the northern one didn't — the discontinuous permafrost, and the southern route didn't talk about some of the real geographic challenges that will face that route as well. There are different challenges for both routes; I am wondering why we don't see anything else on the website.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I have to state for the House that I believe that the Third Party had requested information early on in this Sitting from me concerning some documentation and reports. Some of the information that was commissioned over the last 16 months helped with some of this decision-making process. I know that there are a couple of studies — the older studies — that were in place, but we did certainly commission more work, so I will endeavour to get that to the Leader of the Third Party or make it available to the Assembly. I apologize; I thought that had taken place already.

**Ms. Hanson:** I thank the minister.

I was really happy to hear the minister's comments with respect to the idea that if you had economic opportunities or activities occurring in a hub that forced public servants to move out of their blue palace on whatever street it is over there, that this might happen. That leads me to ask the question, which has been and will continue to be a perennial

question for the Minister of Economic Development — when I look at the org chart and I see that there are six personnel associated with Regional Economic Development, the question is: Which of those six or how many of those six FTEs are located in regions of the Yukon? The same as we want people to be caught up in the viscera of where this exciting economic activity is going in the tech world, there are also the issues associated with — I'm excluding here the support that may have been provided to the chapter 22 economic development plan of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in — I have a second question on that.

It is my understanding that the chapter 22 plan came to an end on March 31. It took a very long time to get done. It was finally published very, very late — but it is there — and my understanding is that it had an ending, a sunset.

What is the next step with that? What plans are there? We have an economic development conference and the conversation going on in Watson Lake — southeast Yukon — huge opportunities and huge potential. I am sure the minister has heard this as well as the Premier — every time I have travelled around the territory, in every community, I have been told that we used to have a regional presence for Tourism and Culture or Economic Development. It makes a difference if you are on the ground and listening, getting the sense of the pulse and the issues that are there. There are no logistical reasons anymore for people not being connected virtually as well as being in the same cubicle down the hall.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I want to thank the Leader of the Third Party because those were some fantastic points that were made concerning how we maximize our supports in our communities.

I think I would be remiss if I didn't thank the team there: Andrew Gaule, who is our acting ADM; Cheryl Meger; Michael Prochazska — we welcome him aboard; Elise Pendlebury; and Matt Ordish, who has been there as a cornerstone in our regional work. What I am happy to share is that some of the individuals who are in that department — and I think it is appropriate for me to pinpoint which individuals — we have members of our Regional Economic Development team who are actually requesting to move into the communities.

It is actually interesting that the member opposite touched on southeast Yukon because it's exactly there — southeast Yukon — where we have some interest in our department where individuals want to continue to work for the Regional Economic Development branch but would be interested in having the opportunity to live and work in Watson Lake. I think that, from what I have been told by the municipality — I apologize to the Member for Watson Lake — I haven't had fulsome conversations with the Chamber, but certainly with the municipality. I did have the opportunity on Friday to meet with the chief of the Liard First Nation who was here meeting with me and the Premier, as well as the Minister of Highways and Public Works. We are very excited, and he has had some discussions with our staff.

I am going to try, in the short run, to shore up to see if that is an opportunity. Just as the member opposite said —

exactly that: Can we facilitate a situation where that individual can work in a regional perspective and be linked in? Working with the Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission, how do we look at some of the existing infrastructure to ensure that there are no gaps in the ability to tie into government infrastructure — which I don't think is a big deal? Then, hopefully, taking into consideration that in many of our communities, housing can sometimes be a challenge — also looking at that.

That is some of the stuff that we are considering. I am very aligned with the Leader of the Third Party on this concept. Whether it is the Dawson region or Klwane, this is something that everybody has tried in different ways to look at. At this point in time, all we know is that we have an interest from one of our employees in the community. I will work with the individuals as well. I would be remiss if I didn't also recognize Jeananne Nicloux, who is also a part of our team there.

As for the question — I think it was on REDI — what we have tried to do on that program — of course, that provided capacity, supports and planning in north Yukon. We have reached out to — we have had lots of feedback from many stakeholders concerning interest in seeing that program continue. The model of how it worked — there was some huge responsibility for Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in within the allocation of funds and supports. We touched on earlier today the fact that we're working with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in directly on trying to ensure they have capacity to engage in the many opportunities that are now happening in their traditional territory concerning resource development, specifically to the nation.

We have had letters of support for the program across north Yukon. What we have tried to do, going back to the approach I think the Leader of the Third Party tends to touch on, was: How do we ensure that it's good spending? How do we ensure that we're doing this right?

What we have done is reach out to many of the individuals who have put forward their interest and have commended the program, from Mayo to Dawson to Old Crow. We're trying to gather as much information on the good work that has been done so we can figure out how to potentially tweak the program to make it work better and enhance it.

So that's what we're undertaking at this point — just trying to make sure that region is a bustling triangle of activity. We want to ensure we do it right, that we have the right supports in place and that we are doing them in the most efficient way.

**Ms. Hanson:** I thank the minister. His comments brought a smile. I was just thinking about the irony. Yesterday, I just happened to be looking for something — this is going to sound weird — on a USB drive that has all the notes I ever took from 1989 to 2007, or something, when I worked for the federal government. I just happened across when I first came back in 1989 and was part of — Canada had decided to relocate its negotiating team to Yukon, because not having the teams located here had been a failure. I was part of

a team that was based in Ottawa, except I was leading it in the Yukon.

My note just made me laugh. The note back to my colleagues in Ottawa was, “For goodness’ sake — if this is going to work, then you just have to think about it. Last week, I was down the hallway and it didn’t take anything to get the information to me; and now it’s that easy to make a phone call. It’s no more difficult and it’s no different.”

There is a challenge. It’s not easy to work at a distance, but you know, one of the things you have to avoid — and this is what we had to avoid in that whole process — is the perception that, if you didn’t live in the golden triangle, your opinion didn’t count — so if you didn’t live in Ottawa-Toronto-Montreal. There’s a tendency for Yukon to somehow think that, if you don’t live in Whitehorse, your views and opinions don’t count. That’s why you have to deliver by having the people where the action is.

I can tell the Premier is agreeing with me, which is great.

The minister had commented on the discussions and the work that’s being done by the crew in his department, who are working on the various trade agreements. I just wanted to ask him: Does the minister, and has the minister, directed his team on this sub-national working group to make sure, or to express concerns about chapter 11 of NAFTA, and particularly with respect to the ability of First Nation governments and the Yukon government to have whole the ability to make laws, regulations and policies to protect the environment and/or health of citizens? I’m thinking particularly as this relates to the court challenge that we have seen in other jurisdictions — Lone Pine Resources in Quebec — and we have seen in the Yukon with Northern Cross, now called Chance. These are not isolated. Canada has lost them all. Yes, it is federal legislation, but you can bet that there will be costs associated to the sub-national governments, if Canada has to pay \$250 million, like they did in Quebec, or whatever they might to have to pay here.

What kinds of input have we had with respect to chapter 11 discussions?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I will just confirm that we have directed our representatives to support chapter 11 and concerning — we touched on earlier — just the effects to our environmental framework, but also our First Nation governments and people — how they are affected, trying to take into consideration the uniqueness of the Yukon. I can’t delineate on what, of course — the member opposite knows better than I, because of her significant resumé at the federal level. I can say that we have strongly advised our team to do what they can in these areas. Where we land, I cannot say. Certainly, I think there have been challenges — I will just leave it at that, but without getting into specifics at the table or even how much these topics have been at the table.

**Ms. Hanson:** There were two separate sort of series of questions that had to do with the film and sound industry, and the minister made a comment that there was a Film and Sound Commission funding review and I’m just wondering what the target date is for completion of that. That’s a policy review, I’m presuming. Related to that, my colleague from Kluane

spoke in different terms than perhaps I would have with respect to one particular aspect of a television show that is filmed in the Yukon.

I guess one of the questions I would have for the minister is: What assessment does Economic Development do with respect to how Yukon is reflected to the world outside of the Yukon and in terms of impact and the consistency/congruence with the value statements that are certainly set out in the platform and in the various mandate letters and the four pillars, or whatever you want to call them, that this government said it will be guided by?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** First of all, with the film review, our fund review — the purpose is to support a prosperous and diversified Yukon economy. We are reviewing our film and media funding programs; we are working with industry members to ensure our funds meet the needs of Yukoners within a changing broadcast landscape in light of new technology. This is the transition of where we see content, where we view content.

In partnership with Screen Production Yukon Association, we have developed the terms of reference to guide that review. In recent years, new direct-to-consumer services like Netflix, Amazon, YouTube and Hulu have changed the ways that media content is distributed. We are working with Yukon’s media industry to make sure our programs are responding to these changes in technology, while meeting the needs of industry and remaining market-focused. A consultant with extensive experience in film and media funding in Canada was hired to undertake phase one of the review.

Yukon producers are busy working with Yukon film and sound incentive program-funded projects and we are working with industry to identify the best time to begin the engagement. This is quite a busy time of year, and so I think that we are probably looking near the end of the fiscal year. I will get an exact date; I do not have a commencement date on the engagement, but I would think that, based on what I saw last year with the amount of activity that was undertaken in industry, we are probably looking at sort of the end of summer or early fall.

That is a difficult question in a sense, going back to the content question. As a government — Tourism, Heritage and Culture, as well as Economic Development play a role from time to time in helping to fund content. I think my colleague would say that, when you are producing content, it is art, and you don’t want to meddle with the content, because it is an artistic expression, but in Economic Development, our approach is that we are trying to spur economic growth, and we do take into consideration our Yukon brand.

I would say that we have closely watched what has transpired — where the Leader of the Third Party wants to touch upon — some things are going through legal processes, so I am not going to touch on those, but I would say that, in my role, I am closely watching and working with multiple departments, and I have worked with my colleagues at all times on this, when other areas of government have become part of that discussion.

I think it is a very good point and it is something that is appropriate for us to discuss in the Assembly today.

**Ms. Hanson:** I do hope that the government does give thought to that, because I think Yukoners take pride in taking pride of place, and to suggest that the territory is wide open and a Wild West is probably not the message that we want to give.

The minister made comment with respect to next week of doing some work with his staff and colleagues in his department on a strategic plan, so that would probably explain why I don't see any strategic plan on the website. When does the minister plan to have the strategic plan for Economic Development completed? I will start there.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Yes, that's correct. One of our important engagement sessions with some of our departmental members, leadership, is we are meeting next week. There has been a tremendous amount of work done within Economic Development over the last number of years, as well, where members of the Economic Development team have taken it upon themselves, sometimes out of their own interest or through direction from the leadership in the department, to investigate different projects and different opportunities that could help diversify the Yukon economy. Some of that work has been integrated into the general work plan for the department; much of it has not.

Our feeling is that it's important to have a fulsome discussion about a series of themes and ideas and opportunities, some a bit more outside of the scope of what the department has undertaken previously or maybe some new innovation and ideas.

This is step one — to really engage with the team and understand what their feelings about these topics are. We did have an opportunity for just a couple of days — maybe the third week of December, just before Christmas — where we also had an opportunity to have a broad discussion on some topics. I will say that what we have signalled in those discussions — when I say we, I mean me, the deputy minister, also the previous ADM and others — is that we want to nudge in some particular areas. We want to focus with some real impact. It's a department. It may be a risky statement for me to make, but it's a department that has done a broad range of things — a very widespread approach to enhancing our economy, with a limited amount of resources to do it from a financial perspective.

The belief is that if we're really going to look at diversification in our economy, it is very important to focus on some specific areas where we think we can make some real difference and change in. That's the plan. We won't have a concrete plan in place this fiscal year. I'm not going to say November-December. It's important to have this plan in place. It's going to be a blueprint for us to move forward as a department. We have a ton of expertise and capacity and a lot of new, very bright individuals who have just come on, even in the short run, who have to be integrated into our planning process.

That's what we're looking at. In turn, that will take the place of our new strategic plan. I look forward to discussing that in the Assembly further.

**Ms. Hanson:** I too look forward to discussing it, because it's fairly important to get the strategic plan in place. From there, you have your operational plans and your actual ability to develop what you're doing, and say to the public, "This is what we're doing, this is how we're measuring it, and this is the accountability framework that we have established." As I understand from the Premier, the Minister of Finance, this is the expectation of each department. So I do look forward to that.

Can the minister give us an update on any work or thinking that has been done on the Yukon small business investment tax credit? We do know this has been very helpful to a number of small businesses, including Air North, in its early days — in terms of providing a source of funds locally and encouraging Yukoners to invest in their own Yukon businesses without having to force the businesses to seek Outside funding at a higher cost. There has been — I don't have the right word for it, but I'm sure the minister and his colleagues will have it — sort of a threshold or limit placed on the room that's available for that tax credit.

Could the minister comment on that? What work is being done to assess it and assess the effectiveness and whether or not it should be increased?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Just for the Assembly — we spoke about this particular topic during the campaign. My discussions, even directly from the Premier, have been to investigate this along the same theme, I would say, that the Leader of the Third Party is touching upon.

Are there positive impacts to raising the cap? How can we use this as a more nimble tool to enhance economic growth? That is work that has not been undertaken as of yet. It is work that we certainly feel should be done within this mandate, and I look forward to seeing what opportunities can come from that investigation.

**Ms. Hanson:** Perhaps in the strategic plan that will be: We will do this and we will do it by this time. That would be great. That's how we will operationalize it. It would be good to see that.

Can the minister talk about the business incentive program, which has been somewhat static at around \$1 million? Has there been any assessment of the effectiveness of the business incentive program, whether or not it is achieving whatever objectives have been established for it? Are there objectives for it? How do we know that it's doing the job that it was intended to do?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I do want to touch on the fact that, as a government, we have identified our enduring priorities. I also have a mandate letter that defines some priorities that I have to undertake. This is something that I review on a daily basis. We have talked a lot today about how we have worked to attract new investment in Yukon businesses. Certainly, now seeing our numbers in mineral exploration double last year and then looking to triple, that seems like something that is happening.

We are looking at developing innovation in a knowledge economy. That is why we are moving forward on an innovation hub, specifically to do that work. We're looking at our ability to enhance trade opportunities for manufacturing and product development — continuing to do that work.

These are just a few things — encourage major industrial opponents to have local purchase programs that complement government procurement practices. This is other work as well that we are doing with Victoria Gold and Goldcorp.

Just before we wrap up — on the business incentive program specifically, I would say that there has been a lot of work done. Very senior members of government have talked about — there has been a tremendous amount of analysis done on the business incentive program. We are looking at other ways to help our local contractors, which is essentially what this is. Our teams have been doing a lot of work and we have been meeting with the Yukon Contractors Association on some different tools.

Sometimes there is a lag by a year or two on some of this fund, so we will leave this in place. Although people have challenged the efficiency of the business incentive program, I think that our partnership with the City of Whitehorse this last year, which, in turn, led to a local contractor being primary on a very expensive infrastructure build in the Yukon and, in turn, having those contractors come to government after the fact, saying we succeeded because of this partnership in this program, it leads me to believe — basically looking back — it's one of the first big projects in awhile where we have a Yukon-based company leading a building. That doesn't mean that we are not going to look to change things up.

With that, I know that we are almost concluding. I have had an opportunity to thank some of our staff and I hope the Leader of the Third Party will give me a bit of flexibility. I also want to thank a few of our other individuals: Melissa Ordish,Carolynn Phelps, Phyllis Copeland, Derrick McKay, Debbie Mallette, Shelly Jeffrey — as well as Lisa Jarvis, who works hand in hand with the deputy minister on a daily basis — Tara-Lee Bosma, Denise Monkman, Ian Young, Vanessa Innes — who has been acting director and I thank her for that — Erin Deacon and Michael Durham, who has been doing a really great job in his new role. I also thank Marius Curteanu, who is new with the immigration group, and Mona Syed and Ann Bowen as well.

In closing, I know that our team is doing a great job in Watson Lake this week — our community development team led by Deborah Lemaire is there and supported by Gisele Maisonneuve, Cheryl Goulet, RoseMary Fordyce as well. I wanted an opportunity to thank our staff and welcome Jordan Stackhouse who, I believe, has also just started with our team.

With that, Mr. Chair, I move that you report progress.

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

*Motion agreed to*

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

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

*Motion agreed to*

*Speaker resumes the Chair*

**Speaker:** I will now call the House to order.

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

### Chair's report

**Mr. Hutton:** Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 16, entitled *Technical Amendments Act, 2018*, and directed me to report the bill without amendment.

Committee of the Whole has also considered Bill No. 206, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2018-19*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Speaker:** I declare the report carried.

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

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

*Motion agreed to*

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

*The House adjourned at 5:29 p.m.*

### The following legislative returns were tabled April 17, 2018:

34-2-126

Response to oral question from Ms. White re: budget debate on Vote 11, Women's Directorate, in Bill No. 206, *First Appropriation Act 2018-19* (Dendys)

34-2-127

Response to oral question from Mr. Kent re: budget debate on Vote 3, Department of Education, in Bill No. 206, *First Appropriation Act 2018-19* (McPhee)

### The following documents were filed April 17, 2018:

34-2-49

Staffing allocation for Yukon schools, letter re (dated April 16, 2018) from Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee, Minister of Education, to Scott Kent, Member for Copperbelt South (McPhee)

34-2-50

Allocation of education assistants by the Department of Education, letter re (dated April 16, 2018) from Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee, Minister of Education, to Scott Kent, Member for Copperbelt South (McPhee)

34-2-51

Impact of the Coming into Force of the *Condominium Act, 2015*, letter re (dated April 10, 2018) from Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee, Minister of Justice, to Paul Lackowicz, Lackowicz and Hoffman (McPhee)