

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, November 6, 2013 — 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 Yukon Farmer of the Year, 2013

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I'd like to rise today to pay tribute to Yukon's 2013 Farmers of the Year and I would like to begin by thanking the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources for allowing me to do this tribute on behalf of the government, because the recipients are constituents of mine.

Each year, Yukon's Agriculture branch recognizes a farmer, farm family, or farm advocate who has made an outstanding contribution to Yukon agriculture. This year's worthy recipients are Wayne and Alison Grove from Takhini River Road.

Wayne and Alison, along with their children Nicole and David, received the family's award at last Saturday's annual North of 60° banquet. The Grove family has demonstrated a strong commitment to Yukon's agriculture sector through their El Dorado Game Ranch. Taking an underdeveloped piece of agricultural land 17 years ago, with their dedication and passion for agriculture, they have turned it into one of Yukon's largest hay producers. Producing top quality local hay geared toward horse operations requires a significant investment in equipment and crop inputs, otherwise farmers are forced to import hay from other jurisdictions. Growing our own feed creates a more profitable, self-sufficient agriculture industry, which is one of the government's goals for this sector.

The Grove family also have an elk farm that produces meat for the expanding domestic and culinary tourism market. Wayne's service to farming is quite notable and remarkable. He's both a director of the Yukon Agricultural Association and president of the Game Growers' Association and has been involved for many years in a volunteer capacity in both these organizations. Exemplifying a diverse operation, the Groves also operate a high-quality dog boarding kennel at their property. Finally, the Groves show leadership by embracing the latest agriculture research to improve their operation.

I'd also like to ask everyone to join me in welcoming Wayne Grove to the gallery and again congratulating him, Alison, Nicole and David for the award that they have received.

Applause

Mr. Tredger: On behalf of the Official Opposition Yukon NDP and the Liberal Party I rise to pay tribute to

Wayne, Alison, Nicole and David Grove. The Grove family are this year's recipient of Yukon Farmers of the Year award.

Their ranch, the El Dorado Game Ranch, is along the Takhini River Road. Under their stewardship, the El Dorado Game Ranch has a history of providing good quality hay, elk for meat, as well as antler velvet for niche markets, and a dog boarding kennel. Their ranch is renowned for its excellent management and attention to detail. The Groves are deserving recipients of this year's award and exemplify and highlight a number of reasons why our growing agricultural industry is so important to the Yukon.

We've heard a lot about food security. Yukon grows two percent of the food it consumes. The rest has to be imported from around the world. Meanwhile, our neighbours in Alaska grow 10 percent of the food consumed. In the past, mines in Dawson and Keno received much of their produce from farmers in the area — farms that were fertile and productive. Importing food comes at increasing costs economically as well as in quality.

One only needs to ask the happy consumers at markets and stores across the Yukon — markets like the Stewart Valley market in Mayo to markets in Faro, Carmacks, Dawson, Watson Lake, Haines Junction and the Fireweed Market in downtown Whitehorse — to realize the desire on the part of Yukoners for good quality and safe local produce. We can increase local agricultural production and entrepreneurs like the Groves are showing us the way to greater food and agricultural independence.

Farming in the Yukon depends on vision, innovation, a sound business sense, good management, commitment and most of all, hard work. The Groves have a history of all this and, perhaps most importantly, have a reputation for providing products of good quality and excellent service to their clients.

Did I mention the hard work? The Groves work hard together. The Groves in the way they operate as a unit — as a family — show us all the value of lifestyle, the importance of family working together, all contributing, each as they can and each important to the success of the ranch. As a former principal, I know how important it is for children to grow up contributing in a meaningful way — how it builds their confidence, their skills and their sense of worthiness. Watching the Groves, their esteem and commitment to one another are obvious.

Yukon businesses do not grow in isolation. They interact and contribute to their friends, neighbours, customers and peers. Indeed, they are contributors and the mainstay of our community. The Groves' support for 4-H clubs in Yukon, involvement in the Yukon Agricultural Association and the Yukon Game Growers Association speaks to this commitment. One only needs to visit their neighbourhood or talk to fellow farmers to know how valued the Groves are in their community.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Grove family for their contribution to agriculture in the Yukon and to their community and for providing a model of citizenship for all Yukon people. The Groves are held in high esteem by their peers, their clients and by their community, and they are very

deserving recipients of the 2013 Yukon Farmers of the Year award.

Speaker: Are there any other tributes?

In recognition of National Skilled Trades and Technology Week

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I rise today on behalf of the Assembly in recognition of National Skilled Trades and Technology Week. Tradespeople are the foundation for building our strong, healthy communities. Every moment of our days and our lives are touched by the work of people in trades and technology. Our homes were built with the expertise and skills of architects, engineers, designers and a host of skilled tradespeople. Thanks to engineers and technicians, we enjoy electrical power, telephone, computer and Internet services. Road construction and maintenance workers and mechanical tradespeople and engineers all help ensure that we get around safely.

We can thank the trades and technology programs for life's luxuries as well. Bakers, cooks and hairstylists are all red seal trades. Not only are careers in skilled trades and technology vital to a thriving community and a stable community, these careers reward workers with a high standard of living and excellent quality of life.

National Skilled Trades and Technology Week is brought to us by Skills/Compétences Canada. We would also like to recognize our many partners, in addition to Skills Canada Yukon, such as the Yukon Women in Trades and Technology and the very important work that they offer day in and day out. This includes promotions and workshops for adults and youth, including Young Women Exploring Trades, which will be taking place later on this fall, as well as Cool Tools — also incredible workshops offered by Yukon Women in Trades and Technology.

Mr. Speaker, Skills Canada Yukon is also another shining success story, providing youth in Whitehorse and the communities with hands-on workshops and skills club as well. Facilitated by a committed team of volunteer mentors and coaches, Skills Canada promotes trades and technology as viable career options. In fact, in 2013, as many of us will recall, the Skills Canada National Competition saw 19 Yukon youth compete with Yukon's own David Lister bringing home a silver medal in mechanical CAD.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I would just like to welcome David Lister to the Assembly here today, in recognition of all that he has achieved and the great mentorship that he continues to provide all of us.

Applause

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Team Yukon owes part of its success to its incredible support network. Accompanying them to nationals were 20 staff and volunteer coaches, national technical committee members, judges and board members. Territorial and national skills competitions are excellent, great

motivators for youth to learn more about the trades, but there are huge benefits still. Competitions encourage young people and their mentors to learn emerging best practices and the potential to raise the bar for all tradespeople in the workplace too. Last May, the Territorial Skills Competition attracted over 40 competitors, and over 750 high school students attended as observers to learn how exciting and satisfying a career in trades can be.

This week for National Skilled Trades and Technology week, Skills Canada Yukon is hosting a very interesting initiative, a Try a Trade Day at all three Whitehorse high schools. Grade 9 students are getting a hands-on opportunity to explore three different trades and to discuss trades careers with local experts — Vic Enders being one of them and he has also joined us here in the Legislative Assembly. For those whose interests have piqued, high school programs offer a variety of industrial arts options, and dual credit programs are offered in partnership with Yukon College.

The new mobile trades trailer, which is on its way to the Yukon and will soon be on the road, will also expand further training opportunities for high school students and post-secondary students across territory. This winter the mobile trades trailer, I'm pleased to say, will be stopping at the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in government offices near the Robert Service School in Dawson City to offer a credited pre-employment welding course. This course will enable students to earn accredited apprenticeship hours as well as credit toward their high school graduation. The mobile trades trailer is part of the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining initiative which helps create qualified tradespeople who are able to take advantage of local employment opportunities.

As was just announced a week ago, the Yukon government has committed over \$5.8 million toward the operation and management of CNIM programming across five years, as well as \$5.6 million in capital funding. This investment is a further demonstration of the importance of skilled trades and what they can do to make a real difference in the lives of Yukoners.

I also wanted to make mention that in September the northern rural experiential model offered a week of intensive experiential study in Dawson City for 86 high school students from southern rural communities. In that event, which I had the opportunity to see first-hand, trades experiences were front and centre, including courses in wood shop, FEAST — otherwise known as Foods Education And Service Training — hair and esthetics and digital art and film. The on-the-land course also included a significant technology component with GPS, forestry, air quality, soil sciences and wildlife studies. These are just but a few shining examples of so many successes we have to celebrate here.

Of course turning our focus to technology, the Yukon Research Centre has also enjoyed incredible success through the support of the technology innovation fund. Through this fund, the Yukon Research Centre funded mid-Arctic technology services to develop a tablet-based museum system called "Interpretour" which enables visitors to use tablets to explore the displays and get information about them in a wide

range of user-selected languages. The same program also recently funded Frostbyte Software Design to implement an on-line marketplace edition to its buy/sell site at www.borealist.com, again enabling local crafts and arts people to advertise and sell their wares in a traffic-heavy environment with very little technical ability required.

The Yukon Research Centre just finished a two-year project digitizing weather data from old log books from the weigh stations of the White Pass and Yukon Route riverboat and rail systems. It displayed its results for the first time last week and has also been featured at a science poster event. This data is incredibly important for researchers in climatic and environmental sciences.

To help us recognize and celebrate National Skilled Trades and Technology Week, we have with us here a number of individuals. In addition to Vic Enders and David Lister, we would like to list off Gerry Quarton, who's also a board member for Skills Canada Yukon, and Patrick Rouble, who is a former colleague of mine and former Minister of Education and Energy, Mines and Resources and also a great champion of Skills Canada Yukon. We have Megan Freese who is quite a veteran, compared to me, and has also joined with Skills Canada Yukon as executive director.

From Yukon Women in Trades and Technology, I want to welcome a friend of mine, Kim Solonick, who is the executive director, and with her are a couple of representatives from Canada World Youth, including Natalie Forsythe and Ivone Benilde dos Santos Matavele.

Applause

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Thank you everyone for joining us here for today's tribute to National Skilled Trades and Technology Week. Whether we look at tradespeople who build our communities or the people who build our economy, each of you all deserve a round of applause. Thank you for the important work that you do on our behalf day in and day out. Thank you for all of your leadership in our trades and thank you for joining us.

Applause

Ms. Moorcroft: On behalf of the Official Opposition, I stand to acknowledge National Skilled Trades and Technology Week, 2013.

Across Canada, there is a need for a skilled labour force. Consequently, there is a need for initiatives that improve access for everyone to skilled trades training opportunities. For National Skilled Trades and Technology Week, we encourage youth in Whitehorse and the communities, along with the large and growing aboriginal youth population in Yukon, to complete high school and consider the many rewarding opportunities of trades and technology careers.

Carpentry, cooking, plumbing, electronics, hair styling, robotics and electrical skills are useful in diverse workplaces across Canada. Working together with Skills Canada, youth organizations such as BYTE and the Youth Directorate, Yukon College, labour unions, First Nations and employers

can help realize the Yukon's training strategy vision of a fair, equitable and diverse economic and social development.

Members of this House know that such work is critical to an effective trade strategy. We want to promote careers in skilled trades and technology to those who are currently underrepresented in those workplaces. It is critical to support training opportunities for students that are available in their own communities, such as mobile labs and shops in rural Yukon. Collaborative work on partnerships between Yukon government and Yukon First Nations governments and support for experiential learning and other models that may be presented by First Nations education leaders will result in even more success in trades and technology for Aboriginal students.

Mr. Speaker, industrial arts facilities in Yukon schools are important venues for training youth. These facilities could also be opened up in the evenings for adult training. Yukon College and public schools' cooperation for trades training benefits both institutions and their instructors and students. The new Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining at Yukon College's Ayamdigut Campus in Whitehorse will allow training and research that addresses the unique skills necessary for working in the mining industry in the north.

Trade unions and red seal tradespersons must be acknowledged too for the critical role they play in contributing to the stability and economic success of the workplace. The union and union-trained workers' presence on jobsites improves safety and fairness by participating in joint health and safety committees and providing journeyperson oversight for successful apprenticeship programs in the skilled trades. Government itself employs many skilled tradespeople and can offer apprenticeship placements.

Yukon Women in Trades and Technology works in partnership with Yukon College, communities, schools and government departments to provide hands-on experience with different trades for grade 8 girls in a fun and supportive environment at annual Young Women Exploring Trades career fairs. This event takes place this year at Yukon College on November 29. Skills Canada Yukon's many initiatives are also a great success with students and, as a result, our Yukon students often bring home medals in national competitions.

National Skilled Trades and Technology Week is a time to consider how much Canadians rely on skilled trades. Trades and technology skills are valuable in many economic sectors. We acknowledge National Skilled Trades and Technology Week and express appreciation for the teachers, tradespersons, parents, educators, workers, employers and volunteers who are part of the skilled trades, and, of course, students who take part in trades and technology training. We wish every success to the youth of today in building tomorrow's future.

In recognition of Media Literacy Week

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I rise today in recognition of Media Literacy Week, which aims to raise awareness of the importance of media literacy and digital literacy in the education of children and youth. In our territory, the Yukon Department of Education and the Yukon Teachers Association

are gold sponsors of this very important nation-wide initiative led by a national charitable organization called MediaSmarts.

In today's digital age, children are exposed to marketing messages at every turn. Whether they are watching television, listening to the radio or purchasing songs on-line, whether they are conducting research on-line or passing a wall full of flyers as they walk into the community library, many times every day our kids face words and images trying to offer them something. In fact, studies show that urban North Americans can see up to 5,000 advertisements every day.

Marketing messages are very powerful, especially for children, and they can have both positive and negative influences on children's social, emotional, intellectual and physical well-being. What makes the difference, however, is education. With critical thinking skills, knowledge about marketing techniques and clarity on their own personal values, adults and children can respond to media messaging in a very healthy way. Being media literate is an important component of 21st century learning. This year's Media Literacy Week theme, "What's Being Sold: Helping Kids Make Sense of Marketing Messages", encourages educators and families to talk to children and teens about the marketing they encounter on a daily basis.

MediaSmarts programs include classroom and community resources, professional development tools, public awareness campaigns, and research on the network lives of young Canadians. With this, I'd like to recognize our many school-based staff and the department-based staff who have and continue to work throughout the school year to support media literacy among our young people so that they can develop into active and informed digital learners.

Yukon's curriculum has a strong media literacy component where media literacy lessons are woven throughout lessons from kindergarten all the way through to grade 12 in language arts and career and personal planning lessons. Lessons on marketing messages can also be included in lessons on health, consumer education, global studies, civics, information technology, music, and visual arts.

This year, an enthusiastic but small group of Yukon students took part in a web conference marking the official launch of Media Literacy Week during a national forum in Ottawa. During this time, students were able to hear and take part in a live panel discussion on marketing, consumerism and youth. At all our Yukon public libraries, youth aged 12 to 18 can also enter a free contest during Media Literacy Week. Information about the contest can be found on the Yukon public libraries Facebook page, and we certainly encourage Yukoners to take a look at that.

Information about digital literacy for students, parents and teachers is also available on-line at the Yukon Education Student Network, or at www.yesnet.yk.ca. I encourage all of us to take an active role in helping children of all ages discuss the impact of marketing on a wide range of issues.

Speaker: Are there any other tributes?
Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I would ask that all members of the Assembly join me in welcoming a friend and owner of Harper Street Publishing, which is a solid partner in branding Yukon as a year-round tourism destination, Greg Karais.

Applause

Ms. White: I ask the House to join me in welcoming two individuals today. I have a constituent named Sharon Kempton who is in the audience — thank you for coming — and I am a host family for Canada World Youth and my daughter is in the Assembly, so Natalie Forsythe, thank you for coming and it's a pleasure to have you here.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: In the gallery today, I have my neighbour and Megan Freese's mom, Virginia Freese. On this day of paying tribute to the farmer of the year, it did remind me of the great garden they also have in their backyard. The sunflowers this year were taller than the shop. I would just like to welcome her to the gallery today.

Applause

Mr. Barr: I can't help but introduce my friend and constituent from across the mountain — eventually we're going to snowshoe to the top and meet for tea. It has been many years on this endeavour — Mr. Jim Borisenko.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: I have for tabling the *Queen's Printer Agency 2012-13 Annual Report — Highways and Public Works*.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I have for tabling the *Fish and Wildlife Branch Highlights for 2012*. I also have for tabling *Yukon's Wildlife — A Strategy for Developing and Promoting Viewing Opportunities*, prepared by the Wildlife Viewing Technical Committee on behalf of the Department of Environment and the Department of Tourism and Culture.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I have for tabling the *Yukon Heritage Resources Board Annual Report April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013*. I also have for tabling the *Yukon Arts Centre 2012-13 Annual Report*.

Ms. Hanson: I have for tabling an article from the *Northern Review*, edition 37, fall 2013, entitled, "Fixing Land Use Planning in the Yukon Before It Really Breaks: A Case Study of the Peel Watershed", by Kiri Staples, Manuel Chávez-Ortiz, M.J. Barrett, Douglas A. Clark.

Ms. Stick: I have for tabling a written question addressed to the Chair of the Standing Committee on Rules, Elections and Privileges.

Mr. Silver: I have for tabling a letter from Crawford and Company (Canada)'s senior general adjuster, representing Dowland Contracting Ltd., which outlines which types of companies will and will not get paid.

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

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

PETITIONS

Petition No. 13

Mr. Barr: I have for presentation the following petition, signed by approximately 1,070 persons. The petition reads as follows:

THAT visitors to the Yukon are an important part of the Yukon economy;

THAT wildlife viewing is an important attraction for Yukoners and visitors to the Yukon;

THAT bears are one of the more significant wildlife attractions in the Yukon;

THAT many visitors to the Yukon use the Yukon road system;

THAT bear sightings along Yukon roadways are often the only bear sightings for Yukoners and visitors to the Yukon; and

THAT Yukoners and visitors value wildlife, and specifically bear sightings;

THEREFORE, the undersigned ask the Yukon Legislative Assembly to urge the Government of Yukon to introduce to the Legislative Assembly legislation to ban the shooting of bears within one kilometre of the centre line of Yukon roadway corridors.

Petition No. 14

Ms. White: I have a petition that reads as follows:

THAT the thyroid, a major gland when not functioning properly, negatively affects the health of the person that goes untreated;

THAT correct diagnosis and treatment needs to be available to alleviate progressively deteriorating health, which can often be seen as part of the aging process, but which, in fact, has been misdiagnosed and is rather a thyroid dysfunction;

THAT thyroid drugs are relatively inexpensive compared to the myriad of other drugs needed to support the health of women;

THAT thyroid dysfunction can affect psychological, mental and emotional health and can result in increased risks of anxiety, asthma, carpal tunnel, chronic colds and illness, hearing problems, decreased sex drive, elevated cholesterol, enlarged abdomen, fatigue, fibromyalgia, headaches, heart enlargement, high blood pressure, infertility, insomnia,

intolerance of cold and heat, liver problems, looking older, muscle weakness and PMS;

THEREFORE, the undersigned ask the Yukon Legislative Assembly to hire a female thyroid specialist to work in Whitehorse, Yukon as soon as possible.

Mr. Speaker: Are there any further petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 61: *Health Information Privacy and Management Act* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Graham: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 61, entitled the *Health Information Privacy and Management Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Minister of Health and Social Services that Bill No. 61, entitled *Health Information Privacy and Management Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 61 agreed to

Bill No. 65: *Insured Health Services Statutes Amendment Act* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Graham: I move that Bill No. 65, entitled *Insured Health Services Statutes Amendment Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Health and Social Services that Bill No. 65, entitled *Insured Health Services Statutes Amendment Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 65 agreed to

Bill No. 62: *Animal Health Act* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I move that Bill No. 62, entitled *Animal Health Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Environment that Bill No. 62, entitled *Animal Health Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 62 agreed to

Bill No. 66: *Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Kent: I move that Bill No. 66, entitled *Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources that Bill No. 66, entitled *Act to Amend the Placer Mining Act and the Quartz Mining Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 66 agreed to

Bill No. 60: Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009 — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I move that Bill No. 60, entitled *Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 60, entitled *Act to Amend the Corrections Act, 2009*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 60 agreed to

Speaker: Are there any further bills for introduction? Are there any notices of motion?

NOTICES OF MOTION

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Canada to adjust its travel booking systems to allow federal employees the option of using northern carriers when they travel to the north.

I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to preserve and maintain the free-entry system of mineral allocation in Yukon.

Mr. Hassard: I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to continue to create and maintain fishing opportunities for Yukoners and visitors alike by stocking suitable pothole lakes on a rotating basis.

I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to take measures to reduce vehicle collisions with wildlife, with a particular focus on the south Alaska Highway and the south Klondike Highway.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to monitor the population and biology of the Porcupine caribou herd by conducting composition counts in the fall and late winter, the annual collaring of caribou, body condition monitoring and disease assessment.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to use their fish and wildlife monitoring programs to work with the students at the Chief Zzeh Gittlit school to help develop positive long-term relationships with the community of Old Crow and provide for opportunities to bridge traditional and scientific approaches to data collection.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with the Yukon trapper working group made up of the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and the Yukon Trappers Association to develop a pilot program to facilitate the growth and development of a self-sustaining trapping industry in the Yukon.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to recognize the economic impact of Parks Canada cuts in Haines Junction and Holland America's abandonment of the Alaska Highway route including the Westmark in Beaver Creek, by developing a comprehensive tourism strategy for the southwest Yukon in collaboration with citizens of Beaver Creek, the White River First Nation, Destruction Bay, Burwash Landing, the Kluane First Nation, Haines Junction and the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations.

Ms. Stick: I rise to give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do order the return of the letter which the Minister of Health and Social Services sent to the Hospital Corporation on August 28 regarding recent reports from the Chief Coroner looking into the deaths of two patients at the Watson Lake hospital.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to live up to its commitment of ensuring all contractors who worked on the overbudget and behind-schedule Dawson City and Watson Lake hospitals are paid.

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister? This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Mining sector employment

Ms. Hanson: Recent economic numbers for the territory are not looking good and this Yukon Party government deserves a lot of the blame. For years, the New Democrats have been saying that if most mining jobs are fly-in/fly-out, the economic benefits to our territory are limited. Now a new study confirms what we've been saying all along: the bulk of the work in mining is being done by workers from Outside who are not paying taxes in the Yukon, not buying homes in the Yukon, not spending money at local businesses, and whose flight costs add to the economic burden of doing mining in the Yukon.

When will this government get serious about ensuring that it is Yukon workers, Yukon businesses and the Yukon economy that benefits from mining developments?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: We are very serious about ensuring that Yukoners see the benefit of mining activity here

in the territory. That's why we have made such considerable investments in mining training here in the territory. One needs to look no further than the recent investment in the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining to see our significant contribution and commitment to training Yukoners for Yukon jobs. We see a number of efforts through our investments in the college and mine training programs with industry to ensure that Yukoners have opportunities to get those skills that they need to participate in the Yukon economy and, in particular, the mining industry here in the territory.

We're certainly committed to that and we're going to continue to invest in Yukon College and work with industry to provide the training necessary for Yukoners to participate in our economy.

Ms. Hanson: What this new study found is that the current mining industry in Yukon relies on a significant amount of fly-in/fly-out skilled labour. That's a quote, Mr. Speaker. The study found that of 624 mining jobs in the three producing mines, 417, or 67 percent, were currently filled by labour based outside of the Yukon. The study further found that if even 180 of these workers would move to the Yukon, there would be \$15.7 million in wages to be spent in the local economy.

What are the Yukon Party's creative solutions to try to encourage more mining workers to take up residence in the Yukon? I'm not talking about the future; I'm talking about the workers today.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, we always have our eye on the future, so we're always looking for opportunities for Yukon students and young Yukoners to participate in the economy going forward. That's why we make these considerable investments in training opportunities.

The member opposite is correct that there is a significant body of employees within the mining industry who do come from outside the territory. We've taken a number of measures to work with the industry to find creative solutions for getting not only more Yukoners employed in Yukon mines, but getting outside employees to move here to the territory. We work very closely with the Yukon Producers Group, which is the collection of the three producing mines, as well as a few of the advanced exploration projects that are hopeful to be mines in the near future, to find ways that we can work with them to promote living here in the territory.

We feel that we have an exceptional quality of life. We have a lot of attributes in this territory that make us an attractive place to move for young families across the country. We think that we have a lot to offer.

So we are keen to see more people come to the territory to participate in our economy, but as I said before we are very focused on ensuring that young Yukoners and young people in this territory have the training they need to participate in our mining industry and our economy.

Ms. Hanson: Back to the matter, we are missing an opportunity here. When workers who fly into the Yukon were asked what deters them from moving to the Yukon, the number-one issue by a large margin was high housing prices. We all know that it has been because of the policies and

indecision of the Yukon Party that there has been a crisis in affordable housing. Now we know that it's preventing mining workers from settling here, paying taxes and spending their wages here and building our local economy.

Will the Yukon Party admit it has failed in handling this key economic file and tell the public how it plans to get more resident Yukoners employed in the mining industry and how to attract those people here when they cannot find a place to live?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: We're focused on this issue. We're focused on attracting more folks from outside the Yukon to the Yukon to live here and engage in our attractive mining industry and economy, but we're also focused on training Yukoners for Yukon opportunities.

We've been fairly successful in growing our population over the years. We've seen consistent growth in our population over the past 10 years of Yukon Party rule, but we know that we're never going to get to 100 percent in the immediate future because of some of the issues that were raised in the study that the member opposite cites.

You know what else was a top issue? The weather. There are some things that we cannot control and there are some things that we cannot do to convince some people to move to the Yukon. That's fine, but what we can do is take some concerted efforts to work with industry and to provide training to ensure that industry has what it needs to meet its labour demands and that Yukon benefits from the activity going on here in the territory.

We're going to continue to do that. We're going to continue to provide training for Yukoners and we're going to continue to attract new people to the territory to participate in our vibrant economy.

Question re: F.H. Collins Secondary School reconstruction

Ms. Moorcroft: My question is for the Minister of Highways and Public Works. The government has proudly spent over \$900,000 on a sole-sourced contract to an Alberta company for a redesign of an Alberta school to meet our northern standards and codes. The City of Whitehorse building code requires a minimum wall insulation value of R-28, with an optimal level being R-40, according to local contractors and research on energy efficiency.

Would the Minister of Highways and Public Works explain to this House why the tendered design for F.H. Collins Secondary School has an insulation value of only R-22, while the City of Whitehorse building codes require R-28 insulation?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I rise again to reinforce to the members of the opposition — and in fact to all Yukoners from whom we've heard very clearly their support for our decision — in that when we go out to a tender for construction of a school and when we open the tenders and the low bid is almost \$10 million above the budgeted construction budget — a budget that was confirmed by independent professional estimators — we said that's not good enough, that we cannot start a project that's \$10 million overbudget.

We went back. We're now out again — the tender has been reissued. It is gathering interest from the local trades and skilled tradespeople and contractors. We're looking forward to the construction of a brand new, beautiful school in the location of F.H. Collins that will be the pride of all the students, their parents, the teachers and the administrators.

Ms. Moorcroft: I'm not convinced the government's tender is good enough. Again to the Minister of Highways and Public Works, Yukoners paid \$900,000 through a sole-sourced contract to an Alberta company for a redesign of a southern school to meet our northern standards. It seems that the City of Whitehorse's building requirements for windows and their insulating power are also not met. The R values in the windows and window specs meet Alberta standards but not City of Whitehorse standards.

Experience has taught local contractors that the Yukon-designed and -built quadruple-pane windows are a sound investment. Will the Minister of Highways and Public Works explain to the House why the tender design has only dual-pane windows while the City of Whitehorse building code requires that new buildings have a minimum triple-pane window?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: We're confident in the abilities of our good employees to do their jobs and to ensure that we meet all requirements. I'll again go over the timelines. We created a budget in May 2012 that was confirmed by two independent professional estimators, who both came in with amounts lower than our budgeted construction amount, which had been approved by Management Board. Later that year on November 7, 2012, the tender was issued. Forty-one days later, we received an update on one of the estimates. When all the bids were opened, we found that the lowest bid was almost \$10 million over budget.

I will again say that we will continue to be vigilant. We are responsible to spend the taxpayers' money. They have given us that obligation and honour and our commitment to them is that we will spend their money wisely and ensure we don't spend more than we need to so we have money to do other things, such as the creation of hospital beds, the construction of new infrastructure for clean water and the construction of roads and many other programs and services that this government continues to supply for Yukoners to ensure that the quality of life for Yukoners is second to none.

Ms. Moorcroft: I guess if the Premier doesn't have an answer, he will just refuse to address the question. Here we go again. We already have two northern building standards that are not properly reflected in the tender. The government will have to redesign the redesign of their second attempt at building F.H. Collins to ensure compliance with local building codes. The government spent almost \$1 million on a sole-sourced contract to bring an Alberta design up to Yukon standards. What happened?

As it stands, a building permit would not be issued with the current design by the City of Whitehorse. Why did the Minister of Highways and Public Works issue a tender for F.H. Collins Secondary School with design specifications that would not meet City of Whitehorse building codes and would not be issued a building permit?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Building new offices, recreation centres or schools isn't easy. It's the result of a long and complicated process that aims to meet the needs of programming areas, the service providers and Yukoners at the best possible price.

We have three objectives with the school. Our primary objective is to build a school for Yukoners, for Yukon's kids. That is our responsibility to Yukon families. Our secondary objective is to ensure that the school is built well and built on time and on budget. That is our responsibility to Yukon taxpayers. Our final objective is to provide a project that will create local jobs and be a good economic activity — that is our responsibility to our local contractors, toward our businesses and our suppliers. I look forward to this school being opened. I had the opportunity to take a tour of the school with some of the local kids who are going to graduate when it's completed. It's a wonderful school and I look forward to it being opened.

Question re: Dawson City hospital

Mr. Silver: Since we began this sitting I have been asking questions about the mismanagement of the F.H. Collins Secondary School project. I'd like to move today to another capital project the Yukon Party has bungled: the overbudget and behind-schedule Dawson City hospital.

In the spring, questions were raised about whether companies affected by Dowland's bankruptcy would receive payment for the work on the project. The chair of the Hospital Corporation board said the following in the Legislature on May 13, and I quote, "We're not aware of any outstanding fees or invoices that will not be paid." It has come to my attention that some companies that did work for Dowland have not in fact been paid out. Some have even been told that they are not covered by the bonding process and will not be receiving any money at all.

How does the government plan to honour the commitment made by the chair of the hospital board that everyone who is owed money will in fact actually get paid?

Hon. Mr. Graham: The chair of the Hospital Corporation obviously made that comment with some assurance that he would be able to fall back on the Hospital Corporation's resources in the event that a legitimate claim for payment came forward that was not to be paid by the insurance company. I trust the Hospital Corporation and the board to follow up with any legitimate claims for reimbursement and I look forward to hearing from him if there is a problem.

Mr. Silver: According to court documents filed in Alberta on May 21, Yukon companies were owed more than \$3.3 million by Dowland. A number of these companies were in Watson Lake, some were in Dawson City and the rest were in Whitehorse. Here's what the minister had to say in this House in May, and I quote: "Dowland's insurance agent has already stated that they are good for the claims if the claims are legitimate."

It is now October and some of the contractors I spoke to have been told that they will not be getting paid even if their

claims are legitimate. They are not covered by the bonding process and they have been told “tough luck”.

What steps is this government taking to ensure that Yukon companies get paid?

Hon. Mr. Graham: As I said at that time, I am sure that if there are legitimate claims against either one of the projects — the facilities in Watson Lake or in Dawson City — the Hospital Corporation will endeavour to ensure that those legitimate claims are paid. I have yet to hear from the Hospital Corporation that there is a difficulty in this area. I will correspond with them in the very near future to request information with respect to any claims that are being refused by the insurance agent and discover what their next steps are.

Mr. Silver: We’ve sent letters to the minister responsible and we’ve contacted his office, but received no response. These companies have given credit to contractors for services. They reasoned that this is a government contract and of course they are going to get paid. Mr. Speaker, both the minister and the chair of the Hospital Corporation board gave Yukon companies their assurances that if they sat tight for a few months they would get paid for the work on the Dawson City and Watson Lake hospitals. It has now been now more than six months since these promises were made and these companies are still waiting. These projects are millions of dollars overbudget and years behind and Yukon Party’s handling of the entire mess was subject to a scathing investigation by the Auditor General of Canada. Now there are concerns that Yukon companies that work on these projects won’t get paid.

Will the minister take action to ensure that these legitimate companies with legitimate claims are going to get paid?

Hon. Mr. Graham: I’m not sure if the member opposite can’t hear very well or if he just doesn’t understand. These companies — these alleged companies — that the member opposite is talking about that have not received payment, or have been informed will not be paid, should be contacting the Hospital Corporation. That’s who the bond is with; it’s not with the government.

Once the Hospital Corporation has had an opportunity to look at these claims to ensure their legitimacy, I’m sure that the Hospital Corporation will make a decision based on those claims. I’m sure that the Hospital Corporation will make a decision based on those claims. At that time, I expect to hear from the Hospital Corporation Board of Trustees. I guess the member opposite thinks I’m going to run out with the chequebook and write cheques to everybody that he’s talked to. That’s not the way the system works and I’m not sure how long it’s going to take to convince the member opposite that’s not the way the system works.

Question re: Coroner’s report re death at Watson Lake hospital

Ms. Stick: The coroner’s report on the death of Teresa Scheunert by mixed drug toxicity at the Watson Lake hospital included several recommendations. They are addressed to the Yukon Hospital Corporation, the governing body responsible

for the quality of quick care and quality assurance of hospitals in Yukon.

I remind the minister that public money funds the Yukon Hospital Corporation. One of the coroner’s recommendations to the hospital is “conduct a rigorous gap analysis with a focus on the development of a high-alert medication strategy that is implemented in all Yukon hospitals.”

Can the minister tell Yukoners if that gap analysis is completed and if a high-alert medication strategy is implemented in all Yukon hospitals?

Hon. Mr. Graham: I’m glad that the member opposite today was able to ask a question without making statements that are blatantly inaccurate and in some cases completely false, so I’m more than willing to —

Point of order

Speaker: Member for Riverdale South, on a point of order.

Ms. Stick: In 19(g), it’s false or — basically he said I was telling falsehoods.

Speaker’s ruling

Speaker: There is no point of order. It is still a dispute between members.

Hon. Mr. Graham: If the member opposite would care to meet with me later, I’ll explain to her and point out to her exactly where those inaccuracies were.

The Yukon Hospital Corporation has initiated an independent review under the auspices of the Yukon *Evidence Act* section 13 to provide opportunity for identification of systemic gaps and improvement activities that focus on system safety. The goal of this review is to determine the facts surrounding the incident, complete a systems-level review and provide a confidential environment for participants that is protected under section 13 of the Yukon *Evidence Act* and to encourage improvements in patient care across the organization. The analysis has not yet been completed to the best of my knowledge — at least, I have not yet received that information.

Ms. Stick: That last question was with regard to a high-alert medication strategy.

In answer to my questions last week, the minister did not identify the parts of the system that failed. Today, he suggests he has not received that report or the recommendations. Among the other recommendations from the coroner was another: Where applicable, policies of Whitehorse General Hospital should be amended to ensure that all applicable policies are for the wider Yukon Hospital Corporation and are inclusive of Watson Lake and Dawson City.

Inconsistent application and enforcement of policies throughout the Hospital Corporation may be a part of the system failure.

Here’s another yes or no question for the minister: have all applicable policies of Whitehorse General Hospital been amended to include both the Watson Lake and Dawson City hospitals? Yes or no?

Hon. Mr. Graham: Isn't it a wonderful system? The member opposite gets a minute to criticize and to inform, many times inaccurately, the public about actions that are happening, but expects a yes or no answer. Unfortunately, as I've said to the Member for Klondike, that isn't the way the system works.

I have every trust in the Yukon Hospital Corporation and the physicians and medical personnel who work within the Yukon Hospital Corporation to complete an analysis of any adverse event that occurs in any of the hospitals in this territory. I have that confidence that patient safety reviews are underway or have been completed for the two adverse events in Watson Lake. The development of a high-alert medication system, which includes identification of high-alert medications and the roles and responsibilities of health professionals in relation to prescribing, dispensing and administering these drugs is currently being finalized.

Once those things are completed, I have every trust that they will be provided to me at that time.

Ms. Stick: Ms. Scheunert died from this mixed-drug toxicity in June of 2012. A toxicology report was released August 1, 2012. That is well over a year ago. That is when the hospital and the minister responsible should have started looking at their high-alert medication strategies and their policies. When it comes to patient safety, there is no justification for delaying action.

Another of the coroner's recommendations reads: "Implement the development of a corporate-wide integrated approach to patient death reviews. Reviews of deaths occurring in Yukon Hospitals would benefit from the guidance of corporate-wide quality assurances processes, which will ultimately standardize the approach the review through all Yukon hospitals." Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell us if the Yukon Hospital Corporation has developed a corporate-wide approach to —

Mr. Speaker: Order please. The member's time has elapsed. Minister of Health and Social Services.

Hon. Graham: Mr. Speaker, I will put that question to the Yukon Hospital Corporation.

I have to be very clear that in the event of an adverse event in any of the hospitals in the territory, the Yukon Hospital Corporation does not wait until such time as, as in this case, a coroner's report is available. They immediately investigate any of these adverse events because primarily their concern is patient safety. The physicians, nurses and other medical practitioners in that Hospital are all dedicated to patient safety and improving the systems and the services that they provide in order to insure the patients' safety. So I have every confidence that that's what has happened in this instance. I look forward to providing more information, not only to the members opposite, but to the general public as well.

Question re: Peel watershed land use plan

Mr. Tredger: Yesterday, the minister said that it was ironic that I see the final recommended Peel Watershed Plan as an opportunity for economic development. The fact that the

minister sees no economic value in the environment, unless it is open for resource extraction, is very alarming. It's alarming to Yukoners and it's alarming to First Nation governments who are trying their best to work with this government on a Peel plan.

Like so many people here in our territory, the Yukon NDP believes that environmental protection is an opportunity for economic development. It allows for multiple uses of the land, including mining and tourism.

When will this government understand what Yukoners have clearly said: that the *Final Recommended Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan* is a balanced approach that protects environment and provides economic opportunity?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: It is indeed a balanced approach that we are seeking in the development of a land use plan for the Peel watershed region. We want to see new protection for new, specially identified areas in the Peel watershed region. We also want to see a system of land use planning that allows for multiple users, that doesn't pick winners and losers, and that allows government to manage the footprint of activity on the land. That way, Mr. Speaker, we can allow certain amounts of access and development but also control the footprint by which it occurs. That's something we have said a number of times in this House and it's something that we're working toward.

At this stage in the process, we're in the final rounds of government-to-government consultation with our First Nation planning partners and we will seek to ultimately develop a land use plan for the Peel watershed region that does those things — it balances the need for economic opportunity and job creation in the territory but also takes into consideration the development of new protected areas and protects some of the key areas in the Peel watershed region from ever being developed.

Mr. Tredger: Mr. Speaker, the interim withdrawal of mineral staking in the Peel watershed will expire in December. Yesterday the minister said that it would be premature to speak about extending the withdrawal under the *Quartz Mining Act* and *Placer Mining Act* at this time.

It appears that the minister is confident that the land use planning process for the Peel watershed will be finalized within the next seven weeks. Unless the government concludes negotiations in seven weeks, the withdrawal will expire without a regional land use plan in place. Will the minister negotiate in good faith, commit to this House and the four affected First Nation governments that the interim staking withdrawal will be extended until the Peel land use process has been finalized?

Hon. Mr. Kent: As I mentioned yesterday, and in accordance with the First Nation final agreements, Yukon government is currently consulting First Nation governments on the final recommended plan for the Peel watershed. We will conclude our consultation with First Nation before making a final decision on the Peel plan, and we remain committed to working with our First Nation partners to develop and implement a mutually acceptable land use plan. As mentioned yesterday, I think at this time it's premature to

determine whether or not that staking withdrawal will be extended when it expires at the end of December. What we're focused on right now is the final round of consultations with First Nations to conclude the Peel watershed planning process and come up with a plan, as mentioned by the Minister of Environment, that doesn't pick winners and losers, is balanced and allows for a diverse array of economic opportunity in the Peel watershed.

Question re: Atlin Lake campground

Mr. Barr: After 11 years in government and engaging in countless discussions about First Nations, it would seem that the Yukon Party government has not yet learned how to conduct itself in accordance with the laws of this country and of this territory. I have a letter here, addressed to the Premier, from the lawyers for the Taku River Tlingit First Nation dated November 1, 2013, which I will table.

The Taku River Tlingit First Nation assert that meaningful consultation has not occurred and that all development on the proposed Atlin Lake campground be immediately halted until a consultation protocol is developed or they will commence legal proceedings.

Will the Premier tell this House and the Taku River Tlingit First Nation that this government will immediately halt all development on the proposed Atlin campground until a consultation protocol has been established?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: The area in question is an area that was identified well before I was born — over 40 years ago — on the Atlin Lake road in 1972. The area was designated as a park reserve for the intent of building a campground, so any notion by the NDP that this is a new idea is simply not correct.

In the budget this year we have identified funding to potentially develop a new campground in this territory. I've indicated before that I think it's a great idea to build a new campground in Yukon and that we were sorely in need of it.

I had the pleasure of meeting with the spokesperson for the Taku River Tlingit earlier this year to discuss this project and, subsequent to that, we followed up with correspondence from the Premier to the spokesperson indicating that we're happy to enter into a consultation protocol with the Taku River Tlingit.

Of course, with regard to the specific case of the campground, that is with YESAB currently, under review for the environmental and socio-economic impacts of that. We look forward to receiving YESAB's recommendations, especially recommendations that are intended to mitigate any impact that a campground might have on the TRT's traditional uses or asserted aboriginal rights in the area. We'll take every effort to undertake those mitigated measures to ensure that no negative impacts are felt.

I think I speak for many Yukoners when I say we're in strong need of a new campground in this territory.

Mr. Barr: That's not how the system works. I do not think that this is an adequate answer to this serious issue. The Yukon Party government has rushed headlong into this mess and it is of their own making. The Yukon Party government announced this campground without even notifying the Taku

River Tlingit First Nation. For years the Taku River Tlingit have requested a transboundary land claim with the Yukon so their concerns should come as no surprise. I might also add that the Taku River Tlingit were here long before the minister opposite was born.

Will the Premier step back, halt development on the proposed Atlin Lake campground and engage in meaningful consultation with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Of course we will and have engaged in consultation with the TRT. As I said, in a letter from the Premier to the Taku River Tlingit, the Premier offered to enter into a consultation protocol with the Taku River Tlingit. They said no, they didn't want to at this time. Perhaps the member opposite should get his facts straight.

Second of all, I suppose we can add campsites and campgrounds to the list of the things the NDP are against developing in this territory. As is common practice, we identified in a budget speech and in our budget that we have money set aside to develop a new campground in the territory. At that point we contacted the Taku River Tlingit and offered to enter into consultations with them. They chose not to participate in the meetings we had in some communities, but we've tried our best to engage them and to hear what their concerns are.

We want to understand what the concerns are that they have with the site and in what way we can mitigate, if possible, the impacts of development of a campground on their asserted aboriginal rights and title. That's what we're going to continue to do.

We're going to continue to offer to the Taku River Tlingit to enter into a consultation protocol if they're interested but, in the meantime, we look forward to receiving the recommendations from YESAB, which will hopefully tell us some of the ways we can develop the campground in manner that respects the traditional uses and traditional rights of the Taku River Tlingit.

But as I said, we're committed to developing a new campground in this territory.

Mr. Barr: The government is missing the point. I have nothing against campgrounds, but I have something against the government avoiding consultation. I highly doubt that the Taku River First Nation would get lawyers if they felt that they were being consulted.

This government is again heading toward a conflict with a First Nation — one that will end up in the courts, cost Yukon taxpayers money and create further economic uncertainty, not to mention the continuing damage to our relations with other First Nation governments. The Taku River Tlingit make it very clear that they have unceded aboriginal rights and title in the Yukon. The Taku River Tlingit have also made it very clear to this government on numerous occasions that they view the area for the proposed Atlin Lake campground as one of their potential land selections. Why is this government so determined to ignore the law and trample on the rights and title of the Taku River Tlingit?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: As I said, the Premier, in a letter to the Taku River Tlingit, offered to them to enter into a

consultation protocol. They declined. Their priority is to enter into a treaty negotiation with Yukon government. Of course, what we said is that their primary area of claim is British Columbia. We want them to make at least some sort of effort to engage in treaty negotiations with the British Columbia government and the Government of Canada, at which point we will be happy to come to the table when it's appropriate for us to do so.

In the meantime, we would be happy to enter into a consultation protocol with them. Again, we need them to come to the table to do that though. In the case of this particular project, as I said, we want to develop a campground in a manner that, as best we can, mitigates any negative impacts on asserted aboriginal right or title. We want to do that in a way that respects the traditional uses of the land, not only for the Taku River Tlingit, but for others in the region.

Mr. Speaker, we think that it is possible for us to do that and we hope that YESAB provides us with some recommendations for how best to do that. In the meantime, as I said before, it's clear that the NDP is against the development of a new campground in this territory, so we can add that to the list — the very growing, lengthy list of things they are against developing in this territory.

Speaker: Time for Question Period has now elapsed. We will now proceed with Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

OPPOSITION PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 497

Clerk: Motion No. 497, standing in the name of Ms. Hanson.

Speaker: It is moved by the Leader of the Official Opposition

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to build an inclusive, diversified and strong economy with good jobs and opportunities for all by:

- (1) prioritizing the completion of regional land use planning in order to create economic certainty;
- (2) partnering with First Nation governments on economic development by fully representing and honouring Yukon First Nations final agreements;
- (3) stimulating green jobs and building a renewable energy future;
- (4) supporting tourism and avoiding decisions that tarnish Yukon's tourism brand;
- (5) lessening dependence on extractive industries to drive economic growth;
- (6) generating more value from extractive industries by lessening reliance on fly-in/fly-out labour and contractors;
- (7) recognizing the importance of a vibrant arts community for our economy;
- (8) implementing policies to improve access, speed and pricing of telecommunications including information technology;

(9) improving management of capital projects so key infrastructure is built on-time, on-budget and maximizes benefits to the local economy;

(10) increasing small and local business' access to capital and government contracts;

(11) targeting job creation measures for rural Yukon; and

(12) creating more skills training within our educational system and including incentives for employers to hire apprentices.

Ms. Hanson: It gives me great pleasure to rise today to speak to a motion that I think is incredibly important at this point in the history of the Yukon Territory — a motion that describes and will talk today about the building of an inclusive, diversified and strong economy for Yukon.

Mr. Speaker, as the MLA for Whitehorse Centre, I know how important it is, and my constituents have reflected to me on a regular basis, the importance of having an economy that is inclusive and diversified. The only way you can have an inclusive and diversified economy is that you have at its core strength.

I will be speaking to a number of the measures that are essential to building an inclusive, diversified and strong economy this afternoon. This is a matter that Yukon NDP Official Opposition caucus takes very seriously. My colleagues — each of the members of the Legislative Assembly from the Official Opposition — feel strongly about the measures and issues that are identified in this motion and will be joining me in debate this afternoon to speak from their perspective and from their experience, to reflect the voices of Yukoners they have heard over the last two years, as they have seen this Yukon Party government forego opportunities presented to them — many opportunities — to build on the notion of an inclusive, diversified and strong economy.

We've heard repeatedly the Yukon Party government's message, and it's predictable. I guess it is predictable because they've honed it over 11 years in power. It sort of goes like this: previous governments botched the economy; people were leaving the territory; there were no jobs; the Yukon Party got into power in 2003 and, thanks to the Yukon Party's superb management, there have been budget surpluses, economic growth and increased population, more jobs, et cetera.

You know what, Mr. Speaker? The Yukon people know this narrative is false, that it has no underpinning, and that it's not due to the political rhetoric of the Yukon Party.

It has everything to do with place. It has everything to do with the gift of the natural resources that we have in this territory, those natural resources being the people — in the first place, the First Nation people, and those of us who have come to benefit from the beauty of this territory, the magnificent natural resources that have blessed this land. They are there, Mr. Speaker, regardless of the political party in power.

The Yukon Party, however, has given no thought to the fortunate factors that have contributed to this period of relative prosperity — factors that in many cases they had nothing to do with. For example, I cannot see one member of

the opposite benches who can claim that they personally, or their political party, had anything to do with the rise of world commodity prices, particularly the rise in the price of gold, silver, zinc and copper.

Nor is there any minister opposite or member of the Yukon Party Cabinet or backbenches who can claim any credit for the massive increases in federal transfers to the territory coffers.

When the Yukon Party came to power, approximately 86 percent of our territorial expenses were paid by federal transfers. Today it's essentially the same — between 84 and 87 percent. Having the certainty of the economic support from the federal government can and should provide Yukon government with the flexibility to develop creative and sustainable options for our economic future, for our economic presence. But to do that there is a need for our political leaders to stop acting like program managers, managing allocations primarily from the federal government.

We're looking for political leadership. That's what Yukoners need: political leadership. No matter how they spin it, the Yukon Party's economic management has been about managing an increased dependency on the federal government. That's not diversified, and ultimately it speaks to no strength.

I've heard repeatedly from the benches opposite the notion that the Yukon Party settled land claims and were responsible for the development of First Nation governments and development corporations. Again it's timing. The truth of the matter is that although a Yukon Party Premier signed the *Umbrella Final Agreement* in 1993, the hard work, the slog work, was done by many, many, many others, and in fact it was the vision of the New Democratic Party, the government in place at the time, that led to the conclusion of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and the first four.

The Minister of Economic Development/Environment may not believe that, but I'll remind him that he wasn't there. In fact, Yukon Conservatives — and history will prove us right, and we saw it again this afternoon — were 11th-hour converts to the reality of land claims. Many a Yukon Conservative and Yukon Party MLA were opposed to this new relationship, despite the economic certainty it would achieve.

I heard this afternoon the Minister of Economic Development say that Yukon Conservative governments have made it clear since 1992 that they were going to build a campground at Atlin. They don't give up, he said. We have set aside the dollars.

May I remind the minister that it was a previous minister — Conservative, Yukon Party, whatever you want to call it — a territorial Minister of Education — who said in response to the notion of First Nation land claims that white people would never stand for that because it would be giving away the land, giving away the economy by birthright — birth and blood right was the actual quote.

It's important that we move on from that. The settlement of land claims is a huge opportunity and we'll speak about that in more depth. There is a litany of other foundational

pieces that are central to the relative prosperity experienced in the Yukon and the rest of Canada's north and that the Yukon Party spin makes no mention of.

The purchase of NCPC power-generating assets for a relatively minor amount that gave the Yukon, as it devolved more province-like responsibilities, an ample supply of affordable, renewable electricity essential to our economic development. This was an NDP government that made this happen. Unfortunately, the Yukon Party's economic narrative doesn't touch on these issues. By not being inclusive and by not reflecting on the reality, the history, this Yukon Party spin fails to recognize the many factors that contribute to Yukon's economic development. In doing so, it fails to recognize the important contribution of others. It's in that other focus that we're able to move forward. That's how the territory does it. That's how we've done it to date. The Yukon Party wants the public to believe that it is only through their efforts that the economy will grow, and that no one else could be trusted to manage the Yukon economy through complicated times when the threat of global recession hangs around every corner.

Well, I'm here to say that the Yukon Party spin is simply that: spin. The Yukon Party government may have benefited from developments outside of their control, but the reason we are here this afternoon is because they have squandered many economic opportunities. It is easy to govern in times of plenty, and these last few years have been times of plenty across the north, although it must be said that there has not been a natural economic trickle-down of benefits of economic growth.

The Yukon has not used this period of relative prosperity to tackle some of the worst social problems. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, last year when a report was presented to the government that spoke about *Poverty amongst Plenty: Waiting for the Yukon Government to Adopt a Poverty Reduction Strategy*. This report spoke to the fact — and when we talk about an inclusive approach, the Yukon Party talked about developing a social inclusion and poverty reduction strategy. They talked about it three and a half years ago and then shelved it. But the opportunity was there at the time of the report by Nick Falvo, a man who has done an extensive amount of research on equity and poverty issues across the north from Carleton. He said the good news is, "Yukon is in a very strong financial situation... Insofar as new spending is required, Yukon is in a position to deliver" poverty reduction.

"And herein lies a paradox: Yukon is a jurisdiction that would clearly have much to gain by implementing a poverty-reduction strategy, and it is more than able to deliver one. Yet, it has also dragged its feet in moving toward both the adoption and implementation of such a plan."

He said, "It is not at all clear why YG has been so timid in moving forward."

In times of prosperity and surplus budgets, Yukoners wonder why this government has chosen not to tackle issues like homelessness and has not taken the evidence of the economic boon to the local economy and addressed homelessness. Why this government has chosen not to do this is beyond the ken of many, including the Official Opposition.

The boom-bust cycle is well-known in the Yukon. We have gone through the ups and downs of this cycle and we're lucky we've been on a rather long upward swing. All the indicators are indicating that swing is starting to go the other way. The challenge for the government is to build out on the best of the boom cycle and create an environment for prosperity that will endure not just for this generation but for generations to come.

Let's look at some of the economic circumstances and put on the record an economic snapshot. This is from the 2013 economic forecast.

In 2012, the territory enjoyed employment of 18,900 people. We saw a GDP growth of 3.4 percent — healthy. We saw in 2012 the beginning of a slowing of mineral exploration expenditures down to \$100 million. We saw our value of mineral production go up to about \$500 million. What we didn't see was a return to Yukoners on those non-renewable resources. We also saw the beginning of that softening with respect to building permits that fell in 2012 to \$100 million. On the positive side, we saw an increase in tourism visitors — and I'll come back to these at a later point because they are all important. This is where, as we look at this year, despite the claims from the government that all was rosy and there was no change, all of the economic forecasts, including the Yukon economic forecast, do recognize now that our GDP has decreased and will continue that way — recognition that employment will decline and that weaker mineral prices will contribute to lower exploration spending.

In fact, those lower exploration spending dollars will be where they were at the beginning of the 2000s — around \$60 million. Now is that because of the Yukon Party that that has fallen? I wonder. Does the Yukon Party assume responsibility when prices go lower similar to how they assumed the glory — the self-designated glory — when prices were high?

That economic forecast also speaks to lower mineral prices that have already led to delays in mine project development, and because these are forecasts that are prepared by economists and statisticians — professionals in that field — there is no editorial comment about other factors that are causing these delays. One of the real factors we are facing is increased uncertainty about the confrontational environment that has been created by this government. We've seen the value of building permits fall by \$20 million in one year, and we hear confirmation of what we hear anecdotally from local businesses from the economic forecast that confirms that there has been no growth in retail sales.

As I said earlier, we have this opportunity and we look to the government when the economic circumstances have been stable for several years and we see the beginning of a downturn. What strategies do they have in mind to ensure that those 21,000 employees whose average hourly wage in the Yukon is \$36, whose average weekly earnings are about \$980 — which is higher than the national average? We have a housing economy that's based on those kinds of salaries and wages, whose citizens have leveraged their own economic personal status in order to be able to afford homes that have been highly inflated because of this boom cycle. The

importance will be on ensuring that those people are not left out over the next few years as we, together, address the challenges of a changing economy — a global economy that will have an impact on this territory.

You know, it's interesting when you reflect on some of the information that's in the economic forecast and the government reports. We often think that because we see we have a large public administrations sector that that's the most significant sector of the economy in terms of jobs or employment. But jobs in the Yukon economy are primarily in the services — about 18,500 compared to 2,200 jobs in goods producing, which includes manufacturing, mining and oil and gas. It is significantly smaller in that sector, isn't it?

Yukon-wide employment in the public administration sector has increased by 1,200 employees, or about 25 percent, from 4,900 in 2003 to 6,200 public administration employees in 2012. In 2012, the public administration sector included 490 federal government employees and about 3,900 territorial government employees — of whom, one should recall, about 300 came to the Yukon government in 2003 with the devolution transfer agreement — the devolution of provincial-like responsibilities to the territory. There are another 400 or so people who are employed with municipal governments and there are in fact about roughly 1,400 First Nations government employees in this territory. That's a significant public sector reflection.

One of the factors that contribute to the buoyant economy in this territory is that public sector employees across the spectrum have been one of the leading causes of economic growth in the territory. This doesn't earn much mention in the Yukon Party's economic management spin, but it's not evenly spread. The reality is that according to the Yukon Party's own audit of its Public Service Commission, about one-quarter of the public service is excluded or not granted the rights and benefits of public servants.

So even though we just spent some time yesterday talking about the importance — and it is important — to recognize and to negotiate good, fair, responsible collective agreements with public servants, it's also equally important to ensure that those people that we ask to work for us on behalf of this territorial government are not caught in a cycle where they are extended auxiliaries-on-call or extended temporary positions where they do not have access to the benefits of their colleagues doing similar jobs. That is an area that needs closer scrutiny because it creates an inequity in terms of the economic purchasing power of this part of the public sector and it is a significant portion of our public sector.

So when we talk about the kinds of sectoral employment statistics — as I said, public administration across the spectrum — First Nations, municipal, territorial and federal governments — in 2012 there were about 6,800. The trades were 2,800; transportation and warehousing, 1,900; and accommodation and food services, 1,870. In the educational area we have almost 1,400 people; in health care about 1,000; in social assistance — the social welfare programming — a broad area, including people in the not-for-profits, about 1,100

people; and in construction — only construction jobs when we talk about goods-producing jobs — about 900.

As we said earlier, we have had an increase over the last few years until this year of about 640 mining positions, of which about two-thirds, according to the Yukon government's analysis, are fly-in/fly-out. The remaining 400 would be in forestry, manufacturing and utilities.

Through the course of this afternoon's motion debate, I will suggest that the Yukon Party government, far from being the superb economic managers that they claim to be, have missed many, many opportunities to build on the luck of the draw — the benefits from the increase in commodity prices and maintained — or, the indexed returns from the Government of Canada and the taxpayers of Canada — a relative time of stability. They have missed many opportunities to create a kind of lasting prosperity.

We have a rare opportunity in Canadian history to actually be a government that is not under threat in terms of being reliant solely upon the vagaries of the world market. Our benefits that we accrue, if any, from other industries, are add-ons to what we are getting from Canada. The challenges and the opportunities that this government have missed over the last 10 years is to work in partnership and to build on that base from Canada to make it work.

I will offer that one of the most important jobs of any government is to build an inclusive, diversified and strong economy with good jobs and opportunities for all. Inclusive means all receive benefits of prosperity and no one is left behind. A diversified economy means simply that not all our eggs are in one basket, whether that is dependency on the federal government or dependency on some aspect or another of the various extractive industries. Diversified means communities with niche industries, balanced economy, goods and services, public administration, tourism and manufacturing — a mixed economy — not a one-pillar that, if withdrawn, we collapse. We need to have a fabric of diversity in our economy to be a strong interwoven economy.

That is strength that builds resiliency, and by building, that resiliency is protected as best as possible through the combined efforts of government and the private sector — government and citizens — to withstand the boom-and-bust cycle.

It is the Yukon New Democratic Party's position that there are a number of actions that the Yukon government can take to build a diversified and strong economy with good jobs and opportunities for all. This motion speaks to a number of them. We didn't intend to be exclusive at all in our delineation of some of the opportunities that are open to government in partnership to build a strong, inclusive and diversified economy.

I thought I would start this afternoon with respect to the first item on the list — with respect to this motion — and that is prioritizing land use planning to create economic certainty. We've heard an awful lot about land use planning — and in most cases, about the lack of land use planning in this territory — but I think at the real core of the future of this territory is a promise of settling land claims with Yukon First Nations.

We have talked about this in this Legislative Assembly. I have heard many quite thoughtful and moving tributes to the First Nation leaders who, despite many odds, 40 years ago were able to get the ear of the then Prime Minister despite the views of that Prime Minister of the day that collective rights — First Nation rights — should not be recognized in modern treaties. Despite that, the compelling argument that was made by Yukon First Nation — now elders — young people in those days 40 years ago — was because they were looking for economic certainty. They did it, as you'll recall in the words of those elders, because they were tired of seeing the white man come in here and take it away and leave them a mess.

The promise of settling land claims was to create economic certainty. Land claims involved negotiations on a great many matters of importance to Yukon's original peoples having control of their land and a say in the future of development decisions on their traditional territories, and was the main impetus for the need for Yukon and Canada to come to the table and negotiate. The main impetus for Canada to come to the table, quite crassly, was because they wanted the resources. Forty years ago they wanted the resources. Speed forward 40 years now, and they want the resources and First Nations are still saying and they will say, "You will not move forward until you provide the respect that we deserve as first peoples."

That's what the land claims process was about; that's what the certainty was to provide. In return for ceding their control over 92 percent of this territory, Yukon First Nations said we believe you when you say you will work with us honourably and we will agree on how we will develop the balance of this territory. The mechanism was land use planning. It wasn't just sort of a by-your-way kind of thought. This was a very carefully thought-out section of the negotiations process. It was not easy.

There were negotiations on a number of issues other than land: heritage resources, water — water as the most important support for the basis of our ecosystems — wildlife, economic development opportunities, et cetera. But it was first and foremost a question about land. Without land claims, a modern treaty, there would forever be doubts. Who would want to invest in a major project when there are fundamental questions about the very land the project is sitting upon?

I've said before, but it bears repeating: determining the land base of a people who travelled far and wide within their traditional territories was a long and difficult process. The outcome, as I have just mentioned, was that First Nation people agreed to retain 16,000 square miles of the 207,000 square miles of this territory.

The process of identifying those land holdings was probably the most difficult part of the negotiations process. You know, the Minister of Economic Development sort of talked about his forebearers wanting this campground on Atlin Lake and that goes back to 1972. Now can you imagine if you're the Taku River Tlingit before there was a boundary that delineated the Yukon Territory from British Columbia, and if you're a member of the Taku River Tlingit, whose brothers and sisters have travelled with your family from that

southern area of British Columbia into Alaska and traditionally moved into the southern Yukon? The people of Teslin and the people of Atlin and the people of Carcross are brothers and sisters in that Tlingit traditional territory. So to ask the Teslin Tlingit Council and the Carcross-Tagish First Nation to select from that vast territory cumulative totals of 600, 700 or 800 square miles was difficult. But in return for that, the Government of Yukon and that First Nation government solemnly committed that they would find ways to jointly plan how the future land uses would be determined in that traditional territory.

First Nations and governments jointly came to an understanding that land use planning can be and is a comprehensive means of addressing cultural, social, economic and environmental sustainability. Together as a result of negotiating these agreements —let's be clear. They're not just First Nation agreements; they're our agreements. We entered into them together. We signed them. We're covenanted by these agreements. So don't just refer to them as First Nation agreements and try to put it the side. Every aspect of everything we do in this territory is intricately involved with these agreements.

Through those agreements, we created the Yukon Land Use Planning Council to make recommendations to government and each affected First Nation with respect to land use planning. I saw my colleague from Vuntut Gwitchin holding up the *UFA*, and good on him. Chapter 11, there we are, talking about land use planning. The unfortunate thing is that it has been a frustrating and slow process. What do we have to show for what we agreed with 11 First Nations in chapter 11, where we said we would identify and we would complete land use planning as a prerequisite to ensuring the economic certainty and stability for this territory?

There are eight — the land claims process — the land claims identified create — proposed planning regions in the Yukon. The North Yukon — Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation has indicated that and, thank goodness, in 2009 that plan was completed. Many would argue that it's an intensity of use plan where many features of what's necessary to complete a land use plan — with respect to areas that may be designated as needing preservation or for future development — were very much identified in the Vuntut Gwitchin negotiations through the creation and the recognition of things like the Bear Cave Mountain, the withdrawal of oil and gas throughout the Crow Flats, the creation of national parks. So what really remained for North Yukon was a determination of what would go along within that traditional territory of the Vuntut Gwitchin around the intensity of use on the Dempster Highway.

There remains to be completed regional land use planning with the Northern Tutchone, including the Na Cho Nyäk Dun, Little Salmon-Carmacks, Selkirk, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, because the Northern Tutchone planning region would include the traditional territories of all those First Nations.

We saw the commencement of the planning exercise for the Dawson region, which will include consultation and involvement of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Vuntut Gwitchin because their traditional territories overlap. There is a

planning region for the Dakh Ka of the Teslin Tlingit and the Carcross-Tagish. There is a need to complete and a commitment to complete planning in the Whitehorse region, which includes the Kwanlin Dun and Ta'an Kwäch'an. There is the Kluane proposed planning region, which is the Kluane, White River and Champagne and Aishihik First Nations. There is a proposed planning region for the Kaska, Ross River Dena Council and the Liard First Nation. I'll come back to that one in a second.

Again, we have what has now become probably the world's longest and most controversial planning process — the Peel River watershed involving the Na Cho Nyäk Dun, Vuntut Gwitchin, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Tetlit Gwich'in.

I've heard many times from the members opposite, Why didn't the other governments do something about this? They could have done something. The reason I rant out the names of all of these First Nations was to make it abundantly clear that until the First Nation final agreements and self-government arrangements with each of the affected First Nations in each of the proposed planning areas had been completed, it was not possible to move forward on all of these plans.

So, North Yukon — the Vuntut Gwitchin agreement was completed in 2009. There was only one First Nation involved in that. The other agreements are dependent upon having the other agreements of the other First Nations. The Teslin Tlingit and the Carcross-Tagish agreement had to wait — the beginning of that planning process had to wait until the Carcross agreement came into effect. That is in the tenure of this government — similarly with Kluane, Whitehorse. But there has been no movement to move forward on them.

Part of the problem is that there is an appearance, often stated by First Nations, that the government has not acted in good faith, that there is a tendency to interfere in the process of land use planning when, for whatever political reasons, the government doesn't like what they see. We saw that with the former Premier of the Yukon Party, who publicly threatened Environment officials and ordered them to change their submissions to the Peel planning process. We've seen this current government raising false spectres that accepting the Peel plan, for example, would be a de facto expropriation of claims costing billions of dollars.

Today's Premier allegedly is still using this line in Germany, even after it was revealed that government officials say that such costs, if any, are unknown. Of course it is the same Yukon Party government that allowed staking in the Peel planning area to take place before placing a moratorium on staking, increasing the number of staked claims by 4,000. So if there is a problem, it's a fabrication, but it's a fabricated problem of their own creation.

I was going to, but I won't do it just in the interest of time — but I have with me a number of quite recent reports with respect to the lack of validity of the kinds of claims that the Premier has made during the election campaign and as recently as this fall when he was in Germany. I would urge him to actually do some research and to look at the difference between mineral resource and mineral reserve, and the

thresholds that are required before any company can or will make any claims as to the feasibility — well, there are no feasibility studies — for these exploration projects in the Peel. That's a given and that's a known. There is no objective knowledge about their value — only as this government is so quick to flame speculative opinion

As I said, land use planning was an essential part of the resolution of Yukon land claims and is an essential tool to build economic certainty and a sustainable economy. This is not a radical proposition. Even the Fraser Institute agrees that land use planning needs to happen to ensure economic certainty.

Chiefs at the Conference Board of Canada meetings recently called for a recommitment to getting land use planning done and I would echo that. Get it done, but get it done right because there is a lot of mistrust when it comes to land use planning and in the intentions of this government. The Yukon Party would need to do a lot to re-establish the trust of Yukon First Nations and the public in order to expedite and prioritize land use planning. I would suggest they consult the recent article, the one I tabled this afternoon in the *Northern Review*, "Fixing Land Use Planning in the Yukon Before It Really Breaks: A Case Study of the Peel Watershed". This study developed an analytical framework from the policy sciences and identified that it is not the polarizing nature of the perspectives on the Peel land use plan that caused it to break down, but rather it is a broken decision-making process that to date has failed to secure the common interest.

The article went into depth on what has gone wrong in the Peel planning process and provides some very solid recommendations for the future — solid and practical. One recommendation is that the process for establishing the ground rules for making decisions within land use planning needs to be clarified and made authoritative. The unilateral reworking of guiding principles and land use classifications is provocative; it corrodes participants' trust and is unlikely to lead to outcomes in the common interest.

Another finding they had is that the ground rules for addressing disagreement between the parties within land use planning need to be established starting at the beginning of the planning process. As the Peel watershed case demonstrates, the way in which the Yukon government went about making modifications to the final recommended plan after it was submitted to the parties — keeping in mind that this is government-to-government — has come at significant political cost. In order to prevent such an outcome in the future, the parties need to be clear about their position.

The article concludes and I'll quote: "There are undoubtedly a number of different and, at times, conflicting perspectives and values being promoted by groups and individuals involved in Yukon land use planning. That is to be expected in a diverse and democratic society. However, in the context of the Peel Watershed, the decision-making process led by the YG has to date failed to navigate such differences with sufficient regard for the common interest of Yukoners and the legitimate special interests of First Nations and other

stakeholders. This failure has left planning process participants with the perception that they have been denied both respect and the ability to have their voices heard within land use planning for the region."

So, Mr. Speaker, 20 years after signing of the landmark final agreement and the first four final agreements, the Yukon really still is in the early development of land use planning. We have the framework; we have the guidance that First Nation governments, the Government of Yukon and Canada provided us. Building a modern, strong and inclusive economy means prioritizing the completion of land use planning.

I want to reflect on positive experiences with respect to land use planning. I mentioned earlier that I would come back to the Kaska, Liard and Ross River Dena Council. As you're aware, Mr. Speaker, the Kaska Dena traditional territory — although for government purposes, the Kaska was divided into various *Indian Act* bands and said there would be a Ross River *Indian Act* band and a Liard First Nation *Indian Act* band and there would be some folks down in Lower Post and others in Kwadacha. In fact from the Kaska perspective, those boundaries of British Columbia, Yukon and N.W.T. was not how their traditional territory looked; that's not how they lived; that's not how they travelled.

But 15 years ago the Kaska — which includes representatives of the Liard First Nation, Ross River and the Kaska Dena — worked together to create what is called the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area.

I've heard in here that we can't possibly do land use planning with an unsettled First Nation. Well B.C. could; B.C. did. Muskwa-Kechika — pronounced Muskwa-Kechika, and I've got this one down — are the names of two major rivers that flow through the area in northern British Columbia. The names are of First Nation origin and translated Muskwa means "bear" and Kechika means "long, inclining river".

I think that it's important to reflect upon the opportunities and creativity that is reflected in this exercise — it's more than an exercise because it's a manifestation of how business is done in this massive area, and I'll get back to that in a moment. If you are driving through Fort Nelson, there is a visual display centre about the Muskwa-Kechika, and it's well worth stopping and looking at.

If I may — and I can make copies of this for folks if they are interested — but I'd just like to refer to this pamphlet that describes the process for establishing the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area and ask members to reflect on how we could seize on some of these opportunities in this territory.

In 1998, the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area was legislated by the provincial government as a world-class management model. The provincial government saw the need to designate this special area in northern B.C. to ensure that the land would be viable for generations to come. An advisory board was appointed to provide advice and recommendations on how the area should be managed. That board was made up of dedicated volunteers who counsel government on a number of issues, including land use, resource planning, management research monitoring, and funding expenditures.

The role of this board is to ensure that planning, research and inventories remain a priority of the B.C. government's management of this area, to advise the government on natural resource management, to help prioritize local strategic plans including parks, recreation, wildlife, and oil and gas. When you see the vast area that this comprises you'll realize that the values that are contained in the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area are all values, all resources. The board's role is also to provide community support and raise awareness by providing opportunities for local involvement.

The Muskwa-Kechika Management Area was originally sized at 4.45 million hectares; however, following the approval of the Mackenzie Land and Resource Management Plan the total size was increased to 6.4 million hectares — about twice the size of Vancouver Island — making it one of the largest legally designed management areas in the world.

This board, in the 15 years, has spearheaded research initiatives and programs. It has been involved in the Churchill mine cleanup project, jointly funded by the Muskwa-Kechika trust fund and Teck Cominco and it was a successful initiative to reclaim an old mine site and return it to the high environmental standards of the Muskwa-Kechika area. They've done other barrel clean-up projects and joint projects with the Ministry of Environment. They've even had environmental youth camps. They've done partnerships to do research studies and reports on large mammals, including bears, wolves, caribou and Stone sheep as well as a mineral lick study.

In cooperation — joint projects between the First Nations — they've done a geographic valuation systems project that allows First Nations to participate in resource management and planning in ways meaningful to First Nations and consistent with their traditional values. But you know, again this is an idea. It's not a suggestion that this is something the Yukon needs to adopt, but it shows that where creative people want to achieve some certainty to see development occur, you can do it if you work in cooperation. The most unique feature about the Muskwa-Kechika management area is that the area allows for a healthy, productive and diverse industry, truly making it B.C.'s working wilderness. While protecting a world-class wilderness and wildlife complex, opportunity exists for economic development that benefits the region, the province and First Nations.

Mr. Speaker, First Nations have demonstrated their flexibility and their willingness to work in partnership with governments and other stakeholders. It has been done inside and outside of the land claims process in B.C. It can be done in this territory.

I would now like to talk about the economic opportunities that come from partnering with First Nation governments on economic development and fully respecting and honouring our final agreements. Earlier this spring, I had the opportunity to join my colleagues in this House to pay tribute to the visionaries who on May 29, 1993 signed the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and the first four final agreements. I said at the time that it's important to remember that although that *Umbrella Final Agreement* and each of the agreements that

flow from it — because they all are replicates of the agreement with specific provisions for each First Nation — although there are about 300 pages of complex legal language, the reality is that these agreements set the stage for success. It was success for all of us for now and for the years and decades to come. However, it is sad that it is no longer a surprise that many Yukoners think that we have fallen short in realizing the great opportunity presented to the Yukon by the First Nation final agreements and by the self-government agreements.

Indeed the potential in Yukon is immense. Realizing that potential requires us all essentially to breathe life into the agreements that we have entered into; to not let them sit on the shelf, but realize that they have and are the fundamental changes for this territory.

I think at the time I mentioned that many of the people who were involved in the process and the territorial governments — and I watched for many years as successive territorial governments were eager to complete the devolution transfer agreement. I also watched and sat in rooms where First Nations said, "Not until we have our land claims; not until we are assured that our rights are recognized and that you recognize us as a government." This may come as a surprise to some, but the words used in those rooms was that the Yukon Party — and they didn't care who it was — was a hostile government. They thought 20 years ago or more that Yukon governments would not honour agreements unless they had them signed, sealed and delivered before the Yukon Party — Yukon government, whatever one it was at the time, whatever government — because their history going back to the '70s had been resistance and hostility every time they talked about asserting their rights.

Having achieved the conclusion of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and the first four final agreements and having them come into effect in 1995 opened the way for the progress to be made in having the government of the day being willing to let First Nations, not be a party to the devolution agreement, but to participate in those discussions. It allowed us as governments to have, in effect, the essential building blocks for the governance of this territory, and they are interwoven. The governance fabric of this territory is built on the First Nation final agreements, the First Nation self-government agreements and the devolution transfer agreement. Take one away, and you have an incomplete puzzle and you have challenges to the certainty and you have challenges to the prosperity of this territory.

So when I talk about breathing life into these agreements — although some days it feels like we're doing life support — it means that the bodies created by the final agreements, such as the Fish and Wildlife Management Board and the renewable resource councils, are not marginalized when key decisions are made. It means that the obligation to complete land use planning is honoured as a priority by actually dedicating the time and resources to their completion and that the recommendations by the YESA Board — created by the parties to provide a unified assessment process for

development in the Yukon, the YESAA process — are not routinely varied or set aside.

Fulfilling these commitments is part of the bargain because to do otherwise is to contort the vision reached at the negotiating table. It is time to reinvigorate and empower public involvement in government decision-making using the framework established by the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and the First Nation final and self-government agreements.

I've said many times — and it has been my experience over the 35 years that I've been in this territory and first worked with First Nation people — that Yukon First Nation people are patient. They have worked hard to establish new governments and to live up to the terms of a new relationship that is signified by the agreements that we all signed on to. As I said earlier this afternoon, these agreements are not just First Nation agreements. Canada and Yukon signed on too. Now we must collectively honour and implement this new relationship.

As I recall — and it struck me at the time and that's why I said it in May — we've seen the recognition and the evolution of some very dynamic First Nation leadership as a result of the power that has come from the conclusion of these agreements. I paraphrased the CEO of the Carcross-Tagish First Nation Development Corporation who, when speaking to the challenges facing his First Nation in putting forward and developing an economic vision for the Southern Lakes region of this territory, said at the time that the time of the handout or the hand-up has passed.

The respectful relationship that can and should flow from the signing of these final agreements is now realized with a handshake between equals. Isn't that what good business is all about? Isn't that what certainty is all about? It's equals shaking hands and saying, "Let's get on with it, let's do the job."

So, it's unfortunate that after 11 years of Yukon Party government there has been a lack of substantial progress on land use planning. We heard the chief saying — reiterating again at the Conference Board of Canada meeting — that they want to get on with it. First Nation leadership tell me that they are looking for an expedited process, a commitment from this government to expedite land use planning in this territory.

Land use planning is the major part of the commitments made through negotiation of the final agreements, but there are many, many other ways that the Yukon government, I believe, has failed to respect and honour these agreements with Yukon First Nations. Many times I have heard First Nations tell me there has been a refusal to partner. "Partnership" is a fine word just like "consultation". What makes these real, rather than just words, is the degree of mutuality. If you mean it — if you mean that handshake, you're a partner. If you're holding back, only giving part, that's not partnership.

The 20th anniversary of the signing of the first four agreements and the signing of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* shone a light on how governments in the Yukon could build enduring relationships, so we can learn from lessons. We can ensure that we do not ever repeat situations where we ignore

provisions in these agreements, where we're not dragged to the table because we insist that what was negotiated in chapter 22 of the agreements — where we should deal with economic opportunities so we don't repeat these situations like where the Kwanlin Dun First Nation sued Yukon after being shut out of the Whitehorse airport construction project — where it doesn't take years for the Carcross-Tagish First Nation or other First Nations to get the Government of Yukon, not to give money, but to demonstrate some flexibility and understanding with respect to some creativity around land matters — it wasn't money being asked for there; it was a successful private sector project was delayed by this government because they couldn't get their head around using a provision that was negotiated in the land chapter of these agreements — where we don't find ourselves in confrontation or looming confrontation such as we heard today with respect to the Atlin campground — threats of lawsuits are as good as a lawsuit when it comes to frightening off potential investors.

That's not the climate we need in this territory. Before we make decisions to move ahead on pet projects, we need to talk with our partners. We need to be aware of who those partners are — and it is no surprise that this Yukon government has recognized transboundary claims — the Taku River Tlingit, the Kaska Dena Council, Northwest Territories First Nations. They're recognized, Mr. Speaker. This is not a surprise. There is no excuse for ignorance on these matters.

We have many, many opportunities to learn from the mistakes over the last few years — whether it's pushing the Ross River Dena Council with respect to their challenge with modernizing the mining rules in this territory, whether it's removing consent provisions in existing legislation that were put there to respect aboriginal rights and title, whether it's our failure to live up to the expectations established in the early days of the Yukon Party government and its *Cooperation in Governance Act* — a piece of legislation that had been promised and has been shelved — not doing things that have caused First Nations to worry and to wonder about the commitment when they see refusal to clean up areas like the Scout Lake shooting range; not looking at how deep consultation — I use the word "consultation" in its legal context; I'm not talking about sending letters, I'm talking about deep consultation, the obligations the Supreme Court of Canada has found that governments have — with respect to so many matters, the most recent one being the expansion — or the notion of expanding — as the government got more aggressive with respect to the development of the gas industry in this territory.

First Nations are interested, they need to be involved in that discussion in a meaningful way. They weren't, and we've seen the backlash. Could there have been another outcome, another result? Opportunities, Mr. Speaker, opportunities.

During the last election campaign, the Premier in his riding made an announcement — actually talked about how he was going to deal with the housing crisis — that he was going to work the Kwanlin Dun First Nation and make available a significant number of already-developed land lots within the City of Whitehorse. Right now they're not shovel-ready, Mr.

Speaker. All you needed to do was build the houses because the roads are there and water and sewers are there. We're still waiting. Kwanlin Dun is still waiting for that economic opportunity.

It was a commitment made by the Premier in the election campaign. There are other opportunities in terms of partnership — real partnerships — building on experiences that have been done in the past. I was in Carmacks this summer with my colleague, the Member for Mayo-Tatchun. I had been there earlier in the spring as well — we had a barbeque in that beautiful little park by the river. One of the things that we talked about with the community was the opening of the new administration building last spring that the Little Salmon-Carmacks First Nation had built.

It's a beautiful building, and the interesting thing is it was designed with a view and was built with a tenant in mind — because one of the things that we've seen successfully demonstrated in the past in other communities is that governments work together cooperatively — First Nation government, the Government of Yukon and in some cases, but rarely, the federal government. Most cases in the past it has been the territorial government and First Nation governments that jointly develop these tenancy arrangements.

So the Little Salmon-Carmacks First Nation designed and built this new administration building with the tenant, the Department of Health and Social Services, in mind. A year later or more, that First Nation is still carrying the cost for empty space and there is no indication of when that partnership will, or if it will, be fulfilled. What an opportunity that is lost — pulling together in a collaborative way services provided by both the First Nation and the territorial government dealing with many of the very same people. It is an economic opportunity, an economic stimulant for the community. It's also a really good way to build on the notion of inclusivity, of how we deliver services in a different way — in a way that's mindful of each other's responsibilities but also builds on the opportunities that come from working in close proximity.

When I was in Pelly Crossing — again with the member for Mayo-Tatchun — they reminded us — this was in the spring — that they had been waiting for over two years for a response from the Premier regarding their concerns about establishing a protective buffer zone around Fort Selkirk and he hadn't responded. It was a simple matter: how do you ensure this important heritage resource — important both to First Nation and non-First Nation citizens of this territory? It has heritage values that settlers and First Nations, for different reasons, have come to respect and to value. To suggest that mineral staking and mineral development can be conducted right up to it threatens, or has the potential to threaten, those values. Again, it's an opportunity — it's the simple things, it's that simple respect that creates those opportunities.

I've been amazed over the years as I've watched the changes in Dawson City and watched how the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation has become an economic force in that territory. Not only are they an economic force in terms of the

businesses that they own — creating jobs — they also have developed a very dynamic cultural arts presence.

Their cultural centre, the Dänojà Zho Cultural Centre, provided and still provides an opportunity for this government to work in collaboration, to create a visible face in Dawson for the Yukon government's tourism sector. Because where is it? It's the federal government; it's not the Yukon tourism sector. It was an opportunity the First Nation offered to the Government of Yukon and this government chose not to partner with them. It signals a lost opportunity. One wonders why.

First Nation governments are a dynamic, new force with respect to the economy in this territory. The Self-Government Secretariat for the Council of Yukon First Nations published economic statistics from the 11 self-governing First Nations a year ago. At that time, they said the total employment of the 11 self-governing First Nations was 1,500 people — up about 200 since 2010. Their estimated weekly payroll is \$5.6-million. That's a significant contribution to the local economy if it's spent in the Yukon. Why wouldn't we want to partner with those people? Why wouldn't we want to be seen to respect Yukon First Nations public servants and encouraging them and their governments to do business here?

First Nations are, as I said, a major economic force in the territory. They have been here; they always will be here. They are looking to invest in this territory. They hire Yukoners. They are owners of important businesses and major investors in key industries — construction, construction materials, manufacturing, transportation, tourism, the airline, food and accommodation, to say nothing of the music, arts and culture fields. They are building important economic infrastructure in the Yukon. We need to be partners. We need to be real partners — not partners of convenience when it looks good in the headline or on a trip. Some industries in the private sector have recognized this — so kudos to Northern Vision, to those involved with Kilrich, to Northern and Air North. They see the potential, Mr. Speaker.

We have a long way to go to build true economic partnerships in the Yukon — to build those true partnerships that were envisioned by the framers of the land claims agreement.

At the Conference Board of Canada meetings a few weeks ago, one of the speakers was J. Malcolm Ross. But Mr. Ross was chief, if you remember, of the Tetlit Gwich'in First Nation when they completed their treaties in 1992. He has since gone on to become pretty successful and so have the Tetlit Gwich'in businessmen. One of the things he said to the participants at the Conference Board of Canada's Summit on Canada's North was adhere to those agreements, and you will prosper.

You know, I've been talking about the importance of having a willingness to be creative and to think outside the box. I know that yesterday the Premier said that this government is pretty comfortable working within the box, but I'll remind members that the First Nations and the government representatives who sat together across from each other and debated deeply and profoundly on the principles that would

guide the new relationship — the new economy of this territory — were not thinking within the box. They were guided by mandates, sure, set by their political masters, but a narrow interpretation or a reading of a mandate would never have enabled the myriad interconnected mini-agreements that are contained in the whole of the First Nation final and self-government agreements.

It cannot be stated often enough that these are our agreements. Every Yukon citizen is, by virtue of the signature on these agreements of Yukon Premiers, negotiators and witnesses. We are party to and a part of the new relationship of these agreements. What an amazing opportunity and a daunting challenge they set before us all. There is no prescription here. We are enabled to do things differently. It's not a prescription.

Yukoners are risk-takers and, in entering with an open mind and an open heart into the new relationships established by First Nation final and self-government agreements, we have collectively taken a major but risky step into the 21st century. The risk is falling back into old patterns of behaviour, acting as if what was so carefully crafted over so many years does not exist. We saw again this afternoon evidence of a tendency to want to fall back into those old patterns, acting as if the new relationship does not exist.

There are so many aspects of developing this diverse economy and I'm not going to be able to speak to all of them this afternoon. I know my colleagues will, but I have a number of other aspects that I wanted to focus on, partly because they are areas that as Leader of the Official Opposition, when I have an opportunity to be invited to various meetings I seize on those, because it's an opportunity not just to go there, but to actually learn, hear and listen to people who have many things to offer us as we develop this diverse and strong economy.

An area that I think the Yukon NDP feel very strongly about as the Official Opposition, echoing the voices of many people throughout this territory, is the absolute importance of supporting our tourism industry and avoiding decisions that tarnish the Yukon tourism brand. I'd like to speak a little bit about that if I may.

This spring, I had the opportunity in June to attend a tourism town hall that was put on by the Tourism Industry Association of Canada and Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon. There were a number of startling points raised at that meeting. I think it's important to situate our Yukon tourism industry in the global context, just as we situate our resource extraction industries in the global context. They're not isolated, and things that are going on around the world and things that are going on across this country impact our tourism industry in this territory.

Globally, the growth rate of tourism has been about three percent. The tourism growth rate domestically has been 7.6 percent. One of the challenges that Canada's tourism industry is facing is that our competitiveness as a tourism destination has been hurt by key public policy barriers. We've talked before about how some of the random — or seemingly

random — federal government cuts have resulted in serious negative implications for our economy.

The federal government, in its omnibus budgets, has resulted in serious negative implications for our economy. The federal government, in its omnibus budgets, has cut the marketing investment for Canada from \$72 million in 2011 to \$58 million. Now this is our national marketing investment fund, putting Canada at the bottom of the pack internationally. When you think about the implications of that — the Canadian Tourism Commission said at this meeting in June that the tourism industry in Canada is at a crossroads. When we look at the implications of some of the statistics for what it means for the economy of this territory, I think it also raises some questions about how we strategize and how we think about the tourism industry and where we're putting our money.

The biggest growth in Canadian tourism has been the domestic market. In 2001, the domestic market in tourism was \$36.2 billion; in 2011 it was \$63.7 billion, a 300-percent increase. The U.S. market, on the other hand, had decreased in that intervening period from \$10.4 billion to \$7.2 billion, and our international market, where we spent a lot of our time and energy, had only grown by \$.5 billion, from \$7.5 billion to \$8 billion. There was a travel deficit overall, so we're spending more money overseas as Canadians than we are domestically. That is a challenge because even though there is a significantly huge amount of domestic market available to us, we're not seizing it.

Domestic revenue is where I think the opportunity exists for this territory and the notion of not tarnishing our brand. When we speak to tourism values and what people value about the Yukon — and I'll come to that in a second — we can't dismiss the views of others when they say they like the Yukon because of our pristine wilderness, our unique First Nation cultures and our wildlife.

Domestic revenue and tourism accounts for 81 percent of tourism revenue nationally, which is up from 65 percent, so Canadians are prepared to travel in-country more. We need to grasp at that but it's at risk because the Canadian government, which this government has been mute on — I have not heard one peep from the Minister of Tourism with respect to concerns expressed about the decline in tourism marketing. That's an aid that assists because in terms of scale, we're small, so if the federal marketing investment board has gone down and has continued to be decreased, we're at risk because of the growth of out-bound tourism because at the same time that the federal government has cut its investment in marketing tourism, the American government has augmented it and is flooding the market.

I'm not making this up. These are the statistics that came from the Tourism Industry Association — from the Canadian Tourism Commission — last June. I applaud the officials because they were very keen and actively engaged there, but there was no ministerial presence in the discussions so it was hard to engage with the minister to say, "Geez, you know, what are we going to do about this?" because I would have loved to do it. We had that opportunity a bit at the tourism

meeting in Haines, Alaska, in May, but that was unfortunately not possible in June.

The tourism industry needs allies to speak out. They need allies to speak out when the federal Conservative government makes cuts as they've done — so it's not just the cuts to Parks Canada that have an impact on the local economy, but it's the strategic expenditures on marketing. We should also note that effectively, if you take inflation into consideration, we're seeing the same kind of flat-lining approach within this government to expenditures on tourism. In the last five years, the budget for the Department of Tourism and Culture has essentially remained the same — \$23.6 million, \$23.8 million, \$23.3 million, and \$26 million, with \$24 million forecast this year.

We need champions. We need to look at this area, which provides a huge opportunity in terms of working to develop the resilient and sustainable economy for all regions of the territory, not just some.

I know that I've raised this question before — and I think that it's important as we fully develop the tourism industry in this territory to really get a good handle on the net economic impact of tourism in this territory. I understand that, so far, the minister has said that they keep track of the number of visitors in and out of the territory, but what we need to know is the net economic impact.

Similarly we have raised the issue of knowing the net economic impact of a mine. Other jurisdictions can tell you that; other jurisdictions are developing the economic indices so that we can see where we need to put more money or where we need to work in better partnership with the tourism sector.

In the Yukon visitor tracking system that was discussed at that meeting — and I've said this before — the fact that we have a three-percent increase year over year is great. If any one of us had investments or a bank account that was getting three percent year over year, we'd be pretty happy. Here's a solid investment and our budget allocation doesn't reflect that; it doesn't reflect that we're prepared to put even a three-percent increment year over year into marketing tourism.

Where were those people coming from? Seven percent were coming from the U.S., 28 percent were coming from all other destinations and the balance was from Canada.

If you took together what they spent here and the average — I never know how they figure it out — \$64 a day, which seems kind of low — and the transportation that the net impact of visitors in the last year — this is based on this detailed survey that they asked people to do — it was about \$140.5 million. But the fact that the Canadian market is bigger than either the U.S. or other, which includes our Europe and Asia markets, is important, and I think it should give us pause to think about how we might seize that opportunity to get them to stay longer. Maybe this an opportunity that we build with respect to the changing demographics. We're saying that we'd like to engage in that conversation with the tourism sector and the related sectors because — and this is where it becomes so important — when tourists were asked what made them want to come to the Yukon, 25 percent said it was the authentic experience and 18 percent were cultural explorers.

It's very important that when we brand and when we talk about our tourism and the importance of tourism to us, we recognize that people don't come here for Disneyland. They're not looking for the ersatz experience. They're not looking for an industrial experience. They want to be able to see the balance. They want to see that tourism can be done with integrity and I would wager that they do expect that their economic clout is respected. If I'm willing to spend \$5,000 or \$6,000 to come to the Yukon as a tourist, I don't expect that, if I express an opinion about what I value about this territory, it should be dismissed or ridiculed as we've heard in this Legislative Assembly.

Now I'm not sure if the Premier apologized to the good citizens of Dusseldorf when he went to Germany this fall, for the comments made by one of his colleagues, in dismissing the views expressed about the importance of retaining a world-class area like the Peel River watershed. In the digital age, word travels really fast and we saw how fast that can happen. You know, it was ironic on one hand. If you travel — and most of people in this room do — one of the books you usually pick up is the *Lonely Planet* and it was great to see them put the Yukon on as a top 10 destination, but kind of sad for them to have to add, "See it before it is gone" — see the values, which those tourists want to see, gone. You know in this digital age, as I said, the comments that disparage had the ability to be transmitted quickly.

But on the digital aspect, one of the things that is really important is to recognize that tourists coming to this territory — 81 percent of them — get all their information with respect to what they're going to see and what they're going to do in this territory on a computer, tablet or iPhone, and wi-fi then becomes critically important.

Mr. Speaker, the *Milepost* is now digital. What opportunities does that provide for us in partnership — private sector and public sector — for businesses along the highway where no longer do you have to carry that big clunky book. Your iPhone could be connected — changing opportunities, new events going up and down the highway as we build the opportunities to work together.

We live in a crowded space. A distinct brand for our tourism is critical. But people don't want to be targeted just because you have a segment to figure out for the tourism market for this group or that group. They want to know that you understand why they're coming here, and that's an opportunity. I think that we can build on it. I think the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon has made it clear that they want to build on it. I think that First Nation tourism operators and cultural operators know that we can make this a vibrant sector of our economy, even more than it already is.

The return on our investment by augmenting what we're prepared to put from a government side in partnership with the private sector has huge returns. We can help the Minister of Tourism make that case by working in partnership with the Minister of Economic Development to develop those economic indices more robustly so that the tourism industry can be a key economic driver as part of a strong diversified economy that the territory can be building.

There are opportunities. We saw some work that occurred and the result was great — to see the work done at the airport in terms of building the additional terminal there so that Canada Border Services Agency was prepared to allow the international flights. I know it wasn't without its problems, but establishing joint working groups between the Tourism Industry Association and government with respect to infrastructure will allow us to expand upon the alliances, opportunities and strategies that already have their basis in terms of the ideas within the industry.

There are huge opportunities, but it does take a government that is willing to look at what the left hand is doing and what the right hand is doing and making sure there is a balance. The Official Opposition knows it can be done and we'll work with the government in cooperation to see that happen. We would rather do it in cooperation, but if we see that the government is refusing to maintain that balance, we will hold them to account.

Another area that I thought I should touch on this afternoon is with respect to the importance of ensuring — and that's why I talk about the balance — that we don't build an economy that has so much dependence on one pillar that we that we are left in the lurch. We have seen that in some governments across this country where there is an unhealthy dependence on one extractive industry or another to the exclusion of any other. We can't afford that, Mr. Speaker.

The Yukon Party government was proud to say, and has been saying, that so goes mining, so goes the Yukon. That's what the Yukon Party said. We know that a diversified and strong economy wants and needs robust extractive industries, but it's not the only sector of our economy that we need to have. We are experiencing currently, as I've said before, production being down, exploration is down, and major projects are delayed.

The Yukon Party has told us that oil and gas is a major pillar of the Yukon economy. It's a wish list that goes back to 2003 at least. It's not the case in terms of economic return in terms of oil and gas, but they'd like it to be so and have aggressively pushed for fracking of Yukon shale gas.

The Yukon was founded — in terms of modern day history — on mining. I'd say that the Yukon New Democratic Party, unlike most other parties in this House, actually has had MLAs and premiers who worked in the mining sector.

Members opposite didn't hear me. I said that the Yukon NDP, unlike the minister opposite who just spoke, actually has MLAs and Premiers who worked in the mining sector. We know that mining is a particularly important player not only through large projects, but also through placer mining and exploration. We know that. We know that because we are familiar with the boom/bust cycle that impacts economies and communities tied to natural resources and world commodity prices.

Yukoners are generally supportive of mining and extractive industries, and so is the New Democratic Party. It was the New Democratic Party that introduced the mineral incentive program. We're pleased to see this government has augmented it again this year in response to a slowing

economy. That's fine, that's what it was intended to do; to help grubstake exploration efforts. The Yukon NDP worked hard, as did all parties, to find ways to keep the Faro Mine operating when it was an economic engine for this territory. We would argue that the Yukon Party has not done enough to add value to this sector and that we could get more benefits.

You know, I'm often critical of governments that have a singular view, but there are some champions that Canadians have looked at. Some will think it funny that I would support a strong position taken by a Premier who demanded that the resource extraction industries make a solid return to his jurisdiction and who said, "If you don't like it, go away. You'll come back when you want my resources, but my people will get a fair rate of return for your access to our natural resources." You know what, they did. We need a Yukon Danny Williams; we need a Yukon Danny Williams in the version of the Yukon NDP. Too bad he was the wrong stripe, but he had the right message and we as Yukoners do need to ensure that we do get our fair rate of return.

I heard a motion this afternoon suggesting that members opposite want to solidify and maintain the free-entry staking system, a system that was established in the late 1800s — 1848 to 1855. We all know the history. It established and opened up the west so that we could move settlers across, particularly toward California for the gold rush. Times have changed; they've changed a whole lot since 1848 to 1855. In those days they shot Indian people. They didn't talk to them. There was no notion of aboriginal rights or title. Assertions of that would see you put in jail. Slavery still existed. One-third of the people representing Yukoners today would not have been able to vote. Women couldn't vote; First Nation people couldn't vote.

If you didn't own land, you couldn't vote. Things have changed. Free-entry staking is an archaic holdover.

Do you know, Mr. Speaker, I'm not alone nor is the Yukon NDP alone in suggesting that there are opportunities for change. What we have said in the past and what I'll say here today is we're not prescribing what should replace or how we replace the outdated and archaic view that the ability of an 18-year-old or older to go and be able to stake a claim and have those rights — rights ascribed to the staking of that claim that trumped every other value for land in this territory — whether it be agricultural, residential, tourism, wilderness outfitters or you name it.

Other provinces — I think we could learn from the experiences of other places. In Ontario in August 2008, the Government of Ontario of the day put out a discussion paper on modernizing mining legislation. I'm not speaking to the merits of what they put out, but I am speaking to the merits of them being open to having the discussion; to bringing the mining industry and the free-entry staking system into the 21st century. They did this paper on free-entry staking with a view to finding a balance — a consultation to ensure that mining legislation promotes fair and balanced development that benefits all Ontarians in a sustainable and socially appropriate way while supporting a vibrant, safe and environmentally sound mining industry.

That didn't cause mining to collapse in Ontario. They had five critical policy elements that they identified in this discussion paper. The first was a mineral tenure system and security of investment; the second was aboriginal rights and interests related to mining development; the third was the regulatory process for exploration activities on Crown land; the fourth, interestingly, was land use planning; and the fifth part was the private rights and interests relating to mining development. Their view was that modernization would bring the Ontario *Mining Act* into harmony with the values of today's society, while maintaining a framework that supports the mineral industry's contribution to the Ontario economy. What an enlightened view. Wouldn't it be nice to see something similar occur here, where we have that open general debate? It generated debate, which is good.

That legislation was passed in 2009 and in November 2012 they passed new rules under that act to provide clarity and certainty to industry to ensure ongoing engagement by industry with affected aboriginal communities. The opportunities do exist to not have court cases or be at loggerheads about the viability of the resource extraction industry in this territory, because every time there is a threat of a court case it speaks to a number of things. One is a failure — a failure of will by this government to understand the common law — and a failure of will by this government to engage with citizens and with First Nations governments. That costs us money, and not only does it cost us money in terms of taking it directly out of our taxpayers' pockets in terms of fuelling those court cases, it costs us money globally. When that mining investor in Zurich or New York is thinking about where they're going to park their money, you can sure as heck bet they're not going to put it in a jurisdiction where they cannot figure out how to talk to each other or what the rules are. Simply saying nothing has changed and acting as if it's pre-Delgamuukw and pre-land claims is not going to work.

Modern mining with jobs and benefits for communities must be part of the Yukon economy, but there must be balance. You cannot operate with blinders on when it comes to resource development. The Yukon New Democratic Party has been strong in raising concerns about the implications we saw with the omnibus bill, Bill C-38, when it — among other things — many things that we've raised — repealed the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. That national round table was established in 1988 and Parliament passed an act to give effect to it in 1989. It brought industry leaders, environmentalists, First Nations, labour and policy makers together to provide non-partisan research and advice on federal policies. Its demise leaves a policy vacuum in relation to Canada's economic development.

So what do we see? We're seeing proposed amendments to the Yukon *Environment Act* that demonstrate the Yukon Party's damn-the-torpedoes approach to development at a time when industry is working hard to earn social licence. The Yukon Party is undermining that by repealing a mechanism — the Yukon round table on the economy and the environment — designed to work to bring together industry, economy and the environment. Under section 40 of the Yukon *Environment*

Act, which established the Yukon Council on the Economy and the Environment, was done in 1989. It was the first legislative round table on the economy and the environment to be established in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, you may recall when the Governor General spoke here. It was an honour to have him in this Legislative Assembly. When the Governor General spoke here, he made a point of talking about coming to the Yukon for the meeting of the National Round Table on the Economy and the Environment and how important it was to have that meeting in the Yukon. The irony was not lost.

As with the model that was established with the national round table, the Yukon round table is comprised of members representing different groups with a variety of interests, including First Nation people, business, industrial associations, environmental, non-government groups, labour unions, municipal governments, women and other interests. The purpose of the round table of the Yukon Council on the Economy and the Environment is to encourage sustainable development in the Yukon. It was not intended, as the proposed amendments would have, to have it at the wish and whim of the minister.

No, it's to provide non-partisan support and advice on sustainable development. To do this the council was given permission to undertake and encourage public discussions on the economy and the environment and their interrelationship — the balance — to review the policies of the government and evaluate their implementation in relationship to the objectives of the *Environment Act* and to promote public awareness of the importance of sustainable development.

You know, it's not just that this is important because it is a piece of territorial legislation. I recognize the ability and the purview of a government to amend legislation, but given the significant role of the Yukon Council on the Economy and the Environment, we should be mindful that chapter 22.7.1 of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* provides that the Yukon government will make best efforts to structure the Yukon Council on the Economy and the Environment so that at least one-quarter of its members are Yukon First Nation citizens. So are we deleting a body that is treaty-mandated, has treaty participation?

Mr. Speaker, the sustainable development division of sustainable development that is fostered by these interrelated agreements by this sort of visionary language contained in and anticipated by the *Environment Act* — it's an unfortunate circumstance when governments believe that you'll get further ahead by ignoring an important aspect of sustainability when you create an economy. It's pretty clear that Yukoners value the balance that is possible in this territory. The Yukon Party's dream of turning Yukon into Fort St. John is just not on. The Yukon Party would appear to want to line up the Yukon with every other desperate jurisdiction in North America that looks to get in on the fracking revolution in order to export LNG to Asian markets.

You know, there are some major problems with this vision that the Yukon might reap all sorts of economic rewards by pursuing massive gas developments. A major

research project on the economic consequences of the Marcellus shale gas extraction identified a number of them and analyzed a number of the issues related to going full bore on a particular aspect of a particular industry.

It reinforces for me the importance of that sustainability and that's why listening to the voices through the measures like the Yukon Council on the Economy and the Environment would allow us to develop our own research to look at numbers of economic issues, so that we find ways to avoid boom/bust cycles and their negative impacts on the local population and that we build in — not after the fact, but anticipate and build in — the capacity to assess water resource impacts of all sectors. Water is at the foundation of life, not just of industry.

I respect that this Yukon Legislative Assembly has put together and has mandated the Select Committee Regarding the Risks and Benefits of Hydraulic Fracturing and I'm hopeful that this Yukon Party government will ensure that the full spectrum of views are listened to before making any decisions. I am concerned when I see the press releases this week, which seem to put the cart before the horse with respect to economic development and activities related to fracking on the Dempster Highway. I hope that it's just an exploration activity. I hope it's got nothing to do with that. We will see that when we create expectations.

There are a number of related activities and dimensions to this that cannot go unspoken. We've seen already the launching of litigation by American companies into the Province of Quebec with respect to their thwarted — from their perspective — opportunity to make a profit of shale gas along the St. Lawrence. Perhaps it's just a licence at this stage to do certain kinds of activities. It's one of those ones where you wonder whether the minister will be able to pull back. We hope so, should that be the outcome. Should this territory be advised, as it appears the Government of Newfoundland was, that at this point in the history of the territory this is not the activity. I don't know, I'm waiting for the results of this committee as well, but I hope that this government is not taking actions that would compromise the ability of the government to make a decision that runs counter to what their publicly stated intentions are.

One of the important lessons that we have learned from the boom over the last couple of years is that it is absolutely important that this territory develop means to generate more value from the extractive industries by lessening the reliance on fly-in/fly-out labour and contractors. I applaud the initiatives being taken by Yukon College and by the Yukon government. My former colleague, Steve Cardiff, spent a fair amount of time in this Legislative Assembly encouraging this Legislative Assembly to look at models like Haileybury and others for northern, comprehensive mining training so that we would be ready and that we would be developing a skilled workforce in this territory.

So I am pleased to see that there is an orientation to developing the training capacity linked to the research that's necessary in the northern circumpolar climate that we live in, with the changes to permafrost and all that that entails. But the

reality is that we have activity going on right now that we missed. It's like this government said to the world, "Hey, come on, look at all these resources here. Come on, come on." So they come and they went, "Whoops, you're here, shoot. We forgot you might need a place to live." So what is the mining industry stuck with? They're stuck with, in one case, a mine paying \$2 million a year to fly their workers in and out. That's not good business.

The Department of Economic Development published a 2013 residency report. This report concludes, and I'll quote: "The current mining industry in Yukon relies on a significant amount of fly-in/fly-out skilled labour."

At the time of writing, there were approximately 468 employees at the three operating mines and 156 identified contractors listed for the Wolverine mine. Of this combined amount of 624 identified positions, 417, or 67 percent, are currently filled by labour based outside of Yukon. The vast majority of the total 625 combined workforce is male — 88 percent — and a total of 114 or 18 percent, have First Nation status — 18 percent. First Nations represent about 25 or 28 percent of the Yukon population. The breakdown is as follows: 624 are employed or contracted at three operating mines. Minto has 129 in operations and 21 support staff; Bellekeno, 56 in operations and 48 support staff; and Wolverine, 201 operations with 156 contractors. This report provides the hard data as to what Yukoners have known for years — that the jobs from the mining boom are primarily going to what the report calls "commuters" and not Yukon residents.

People working at the airport, in local hotels, restaurants and bars have known this for years. The Yukon Party has spent 11 consecutive years in office and only now is studying this fly-in/fly-out phenomenon. I would warrant that if the Yukon mining sector last November at that meeting at the Gold Rush had not insisted upon it, this wouldn't be happening — 11 years.

I guess it's better late than never. The report says that relocation for work and establishing residency involves a number of factors for the north: schools and education, housing affordability and availability, crime rates, work for the spouse, distance to larger cities, access to entertainment, recreation service and, for some, urbanity for knowledge workers.

The report goes on to say that the number one deterrent to fly-in mining workers establishing residency is housing prices — 72 percent of the respondents said, "I'm not going to settle there, it costs too much to buy a house". The Yukon NDP have called on this government for years to develop a housing strategy, a comprehensive housing strategy — not an ad hoc strategy where we're going to do this, this year, and we're going to do this, that year.

Of course, we know that during their time in office this government has presided over the housing crisis, during which time affordable rental housing has not been built, vacancies have been near zero, and the purchase price of a home has gone up to the point where it's unattainable for the average working person. Rental prices have gone up and up. We see

daily price gouging and tenants evicted because there are no limits to rental price increases. This government's amendments to the *Landlord and Tenant Act* contained no provisions to prevent price gouging and no end to the no-cause evictions that seriously undermine a tenant's sense of security. So why would you move here? The only rental you can find turns out to be a dive and you're going to be evicted with no cause.

Let's review: this report shows that it is predominantly fly-in/fly-out labour that is working in Yukon mines and the major barrier to these workers settling in the Yukon is due to the lack of affordable housing. This report is really an indictment of the failure of government to manage the natural resource economy and derive more value from the sector — value that stays in this territory, that supports local businesses.

The report says that in order to reduce fly-in/fly-out dependence, government should introduce or encourage policies that discourage camps in the vicinity of communities, company investments, local residency hiring policies, local hiring policies for some companies, developing policies to discourage commuter camps, and encouraging local hiring policies. This should not be news to a government that purports to understand the resource-extraction industry. They're not talking to their partners in that area either.

This failure has huge economic implications. Based on the 2013 Yukon income tax rates, if 180 people who already work in the Yukon moved to the territory and actually stayed here, based on the average income of \$87,000, there would be a potential increase of about \$1.3 million contributed to the territory in income taxes every year. That's a minimum of \$1.3 million in taxes per year lost because this government has not found a way to get more Yukoners working at those jobs or get those workers settled into this territory. Companies would be happy to see that happen. Studies have shown that, according to the economic multiplier effect, 45 cents for every dollar spent at a local business will be reinvested locally.

Other colleagues of mine will speak a little bit more to capital projects and the importance of improving management of these so that key infrastructure is built on time, on budget and maximizing the benefits to the local economy. There are a number that I just wanted to comment on, though, where we lose opportunities. Because I've sort of been focussing on the lost opportunities with First Nations, one that strikes me — and could have been a solution or part of the solution for this government if it had been thinking forward as opposed to being so high bound with respect to, "it's not our idea, so we won't do it." You'll recall, when the Canada Games were being planned in this territory — one of the biggest economic impacts in the territory for a long time — it has many lasting legacy pieces, really positive, and a really great experience for those of us who either worked on it or volunteered on it, which was in effect, everybody in this room. I mean, I don't think there was a single Yukoner who didn't have an opportunity or didn't take advantage of the opportunity to volunteer or be part of the Canada Winter Games in 2007. One of the things that came as a result of having all those athletes coming here was the need to house them.

Early on, there was a proposal — a well-developed proposal, a partnership — and the potential to establish an early incubator industry for modular homes. That First Nations proposal — the federal government was onside, the Yukon government was onside, and suddenly the Yukon government pulled out and went with ATCO.

Why would we want to support an Alberta multinational over the development of the local housing industry that would have seen the ability to have those homes developed and built in this territory for future? There are strange things done under the midnight sun.

One of the important aspects of building a diversified and strong local economy is ensuring and increasing the ability and opportunities for small and local businesses to access government contracts and provide access to capital. There are lots of opportunities and there should be increased thought given to how we generate more local benefits for local businesses and small businesses. One of those opportunities comes through contracting rules. Government departments, quite frankly, are all over the map. Some give points for Yukon businesses and some don't. In this age of trade agreements, it is a challenge. We know that — to give local businesses an advantage.

But other governments have come up with ideas about how they might change their procurement rules. In a recent article in the *Globe and Mail*, it said that Ontario is beefing up procurement rules — this is October 29, 2013, in case the minister responsible wants to check it out.

Ontario is beefing up procurement rules to favour local construction bids — and in this article it says that, "Government and industry insiders concede that a new local knowledge requirement is effectively a way of giving the edge to domestic bidders without violating international trade agreements. Now, sources told the *Globe and Mail* ..." the Ontario government is "working with provincial agency Infrastructure Ontario to beef up that requirement — which was quietly introduced by the former premier Dalton McGuinty shortly before he left office — and build off it with other conditions."

Under pressure from the Ontario General Contractors Association and organized labour, the government brought in what they call this local knowledge into the process at the end of 2012. "Bidders are now required to provide 'narratives' about experience meeting those standards, navigating permit processes with municipalities and working with the province's labour force and suppliers. Those considerations are then cumulatively given 10 percent weight during requests for quotations, the procurement stage that narrows competition down to a few finalists."

I raise this because there is an important piece about the power of purchasing the economic impacts of local procurement. I happened to have an opportunity to read recently a report that was done by the Sauder Research Centre — the Sauder School of Business at the University of British Columbia, in partnership with the B.C. alliance of local companies, called LOCO BC, and this was done in May 2013. This is not an esoteric or sort of abstract concept. We're

talking about building a diversified economy, that we need to ensure that we build every opportunity for our local businesses to benefit. One of the important pieces is when we can do our purchasing locally.

I'll just use an anecdote. When I was in Watson Lake, I was talking to one of the people there who works at the weigh station. We were commenting about how when a mine is going through at the exploration phase or when you're doing the exploration — not the mine, but there is exploration activity going on in the territory — local businesses benefit. Local expeditors benefit because they're getting that material out to the people at the exploration camps. It really, really has a good and positive impact on the local businesses — local suppliers and local grocery stores. Once that mine goes into development, once it's in production, that changes. Ask anybody who works the highways — what you see on the highway is Cisco Systems. What it means, Mr. Speaker, is it's not the local grocery stores — it's not our Extra Foods — it's not the local businesses that are benefiting. These are complete packages. You have these huge trucks going up the highway and they're going to Minto, they're going out to Selwyn and they're going out to Alexco. They've packaged and delivered holus bolus everything you need, from your toilet paper to your bread, going to those mines.

That's why it's important that we look at opportunities to foster the economic benefits of local purchase.

What this study did was to look at the economic pillar of sustainability and bring it into focus by quantifying the benefit of purchasing from local businesses. This is not necessarily just government procuring but getting a mindset about the procurement from local business. They're finding, and I'll quote here, "Local businesses employ and are owned by friends and neighbours, who are heavily invested in the strength of our communities and our quality of life. They create good, local jobs, buy more goods and services from other local businesses, give more to local charities, recirculate more money in our economy and strengthen our social fabric."

Those are all nice words, but unless you can quantify it, it doesn't mean anything, and this is what this study does: it does quantify it.

The study looked at whether there is a difference in economic impact when buying local and, if so, to what degree. The results showed that locally owned businesses recirculate 33.1 percent of their revenue directly to residences and businesses, compared to between 16 percent and 18 percent of multinational counterparts.

In this case they were looking at a local office supply business — like taking Horwood's Office Supply, a locally owned business, and comparing it to Staples. Actually that is the model they used: a locally owned business supply company compared to three various gradations of multinationals located in British Columbia.

What they found is this represents a 77- to 100-percent economic advantage from buying local. Using the provincial multipliers to translate this into jobs, it shows that this leads to an 80- to 100-percent increase in jobs per million dollars spent.

Now think about that. I don't know what the purchasing practices of the various departments are, but it would be interesting to know whether or not the Economic Development minister has done that kind of analysis to look at the opportunities to increase the multiplier effect in terms of job creation — local jobs. The increased impact occurs because wholly local companies hire more local labour, give more money to local charities and distribute more of the profits from their operations locally, and they buy more goods and services from local suppliers. While the multinational companies examined do have sales, warehousing and delivery staff located in that province, the local company also bases its management, its customer service, its purchasing, marketing and administration locally. That's a big difference. Because it's locally owned, its profits earned also remain locally.

The larger multinationals are publicly traded and distribute profits worldwide, often to large institutional owners and investors. Interestingly enough, in terms of charitable donations, the local companies gave five times as much money to charity as a percentage of revenues compared to the multinationals. That is significant. For us in the local community and local economy, it's sustainability and it's how we support each other. Finally, all of the companies purchased some goods and services from other businesses, such as fuel, cleaning services, maintenance and other operational expenses. But the local company purchases more from other local companies, including legal, accounting, IT and banking services.

So the increased local economic activity and jobs led to greater tax revenue and a stronger economic base to support other businesses and anchor institutions. Non-local companies' imports are of course key components of any modern economy, but the finding they had was that empowering and enabling local companies to capture a bigger share of their local and regional markets can provide significant benefits to the local and provincial economies and, I would say, territorial in this case.

There are significant benefits to considering local. Cities and regions spend millions of dollars on economic development. Private sector institutions similarly make investments in their communities as part of their overall business strategy. Both spend billions — this is in a big scale, so we could say millions here — on the purchase of goods and services. But the goals are rarely aligned — because back again to the left hand and the right hand knowing what we are doing. Do we know that within government? Is it demonstrated? Is a local business feeling that? What they are finding was that the potential exists for greater engagement and utilization of the local economy to the mutual benefit of the public sector, business and the wider community.

There are other aspects of the local economic advantage. One of them was that to identify the economic impact of various office supplies in this area and the proportion of revenues recirculated in the local economy. They broke down the revenue — the cost of goods, net profit, charitable giving, labour and procurement — and in every case, Mr. Speaker, the local businesses returned more. The implications for this

kind of thinking is why we talk about diversifying and making sure that we are giving credence, not to just attracting big investors, but to supporting the local ones. There are significant implications. The study clearly demonstrates that a local company creates more local income and employment than non-local companies, even when the companies have local operations. Public institutions benefit from increased local economic wealth to greater property, income and sales tax. Many argue that local small businesses also bring along a number of other benefits such as increase civic unity, political participation, public health, entrepreneurial growth and tourism.

There have been studies done in the U.S. on local purchasing preferences. It is really much more common to use that, which is kind of ironic, because they're using the same agreements against us. Often in Canada, this is not a common practice. Mostly, we will say that there are barriers to implementing local purchasing goals and sometimes they include trade agreements — that's acknowledged, and that's what the Ontario government was trying and seems to successfully have worked around with its local knowledge component.

There are opportunities for Yukon to further develop our strategies to develop policies to enhance local, small and medium businesses. Again, both the opportunities are there.

Over the course of the last couple of years, one of the things I've heard frequently from the Minister of Economic Development is that he looks to others for external validation, whether it's Standard and Poor's or the Fraser Institute or the Conference Board of Canada. I think it's not just looking at sort of what they say about us, but it's actually engaging with them. During the course of the Conference Board of Canada's recent northern summit, I had an opportunity to spend some time talking with the gentleman who the minister was referring to yesterday — the senior vice-president and chief economist for the Conference Board of Canada. It was interesting because he spoke at length that the development of the economy is looking at all of the opportunities and the development of the whole of the economy. During the course of that conversation, we got into a discussion which I think might surprise the Minister of Economic Development, so I thought I would just reflect a little bit about that. It has to do with one of the dimensions of building a socially inclusive, vibrant and strong diversified economy in this territory.

He said to me during our conversation, "You know, I may be kind of right-winged, but I believe in good economics. One of the strongest things that we could be doing in this territory and in this country" — it started off with the country. It's to look at a time — a big idea, which he called it, whose time has come. I went and checked out what he was talking about and then we followed up the next day on this conversation. I hope I can encourage this government to engage with the Official Opposition and with the Conference Board of Canada to move on an idea that Glen Hodgson, the senior vice-president and chief economist for the Conference Board, has been supporting for the last number of years.

I thought I'd just read a little bit of an excerpt from an article he published in December 2011. He said, "There is little talk today among thought-leaders in Canada of a guaranteed annual income ... as an efficient and effective way to combat poverty—despite mounting evidence of rising social inequality and never-ending concerns about social exclusion."

I've heard lots from this government about their concerns about social inclusion and poverty reduction. I'm hopeful they would be open to the ideas he's proposing here. He says, "The Conference Board's recent analysis under *How Canada Performs* highlighted growing income inequality among Canadians." In the conversation he was talking about the fact that this idea of a guaranteed annual income — people usually dismiss it as a fascinating idea but, so what? His view as a chief economist for the Conference Board is that it's an "idea that could simultaneously serve economic, social and fiscal interests, and could be embraced across the political spectrum."

Now, my goodness, how often do we get an idea that can be embraced across the political spectrum?

I can see from the expressions and the tone from across the way that there is probably a pre-conceived notion of what a guaranteed available income is. Let's just explore it a bit. A guaranteed annual income is the minimum level of income for every individual or family in the country delivered without condition through the existing income tax system. It's essentially the same as how we deliver the old-age pension: through the income tax system. Earned income above the guaranteed level would be taxed at relatively low marginal rates, raising net income for the individual and encouraging them to work.

The concept behind a guaranteed annual income — surprisingly to some — comes from free-market economic thinkers. Milton Friedman, who some of you will recognize, developed an idea called negative income tax to address poverty with minimal government bureaucracy while increasing workforce attachment. He saw personal liberty and minimizing the role of government as fundamental values and the negative income tax provided a way for him to address the reality of poverty with minimal state intervention. Some might find it appealing just on that point. Other prominent economists like Tobin also supported the guaranteed annual income concept and it has been debated for years. It has never been implemented, except once in Canada.

One of the strongest proponents in Canada of a guaranteed annual income has been Senator Hugh Segal. When this government unveiled with great fanfare its *Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Strategy*, it invited Senator Hugh Segal as one of the guest speakers. It was interesting, in conversation with the economist from the Conference Board of Canada, to hear him echo the views and the opportunities that exist for Yukon — the unique opportunities that exist for Yukon — with respect to establishing and using a tool to combat social inequality and to create good economic policy.

From the chief economist at the Conference Board of Canada's point of view, there are three main advantages to a

guaranteed annual income. First, he said, it addresses poverty directly in a neutral fashion via transfers provided through a single existing administrative system, the income tax system. A guaranteed annual income would streamline six existing social welfare programs into one universal system reducing public administration and intervention with related savings.

Second, a properly designed guaranteed annual income would reduce the welfare wall of high marginal tax rates on earned income for the working poor. Earned income, he said, would be taxed at low marginal rates providing a strong incentive for guaranteed annual income recipients to work and earn more. As they work more, the recipients would essentially pay a growing portion of their own guaranteed annual income through income taxes on their employment earnings — value neutral, Mr. Speaker. This is exactly what he's talking about — getting a job.

Third, a guaranteed annual income could reduce health care spending on low-income persons. The link between poverty and poor health is widely documented, said this economist. So, if a guaranteed annual income reduced the prevalence of poverty, it could create better health outcomes and help to slow the rising costs of publicly funded health care.

Mr. Speaker, would anybody disagree with the notion that the current tight fiscal situation means we should be interested in big ideas like the guaranteed annual income that could reduce cost pressures on the health system? As we talked, the economist said to me, "You know, there has been work done." I said, "Yes, I'm aware of some work that was done in Manitoba." He said, "There was never any real research done until recently." It took until, I think, about two years ago, when there was actually some research work and analysis of a social experiment called "mincome" that was done in Manitoba in the 1970s that tested the impact of a guaranteed annual income in the population of Dauphin, Manitoba. All the families in that community were guaranteed an income, not a huge income — an income of 60 percent of the low-income cut-off as set by Statistics Canada, a level of income comparable to that under existing welfare schemes. Each dollar of income from other sources was taxed at a relatively high marginal rate of 50 percent. This is where he said the most interesting aspect was — that the research that was done using data sources from that experiment in Manitoba demonstrated that the hospitalization rates for the mincome recipients fell by 8.5 percent relative to similar non-recipients. Visits to doctors declined, especially for mental health concerns, meaning that the guaranteed annual income appears to have produced a significant reduction in provincial health spending on the target population."

Aren't we trying to find ways to reduce our health care spending in this territory as well?

More adolescents stayed in school to grade 12. Marital stability was maintained, and there was no evidence that fertility rates increased, or that birth outcomes changed. In short, the mincome experiment appears to have had some important success in terms of improving population health and reducing health costs.

An area that the Conference Board of Canada would like to explore and is doing some work in terms of research and looking for partners actually to do some pilot projects is to see whether or not those results could be reproduced and generalized across Canadian society a guaranteed annual income might produce sizable net fiscal savings, especially for provinces and territories. A guaranteed annual income that delivered income support through the tax system would allow the existing provincial and territorial welfare bureaucracy to be sharply reduced. Improved population health for lower-income persons could create savings on health care, through reduced hospitalization and fewer visits to doctors. If the guaranteed annual income system was properly calibrated to lower the welfare wall, greater labour force attachment and higher net income tax revenues could be achieved.

When we were talking about this, the Conference Board economist said, "You know, one of the big challenges we would face is federal/provincial cooperation." There was an area that struck me as being really interesting, because here again is where the Yukon has done things differently. We already have experimented with and have some very creative tax-sharing arrangements between the federal government, First Nations and this territory.

It's possible we could build on those fiscal arrangements to make a guaranteed annual income a reality. The costs and benefits would have to be assessed carefully, but wouldn't it be worth it to find a savings? Wouldn't it be worth it to actually build a socially inclusive and economically inclusive society in this territory?

The Conference Board of Canada expects that economic factors like increased fiscal deficits, ever-rising health care costs and tightening labour markets will eventually be political drivers for a reform like a guaranteed annual income — most likely, he said, more than any social concerns. The Conference Board of Canada does believe there are solid economic fiscal and social reasons to give it serious consideration. If properly designed and implemented, the introduction of a guaranteed annual income could be one of those rare moments in public policy when a win-win outcome is achieved for society and for individuals and families for whom the ever-increasing social inequality is a daily reality.

I was encouraged. You never know what you're going to run into when you go to some of these meetings. As he said, there's no better time than right now to heat up that debate.

We have the ability in this territory to do it differently.

I realize that my colleagues —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Ms. Hanson: One of them just mentioned to me that she'd like to speak.

Mr. Speaker, I think that it's really important that we have an opportunity to discuss these issues and to raise them because they are important. I'm not sure in terms of comments to close. It's my view and it's the view of the New Democratic Party that, as we've listened to Yukoners over the years and over these past number of months in particular for this Official Opposition, we know and we're told on a regular basis that, wisely used, our rivers, forests and lands promise

us prosperity for generations. By welcoming those who come — and I echo the words of the First Nation leadership who spoke to Prime Minister Trudeau 40 years ago — we welcome those who come to make a living rather than those who come only for a killing. When we welcome them, we build a better, fairer society, and by encouraging a mix of economies, it's a step in the way to economic security.

Resource-based industries, small businesses, government and non-wage activities, like subsistence living and volunteer services, all have a future in Yukon's economic future. That's part of what I think that the motion that I'm speaking to for a bit this afternoon with respect to building a diverse, inclusive and sustainable economy is about. I look forward to hearing the views of others this afternoon and in the future as we go forward — as we try together to come to grips with the challenges that we face as a territory and how we together forge that future that will sustain us and our children and our children's children.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I would like to start by congratulating the Leader of the Official Opposition and thanking her for her motion and her speech today. I think at two hours and 50 minutes it is a new record, for this sitting of the Legislature at least, so congratulations are certainly in order for that. I'm sure members will join me in congratulating her on setting the new record for length of time for speaking.

There are a number of things I would like to add. Time does certainly not permit me to get into all of them to respond to all of the various issues, both positive and negative, that she raised today. I'll turn my attention specifically to the motion itself that she tabled earlier this week and that we're debating here today.

It relates to the building of an inclusive diversified and strong economy with good jobs and opportunities for all. The problem is that it lists off 12 particular points and highlights 12 specific industries or methods for growing the economy. That list is notable for its omissions. It is ironic that saying in the opening sentence that it wants to build an inclusive economy, it excludes so many sectors of the economy that are so important and seem to have been ignored or forgotten in this particular motion.

That's why I don't think I can support the motion in its current form. I hear some off-mic comments that my colleagues can't either. I should take just a few moments to highlight some of the sectors that seem to have been forgotten. We notice here that the motion includes renewable energy and tourism, extractive industries. I see telecommunications is involved. Small businesses, rural Yukon and skills training all get highlighted — which are fantastic and I don't want to take away from those important industries — but I can't help but notice that there are some notable omissions, including the knowledge economy. I've discussed at length in this House previously my belief that the knowledge economy offers a tremendous opportunity and potential here in the territory.

I notice that the exploration industry isn't mentioned in this motion. The exploration industry is one that creates a

number of jobs and opportunities for Yukoners, whether it be expediting, drilling, any of those early-stage exploration activities that factor into the life cycle of a mining project.

I notice the oil and gas sector wasn't included. I noticed the agriculture sector wasn't included. We of course had an opportunity to congratulate the farmers of the year this year in the Tributes portion of our proceedings earlier today, so it's a bit surprising for me to see that the agriculture sector wasn't included in this motion. It seems to me it attempts to be very inclusive of all sectors of the economy. The forestry sector doesn't appear to be included in this motion. The trucking and transportation sector is tremendously important for a northern and somewhat remote area like Yukon. The aviation industry is something we've discussed a number of times in this Legislature — the important role that the aviation industry provides to the territory. So again it was surprising for me to see that these important sectors of our economy weren't included.

It's impossible really to craft a motion and present it with every single sector of the economy in it, so I think it would be best suited that we not try to create some sort of exhaustive list and simply stick to a directional motion that simply indicates the desire of the House to see a strong diversified economy that is inclusive and that creates good jobs and opportunities for all. With that being said, I would move a friendly amendment to the motion.

Amendment proposed

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I move

THAT Motion No. 497 be amended by adding the words "to continue" after the word "government" and deleting all the words after the word "all".

Speaker's statement

Speaker: While we're waiting for the copies, I'll remind all members if you are bringing forward an amendment, copies for the House are greatly appreciated. It would eliminate this need to wait while the pages run to get copies and then distribute them. It would give you and I an opportunity to look it over. So if it continues, I'm giving you fair warning right now that your amendment may be found unacceptable because you have not followed the procedures of the House. Keep it in mind.

The amendment is in order. As such, it has been moved by the Minister of Economic Development

THAT Motion No. 497 be amended by adding the words "to continue" after the word "government" and deleting all words after the word "all".

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I think the amendment speaks for itself. I know that members are eager to vote on it, so I'll let it speak for itself.

Ms. Stick: I rise on behalf the NDP to not support what was purported to be a friendly amendment and I'll explain why.

First, I would go to the words adding “to continue” because that would suggest that this government is currently doing everything it can to continue “...to build an inclusive, diversified and strong economy with good jobs and opportunities for all...”

The minister across the way mentioned that it would be too long to list everything that we should have included in that list. But I think the list spoke for itself and though specific industries might not have been specifically named, they were included by virtue of what these different priorities were.

When we talk about regional land use planning, that could include agriculture. Of course it does. Land use planning helps determine what will be used and how, in a certain specific area. So far, this government has settled one land use plan and has another one that has been going on for years that is divisive and does not seem to have an end in sight. We have another land use plan that is started. That’s great, but we have five that do not even have a date on the horizon as to when they might start.

At the Conference Board of Canada we heard from the chiefs. We heard from the Chief of the Little Salmon-Carmacks First Nation talk about his frustration of waiting for 16 years for land use planning. Meanwhile, traditional territory rich in minerals and other resources is being staked — no idea when that land use plan might start. This particular chief was frustrated.

The Chief of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations also spoke about their frustrations and the amount of work they’ve done. This was at the Conference Board of Canada conference held here — the northern one. Chief Allen spoke about having done their transboundary negotiations with their neighbours and talked about looking at their lands and even having people ready on the sidelines to join a land use planning committee — nothing. No plan, no date on the horizon of when this might start. We know that area. There are all kinds of agricultural opportunities and there are agricultural individuals out there practising agriculture and working hard at it. A land use plan would make clear what areas we want and it’s important to the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations because a land use plan would clarify for them and would be their opportunity to say what’s important for the people of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, for their traditional lands and their waters. They want a part of the economic growth also. Of course they do, but they want it managed and they want to get on with land use planning.

Even the Grand Chief spoke at the Conference Board of Canada explaining her frustrations of land use planning that has ground to a halt — one completed, one in limbo, one started in the Klondike and five still outstanding. Without those we don’t know about agriculture. It’s hard for extractive industries to plan. We don’t know about the explorations industry. Things are in the courts. Without those land use plans so much of that economic development is held in limbo. Mining companies don’t know what to do. Wilderness tourism operators are unsure if they should continue to grow their industry or not. Trappers — a sustainable industry — are

unclear about what protection there is for their traplines, for their traditional trapping and hunting areas. Without those land use plans, it’s not going to happen. Those people don’t know what they can count on with this government without those clear land use plans.

No, we didn’t name every industry that was possible, but certainly my colleague spoke to First Nations and the economic drivers that they provide. They are part of the airlines, they are part of transportation, they’re part of construction, housing, industry, business, tourism. Maybe not everyone got named, but to suggest by adding the words “to continue” would make it all good by deleting everything after is wrong. We have not seen land use planning moving ahead. We see it mired in controversy, polarization and frankly many angry people. Partnering with First Nation governments could include all those industries. Many of these First Nations have gone ahead; they don’t need to partner. They have seen their way and what they can do and they are driving the economy in many of our communities.

The Minister of Economic Development could probably talk about unemployment rates. It’s pretty hard, though, looking through the statistics that are provided to see what the unemployment rates are for communities. It might be single digit in Whitehorse but what about the communities? What about the small communities where we don’t have those economic drivers? What are the unemployment rates there? Who’s hiring those individuals? We need certainty. We need vision. We need a way of looking forward and I think my colleague provided many and was scoffed at by some.

That’s okay, but if you have a vision, if you know where you’re going and what tools are available to this government and to Yukoners to create a stronger, inclusive, diversified economy — we have the tools. We have land claims. We have strong First Nation self-government. We have mining companies that want to come here. We have tourism, which could be a huge industry in this Yukon. Every year it continues to grow. It’s not affected by rates or global markets. People come to the Yukon. Tourism is not boom and bust. Tourism has been one of those industries that the Yukon has been able to count on and we should continue to build on that.

We have a wilderness that many want to get out and see and participate in and be a part of. Others just want to come to our communities. Many are happy to come to Whitehorse to take a bus, to go on the train, to ride the trolley. Not everyone is interested in the wilderness. They want to see it, they don’t mind it from their bus or their vehicle or their camper, but there are others who do want to get out there. We need to meet the needs of all of those groups. Not everybody wants to hike to the top of a mountain or into Kluane, but they certainly want to see it and participate in it.

We talked about green jobs, renewable energy. It was mentioned that we did not talk about oil and gas. Well, I look at that as an extractive industry. It is something we take out of the Earth — we extract from the Earth. I may stand to be corrected on that, but I would consider it that. I’ve made mistakes before, it’s okay, it doesn’t bother me.

The fly-in/fly-out — I thought that was a wonderful report that the Department of Economic Development did. I've read it. It's an important piece of economic growth. We need to talk about that, we need to encourage individuals to come here and stay and be a part of our community and be a part of that inclusive, diversified and strong economy. We need people to do that and we need people with jobs.

We talk about trickle-down sometimes, but I don't think an inclusive economy should be trickled down. It should be inclusive, it should be for everyone to be able to make a good wage, a liveable wage and not have to depend on a food bank, not have to go to social assistance. Even though you are working two jobs, it's not because you are a poor manager of money — it's because rent's high, fuel's high, heating costs are high, the cost of healthy food is high. All of those things impact health care and the health of our community. Healthy people make a healthy economy, and what we put in is what we get out — good health outcomes.

The member next to me did not even talk about the importance of our arts community and how much they put into our economy and we need to keep building that. I don't think anyone would argue that.

But to eliminate all of these and to say we're just going to continue on the way we're going is not good enough. There has to be better. We don't want to see mines closing or leaving. They are a part of our economy. We would like to see a better return for our resources for Yukoners resources. I'm not putting a prescription on that or how it should be done, but it's something we should talk about with industry, with Yukoners and with economists — fair return for our resources.

Targeting job creation for rural Yukon — it's difficult in some of the communities to create jobs. But by partnering, by finding ways of doing that through better education and through skills training, as has been talked about, we can do better for our communities. We can provide a strong economy that allows them to stay in their community, to work there and to be contributing to the economy.

We didn't leave the education system out. We talked about skills training. We talked about incentives. We have a fabulous college that's working hard — and, no, it wasn't on the list. But to suggest that all we do is continue to build this economy without talking about how to do it or different ways of doing it — because it does need to be diverse — we can't be reliant on one industry. We're a relatively small population. We rely heavily on funding from the federal government. I'm not sure that will always be there, so we need to find ways to diversify. We need to find ways for Yukoners to contribute to the economy. We need to find ways to include those fly-in/fly-out workers; to invite them to live here in Whitehorse and in our communities by providing affordable housing, available lots in the communities. We have lots of lots here. We all know about that. The communities need the same thing. By supporting these fly-in/fly-out workers, by encouraging them, by inviting them to be a part of our community and not just touch down and take off again — there goes their paycheque, there goes their

income tax. Not all of them want to stay here and I understand that. For many, this is a way of life. They have a home, they're happy, this is how they work. But, that's not the truth for all the fly-in/fly-out workers. The report that the Minister of Economic Development's department did said so.

No, the government can't do anything about climate — that's a federal responsibility — and can't do anything about distances from large centres, but we can do things about housing, about affordability — all of those. We can find ways to encourage mining companies to provide incentives to their workers. It would be to their benefit if they didn't have to pay every time for a person to fly from Alberta or from B.C. into the mine site and back out again. It's a cost to the mining company and it's a loss to the Yukon — income tax, population, people to contribute to our economy, people to spend their paycheques, to buy houses, to support our local businesses — all of those things. By leaving off all of this —

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

Debate on Motion No. 497, and the amendment, accordingly adjourned

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

The following Sessional Papers were tabled November 6, 2013:

33-1-93

Yukon Heritage Resources Board Annual Report April 1, 2012 – March 31, 2013 (Nixon)

33-1-94

Yukon Arts Centre 2012-2013 Annual Report (Nixon)

The following documents were filed November 6, 2013:

33-1-60

Queen's Printer Agency 2012/2013 Annual Report (Istchenko)

33-1-61

Fish and Wildlife Branch Highlights 2012 (Dixon)

33-1-62

Yukon's Wildlife; A Strategy for Developing and Promoting Viewing Opportunities 2013 (Dixon)

33-1-63

Proposed Public Campground on Atlin Lake, letter re (dated November 1, 2013) from Donovan & Company Barristers and Solicitors to Premier Darrell Pasloski (Barr)

**The following Written Question was tabled on
November 6, 2013:**

33-1-5

Re: Standing Committee on Rules, Elections and
Privileges (Stick)