



# Yukon Legislative Assembly

---

Number 175

1st Session

33rd Legislature

---

## HANSARD

Tuesday, November 25, 2014 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable David Laxton

# YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**SPEAKER — Hon. David Laxton, MLA, Porter Creek Centre**

**DEPUTY SPEAKER — Patti McLeod, MLA, Watson Lake**

## CABINET MINISTERS

### NAME CONSTITUENCY PORTFOLIO

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

## GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

### Yukon Party

<b>Darius Elias</b>	Vuntut Gwitchin
<b>Stacey Hassard</b>	Pelly-Nisutlin
<b>Hon. David Laxton</b>	Porter Creek Centre
<b>Patti McLeod</b>	Watson Lake

## OPPOSITION MEMBERS

### New Democratic Party

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

### Liberal Party

<b>Sandy Silver</b>	Leader of the Third Party Klondike
---------------------	---------------------------------------

## LEGISLATIVE STAFF

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

**Yukon Legislative Assembly  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Tuesday, November 25, 2014 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

*Prayers*

**Withdrawal of motions**

**Speaker:** The Chair wishes to inform the House of a change which has been made to the Order Paper. Motion No. 750, standing in the name of the Minister of Justice, has been removed from the Order Paper as the action requested in the motion has been taken in part.

**DAILY ROUTINE**

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

**TRIBUTES**

**In recognition of International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women**

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** I rise today to pay tribute to the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, which we acknowledge along with others around the world each November 25. In Yukon, this day marks the beginning of the 12 Days to End Violence Against Women and the launch of the annual White Ribbon campaign.

This is a time to learn from the many women and girls for whom violence is a reality and listen to their voices when they speak about the violence they have experienced. It is also an opportunity to speak out against all forms of violence against women in our society. It is a time for individuals and communities to act and to join with those who work hard year-round to respond to violence in women's lives.

In Yukon, the 12 Days to End Violence Against Women campaign takes place in November as part of Woman Abuse Prevention Month. It runs until December 6, the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. The theme of this year's campaign, "Call it what it is", focuses on examining and changing the language we use to describe and respond to violence.

Violence against women, whether it is in the form of harassment, assault, sexualized violence or intimate-partner abuse, is a widespread and pervasive problem. In recent months, high-profile cases from across this country have brought issues of violence against women to a new level of prominence and dialogue in the media and in communities. This is a good and important step, but it is only a step. We need to listen better, believe more and work harder to support women.

Every Yukoner has a positive role to play in ending the elevated rates of violence in our territory. We need to speak out against violence against women when it happens, wherever it happens, from streets to homes to workplaces. We

need to stand up and support victims, rather than blame them for the violence they have experienced. Instead, we need to understand, acknowledge and honour the ways that all women respond to and resist violence. These are things that we can all do.

Over the past years, we have seen more Yukoners joining in conversations about challenging stereotypes and ending violence. I would like to acknowledge these people and all others working toward a safer and healthier Yukon. I would especially like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the Yukon women's organizations and other community partners for developing activities and participating in the 12-day campaign. The campaign launched today at Yukon College and will continue with discussions, films and events over the next 12 days.

The ceremony for the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women will be held on December 5 at noon in the Elijah Smith Building. I hope to see many, many Yukoners there. The 12-day campaign runs in conjunction with the annual White Ribbon campaign, a project targeted at involving men in ending violence against women. Our grandfathers, fathers, uncles, brothers and sons are encouraged to join in, promising to never commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women.

Thank you to those who have worked to organize the campaign 12 days to end violence against women and girls: the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre; Les EssentiElles and other territorial women's groups; White Ribbon Yukon; BYTE; Yukon College; as well as the Women's Directorate. Thank you, as well, to all those working within the community and their personal lives to end violence.

I encourage us all to ask ourselves how we can better support women who have experienced violence, stand up to those who commit this violence and change Yukon homes, workplaces and communities to safe places for all of us, not just during these 12 days, but every day.

**Ms. White:** Today I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP Official Opposition to pay tribute to the 12 Days to End Violence Against Women.

With respect to the extent of violence, the philosopher Hannah Arendt said, "...no one questions or examines what is obvious to all." That was said in 1970. Now in 2014, we are finally starting to recognize that violence against women is the most vivid manifestation of gender inequality. In the Yukon, the vast majority of violence against women is perpetrated by men.

Gender-based violence is ingrained in the social relations of our society, is ingrained in how we view and how we talk about violence and is ingrained in how we view, talk about and treat our women and girls. The theme of this year's 12-day campaign is: "Call It What It Is." This undertaking builds on the incredible work done by the women's community over the past few years to change the language we use to describe and understand violence, and in doing so improves social responses and judicial outcomes for victims of violence. Mr. Speaker, language is not neutral. In this context, it creates an

inaccurate version of reality. It paints pictures in our minds in which violence against women is routinely concealed and neutralized.

It is time to stop using the language of consent to describe assaultive acts. When we say, “he had sex with her,” or “domestic dispute,” it hides the violence involved in a unilateral and unwanted violation, where, “he raped her,” or “he beat her,” is more accurate. It is not a misunderstanding or a violent relationship. It is an act of violence, where one person has committed a deliberate, intentional and criminal assault against another person. Mutualizing language conceals the true nature of, and responsibility for, violence.

Instead of placing responsibility squarely on the shoulders of offenders, it blames women and holds them responsible for their own victimization. This is victim-blaming language. Victim blaming shifts blame and responsibility away from the perpetrator — where it belongs — and places the onus on women to prevent or avoid violence. We have all heard it before. “She was asking for it.” “Why didn’t she leave?” “She should have known better.” These phrases are steeped in discrimination. We should instead be asking, “Why did he rape her?” “Why did he assault her?” “Why didn’t he know better?” “Why are we teaching our boys to be violent?”

Using accurate language to describe acts of violence — of assault and rape — reflects the true nature of gender-based violence and improves our ability to understand and respond positively to violence. When we respond swiftly and effectively to violence, we support victims; we help victims and perpetrators to heal and we encourage those in the criminal justice system, in the media and our society as a whole to use more accurate and accountable language.

In short, when we use accurate language, we help create a more equal and caring society where no one questions or examines what is obvious to all — a society where gender-based violence is reprehensible and a society where systematic discrimination against women has no place.

I want to thank all the organizers of the 12 Days to End Violence Against Women campaign and the many women’s groups that continue to call it what it is in their pursuit for gender equality in the territory.

**Mr. Silver:** November 25 marks the beginning of the 12 Days to End Violence Against Women campaign. The campaign is run locally by the Victoria Faulkner women’s shelter, Les EssentiElles and, in Dawson, by the women’s shelter. This year’s theme, as mentioned, is “Call It What It Is,” with a focus on the language that is used when discussing and conversing about violence against women.

Language used in sexual assault cases too often attempts to normalize, or to hide, acts of violence. To change the dialogue on violence against women is to change the language that we use in everyday life and also to change the language that we use to talk about violence against women. Aggression and assault toward women is, unfortunately, too common here in the Yukon. Sexual assault will happen to more than one out of four women in Canada. The number jumps even higher in the First Nation communities.

Only 10 percent of all cases of sexualized assault are reported to the police and, even worse, only a tiny fraction of those cases ever receives a conviction.

The month of November is Woman Abuse Prevention Month. There has been strong public dialogue in the wake of several allegations against public figures and there are a number of events and activities that will be taking place to help spread public awareness of violence against women in the buildup to the National Day of Remembrance. I encourage all members of this House to actively take part.

### In recognition of the White Ribbon campaign

**Mr. Tredger:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the White Ribbon campaign on behalf of the Yukon NDP Official Opposition. I stand as a proud feminist and I would like to take a moment to tell this House why.

As men and boys, we have a collective and ongoing responsibility to actively oppose all forms of violence against women. Sadly, systemic forms of gender-based violence are still ongoing problems. As men — and the main perpetrators of this violence — it is our responsibility to proactively speak up, to condemn violence against women and to advocate for gender equality. In short, we need to call it like it is. That is why the White Ribbon campaign, whose Yukon chapter is launching its 12 days to End Violence Against Women campaign today at Yukon College, is so important.

Co-founded by Jack Layton, the movement educates men and boys to challenge sexist and misogynistic language and behaviour, as well as harmful ideas of manhood that lead to violence against women.

We know what happens when men and boys remain silent about gender-based violence. A sexist joke that gets cracked by a man is not harmless. Women are still regular victims of assault, rape, harassment and abuse. Our culture of male permissiveness, where men and boys remain silent in the face of gender violence and discrimination, is an unacceptable reality. Some men are still surprised to hear me identify as a feminist, but I am proud to call myself one, now and tomorrow, as an ally in the fight to end violence against women. It is more important now than ever that men follow the example set by the White Ribbon campaign to confront gender violence committed by other men and support women and girls.

I was proud this weekend to share white ribbons with the men and women in Carmacks. I look forward to seeing white ribbons on my male colleagues’ lapels in the days leading up to December 6, international day to end violence against women.

I would like to acknowledge the presence of François Picard. He is a member of the White Ribbon campaign board. I would like to thank him and his colleagues for the promotion of the White Ribbon campaign and their efforts to eliminate violence against women.

*Applause*

**Mr. Silver:** November 25 also marks the beginning of the annual White Ribbon campaign in Canada, and I am proud

to stand here on behalf of the Liberal Party to recognize the White Ribbon campaign. It is one of the largest men-led anti-violence programs in the world and is run in parallel with the 12 Days to End Violence Against Women campaign. This year marks the 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary of White Ribbon Yukon, the group responsible for organizing the event.

Starting as a response to the École Polytechnique massacre on December 6, 1989 — 25 years ago, Mr. Speaker — the White Ribbon began to appear in the years following as a show of solidarity and to show opposition to violence against women. The campaign encourages men — especially young men — to pledge to never commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women and girls.

We need to ensure that our boys grow up to be caring and compassionate men who understand that there is absolutely no situation where abuse is okay. Citizens are encouraged to take part by wearing the white ribbon, taking the pledge to never commit violence against women or to volunteer to distribute the white ribbons.

The month of November is Woman Abuse Prevention Month. Let's ensure that we continue the dialogue after November and continue to create an environment that is safe for all women to speak out. I absolutely agree with my colleague. I am, as well, a feminist. From one of the original courses that I took on the subject from one of Canada's most renowned feminists, Dr. Clare Fawcett, said — and I quote: "You are a feminist if you believe that we are equal, but different."

**Speaker:** Are there any visitors to be introduced?

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** It is indeed my honour to introduce to the House today Mr. Jay Hill. Mr. Jay Hill represented the riding of Prince George-Peace River as a Member of Parliament from 1993 until 2010. During that time, he served on many committees, but he was also Minister of State. He was Government House Leader and he was the government whip — not once, not twice, not three times, but actually on four separate occasions.

Mr. Hill is currently serving as Alberta's senior representative to the provinces of Saskatchewan, British Columbia, to the north and also to the New West Partnership.

I invite all members of the Legislative Assembly to join me in welcoming Mr. Jay Hill here today.

*Applause*

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

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

## NOTICES OF MOTIONS

**Ms. Moorcroft:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to advance equal rights for transsexual, transgender, and gender-variant people by:

(a) explicitly including "gender identity" and "gender expression" under section 7 of the Yukon *Human Rights Act* as a prohibited grounds for discrimination;

(b) supporting full equality and respect for trans people accessing Yukon government jobs, programs and services; and

(c) using public education to fight intolerance, discrimination, and violence against trans people.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon, in light of problems confirmed by the Auditor General in his fall 2014 report, to continue lobbying the Government of Canada to make improvements to the Nutrition North program.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to release its timelines for the widening of the Whitehorse corridor of the Alaska Highway.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to disclose whether there is a valid water licence in place at the Ketz River mine project.

**Speaker:** Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

## QUESTION PERIOD

### Question re: YESAA process

**Ms. Hanson:** This week, First Nation development corporations are meeting in Whitehorse to discuss business and development opportunities. These development corporations are already significant players in Yukon's economy. Their potential contribution is enormous.

At the Senate committee on Bill S-6, the Dakwakada Development Corporation stated that the amendments proposed to YESAA in Bill S-6 threaten the certainty necessary for investment in Yukon. Dakwakada Development Corporation has \$65 million in revenue and employs some 170 northerners — and this is the economic impact from just one First Nation development corporation.

The question is simple: Why does the Premier ignore the message that Bill S-6 will create uncertainty, a message that comes from First Nation development corporations bringing millions and hundreds of dollars and hundreds of jobs into our economy and have the potential to —

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** The Yukon First Nations with self-government agreements and their development corporations are indeed key players in our economy today and will be key players in our economy going forward. It's a small economy and we all win with successes.

We have talked about Bill S-6 many times through this House. Bill S-6 went through almost seven years of consultation and 73 of 76 recommendations were approved by all parties. This legislation will ensure consistency with assessment legislation in other jurisdictions across this country. It enables Yukon to be more competitive and this government is focused on Yukon families and on Yukon jobs.

**Ms. Hanson:** This Premier selectively ignores the four amendments dropped by the federal government on the First Nations' table. First Nation development corporations have, over the past 10 to 15 years, become significant economic drivers in the Yukon. First Nation development corporations look to sound investment opportunities for their shareholders. This means that they favour a climate of economic certainty. They want to invest in Yukon to help the territory grow, but continued Yukon Party support for Bill S-6 threatens the economic certainty that will attract further investment from Yukon First Nation development corporations in — as the Southern Tutchone say — Da Ku, our home.

Yukoners deserve to know where the Yukon Premier stands, so whose side is he on? Stephen Harper's Conservative government in Ottawa, or with Yukon citizens and Yukon First Nation governments and development corporations in Yukon?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** This government stands today, has stood in the past and will in future, for Yukon families. These amendments are very good for the territory of Yukon. The environmental protection with these amendments is enhanced by allowing assessors to assess potential effects that are likely to occur and also to look at cumulative effects.

What we have here is what we have seen: the NDP and the Liberal coalition continuing to say that they support the economy, but find every opportunity to be obstructive and to oppose. This government continues to be the only choice to ensure that we have a strong economy and create opportunities for Yukon families.

**Ms. Hanson:** Unfortunately, the reality is that the economic indicators have gone down across the board ever since this Premier took office and they continue to fall. Yukon's industrial growth rate has steadily decreased, the value of retail and wholesale sales have both seen their largest drops since 2009, and the recent drop in GDP growth puts Yukon dead last in the country on GDP growth.

Yukon First Nation development corporations are clear. They are a clear opportunity to grow investment in Yukon and turn the economy around, but they will not invest in an uncertain business climate that Bill S-6 will create. Is the Premier really saying that he fears that standing with Yukon First Nation governments and Yukon citizens would jeopardize federal funding like federal transfers or CanNor? If so, what does that say about the maturity of this government's relationship with the Harper government in Ottawa?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** What we see here is a trend that has continued to grow and that really shows Yukoners have two choices: they have the Yukon Party or they have the NDP light or the NDP/Liberal coalition that, as I see, continues to

oppose all development here in the Yukon. We are committed to growing a strong economy. There are many opportunities where Yukon First Nations and development corporations continue to work with this government and help build this economy.

Certainly one of the next opportunities will be for the hydro project, which this government will move forward with to ensure that we have clean renewable hydro energy for the future. Yukon First Nations have an obligation to represent their members and their interests and we encourage them to continue to do so. This government will meet all its obligations under the UFA and will work with First Nation governments in the interest of all Yukoners.

#### **Question re: Whitehorse airport safety**

**Ms. Moorcroft:** Pilots have told us that one of the trickiest skills to learn in flying is the fine art of the crosswind landing. A high crosswind that is gusting adds to the challenge of landing an aircraft safely. Runway 19 at the Whitehorse airport provides an option for pilots of small aircraft that must land in these conditions. Runway 19 also provides an alternative landing surface if there is a mishap that closes either of the two parallel runways. Does the government think it's more important to lease out airport land than to retain an existing runway that provides for safer crosswind landings for small aircraft?

**Hon. Mr. Istchenko:** I do want to talk about Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport and its excellent safety and security record. There are a few flight delays or cancellations each year due to poor weather conditions or aircraft mechanics issues, but there have been unknown cancellations due to poor runway conditions. Of course, safety is of the utmost concern and we're very proud of our safety record at all Yukon airports.

Use of the crosswind runway has been restricted over the past few years due to upgrades being done to the airstrip. The crosswind runway has still been available to small aircraft to land if necessary.

**Ms. Moorcroft:** The minister missed the question. Surely the safety of pilots and passengers in aircraft is the highest priority when planning future development at the airport. Consulting with stakeholders and affected users is important in any land use planning initiative. Pilots are saying that closing runway 19 is a bad idea. Yet again, it seems the government is trying to proceed with change before planning is complete. The Whitehorse airport development plan review should be finished by the end of 2015.

Mr. Speaker, why is this government considering eliminating vital infrastructure that provides increased safety for pilots and passengers before the Whitehorse airport development plan review is completed?

**Hon. Mr. Istchenko:** We're working with the interested parties, including COPA, Transport Canada — which is a key player in this with the federal regulations — and the individual pilots to find a solution for the crosswind runway.

We are in the midst of discussions and no decision has been made yet. You know, Mr. Speaker, when you have a good economy and a good government — we saw a mass exodus of people back when the folks on the other side were running this territory — you know what? You need things like upgrades to our water and sewer at the airport. We have a request for commercial lots. The crosswind runway which is apron 2 seemed like a good logical location.

**Ms. Moorcroft:** Aviation has had a large role in the history of the Yukon and it will continue to be important for continued growth of tourism and industry in the territory.

More pilots and planes means more demand for airport services, but it doesn't mean eliminating an existing runway, which the government has proposed to do. A minister's spokesperson says the department is always looking for opportunities to better utilize airport lands.

The minister says they want to find a solution, but they're proposing to close a runway. Surely, the best use of airport land is having runways for the safe takeoff and landing of aircraft.

Will this minister hear the call from Yukon pilots, make safety a priority and commit to reopen runway 19?

**Hon. Mr. Istchenko:** I do thank the member opposite for the question. I was hoping I would get this question yesterday so I could clarify some stuff — but a day late, I guess. Transport Canada arbitrarily changed some existing exemptions to this runway and another runway in the Yukon that would adversely affect the usage of the runway.

On that note, the department has been engaged with Transport Canada. I met with the federal minister when I was at transportation ministers meetings on this exact issue, and I am encouraged to see that COPA, the local pilots association, is engaged with Transport Canada also. We haven't made a decision on this yet. We have spoken to some of the industry members at geoscience — last week I did. I have been speaking to them and I have meetings this week. I got their perspective on this matter and will continue to have these discussions. I look forward to finding a solution that works for all and works for industry.

#### **Question re: Post-traumatic stress disorder support**

**Mr. Silver:** I have a question for the minister responsible for workers' compensation. There has been a lot of attention paid to the issue of post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, as it pertains to military personnel. Another group of workers who are overrepresented with this illness are our first responders, including firefighters, paramedics and police officers. First responders who suffer from PTSD are not automatically eligible for workers' compensation in the Yukon.

In 2012, the Government of Alberta changed its *Workers' Compensation Act* to allow firefighters, police officers, sheriffs and paramedics to receive compensation for PTSD without having to prove that their condition is work-related. Alberta became the first province in Canada to provide such coverage.

Has the government or WCB considered making similar changes here?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** At this time we haven't entered into any discussions with the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board in relation to this issue. I won't speculate on what we might do in the future, but at this time we have not begun those types of discussions.

**Mr. Silver:** Just to inform the minister, other provinces, including Ontario and Alberta, have presumptive legislation for firefighters that covers certain types of cancers and cardiac events. Our own *Workers' Compensation Act* was amended in 2011, as the minister knows, to include such coverage so there certainly is a precedent here for this type of legislation. Such changes would benefit first responders and are pretty straightforward.

How long does the minister believe that it would take to see legislation like this — these changes — introduced?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** As I said, we haven't begun any kind of discussions with respect to presumptive legislation for first responders. I am very aware of what happened with the firefighters because I was a member of city council at the time and was a strong advocate on behalf of firefighters. Having said that, I won't make any comments or commitments with respect to presumptive legislation for first responders until we have a chance to discuss it, first of all, with the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board, and secondly, with my own colleagues.

**Mr. Silver:** I do urge the minister to get on those talks and I can't wait to hear the members of the WCB here as witnesses.

Beyond changes to our legislation to ensure that first responders who suffer from PTSD get the coverage they deserve, there are other ways in which the government can help these individuals. After the deaths by suicide of several first responders in recent months across the nation, there have been new mental health awareness campaigns to shine a light on post-traumatic stress disorder among police officers, paramedics and firefighters. One such initiative is the "You Are Not Alone" campaign, organized by the Ontario Psychological Association, and the other is the "Helping the helpers" education campaign in Nova Scotia. Has the government considered a similar public awareness campaign, at least, here in the Yukon?

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** It is a pleasure to rise here and just provide a bit of information to the member about some of the things we have done to increase the support that we are providing for our first responders, including EMS paramedics. That includes — as a result of feedback that we received from volunteers — we have extended counselling services automatically in the event that first responders have dealt with an experience that may be very troublesome for that first responder.

We have expanded the same type of counselling services to them as are available to Yukon government employees. We have continued to work with them in increasing the training that is available for rural EMS volunteers. In both the areas of fire and EMS, staff of Community Services are working very

closing with the volunteers to identify additional needs and priorities to ensure that we are continuing to increase the support that we provide to our volunteers and, as well as in the area of EMS, to our full-time staff.

**Question re: Nutrition North Canada program**

**Mr. Tredger:** This morning, Canada's Auditor General released a damning report on the federal Nutrition North Canada program. The Auditor General found the initiative so ineffective and poorly managed that Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada cannot say if Nutrition North has even led to lower food prices in Old Crow or anywhere else. That's the Nutrition North program which subsidizes retailers and replaced the food mail program, an effective initiative that actually helped northerners themselves with the cost of shipping food to remote communities. Old Crow deserves representatives who are vocal about challenges to food security and today this government has a chance to rise to the occasion.

Will the Premier stand in support of Old Crow and call on the federal government to reinstate the food mail program that actually helps northerners with the cost of shipping food?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** It is disappointing that the member would rise from the NDP with such a question. Of course this House has passed a unanimous motion supporting working with the federal government to look at the challenges that exist with Nutrition North — with our only community that receives those benefits, and that is Old Crow. We have said — and we articulated to the federal government — that the community of Old Crow is in fact unique to the program that exists quite extensively in the other territories. We are very proud of the work of the MLA for Vuntut Gwitchin and his endless pursuit to ensure that that program works the best for all citizens of that community.

**Mr. Tredger:** Northerners across the north have said that Nutrition North is ineffective. The community of Old Crow, the Yukon NDP and now the Auditor General also agree that the program is not meeting its objectives. Now, with the reported closure of the Northern, Old Crow's grocery store, the community has rallied to create a non-profit to sell basic food supplies until a planned co-op grocery store eventually opens. Old Crow deserves our full support in making food security a priority.

As Old Crow prepares for winter without a grocery store, what measures are the government taking to support food security in the community?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** This government will continue to support the Government of Vuntut Gwitchin and the work they're doing directly with the Government of Canada with the agreements they have, and we will continue to admire the work of the MLA for Vuntut Gwitchin as well, in his tireless work.

This House has sent a message to Canada. There was a unanimous motion passed during this session. We are continuing to work with the federal government to ensure that the unique situation of Old Crow that exists within the

Nutrition North program is addressed for the benefit of all the citizens of Old Crow.

**Question re: Support for informal caregivers**

**Ms. Stick:** The majority of Canadians want to stay in their home and community as long as possible and in the presence of their loved ones, yet three-quarters of them spend their last days in hospitals or long-term care facilities. Informal caregivers are family members or friends who help loved ones with activities of daily living, emotional support and end-of-life preparation. In Yukon, an informal caregiver is present in almost all home care cases. Although there's no territorial data, we know that one in four Canadians will be an informal caregiver each year. We also know that up to one-third of informal caregivers will show symptoms of distress.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister tell this House what supports are available to informal caregivers in Whitehorse and the communities who are helping their loved ones fulfill their desire to spend their final days at home?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** If we're talking about palliative care, then the territorial government has established a palliative care unit, which is an integral part of the continuum of health care services in the Yukon.

I have some personal experiences as a caregiver, and I know that there are several organizations — or at least one particular organization in town that is attempting to provide that support and advice to new caregivers. I think that we will continue to encourage and support that kind of assistance to caregivers.

I'm just not exactly sure what the member opposite is getting at outside of palliative care, which is provided, and outside of home care, which we have also expanded greatly in the last two years.

**Ms. Stick:** I'm talking about the informal caregivers and the supports they require. Informal caregivers face challenges, including stress, missing work and having to rely on their own personal savings. Meanwhile, their unpaid work saves the Canadian health care system an estimated \$25 billion a year. A recent study shows something as simple as a \$200-a-month caregiving allowance would save six times the cost of a long-term care bed. Our reliance on informal caregivers will continue to grow as our population ages. It's essential to ensure the well-being of those caregivers.

In April 2014, the minister did say that our data shows that 40 percent of home care clients are at high risk of institutionalization. Will the government's palliative care framework include an action plan for end-of-life care that will minimize caregiver burden and assist those informal caregivers?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** The member opposite doesn't seem to be aware of what has actually transpired in the Yukon. There is currently a caregiver tax credit available — a Yukon caregiver tax credit.

We also provide supports to residents of the territory to enable individuals to live in their homes longer. Not only do we provide support to individuals, we provide support in the form of — as I said before — home care.



When we are talking about palliative care, we have a palliative care resource team that supports care of individuals in all Yukon communities. They provide community nursing, acute care, continuing care — all of those things are provided through our social services group and we continue to support individuals in their care of family.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite seems to think that this should be a paid position — I don't. I believe that we should support caregivers by giving them a tax credit and by supporting individuals. But I also feel a certain commitment to my family to support them as they age. I believe that is the individual — the family member's — obligation, as well as their right.

**Ms. Stick:** I would agree that, where possible, family caregivers are the best. But not every caregiver in a home or a family can afford to not go to work. I can speak from personal experience too. I missed eight months of work — not something I could easily afford being self-employed. I was able to do it with the help of friends and family, but not everyone has the potential to do that. I am talking about informal caregivers, who are not able to leave their jobs — as much as they would like to — or are forced into situations that they cannot afford. I am looking for support, Mr. Speaker, for the informal caregivers besides a tax credit, because if you are not making the income, you are not able to do it.

Perhaps the minister could speak a bit more about informal caregivers and their supports.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** I have already spoken about the tax credit that we are giving. It is our tax credit that we're giving. You know, I am not sure exactly what the member opposite is requesting — whether we should pay informal caregivers a wage, while they are forced to take time off. We do have other supports in place for people who are in financial need. If they can show a reason for requiring that financial assistance through our social assistance programs, we would be happy to help out.

With the growing aging population, this is going to become more and more of an issue. It is an ongoing need that we are addressing through home care, through creation of palliative care and through expansion of palliative care. We are also in the process — as all members of this House know — of planning for a new continuing care facility that will assist in years to come with the aging population here in the territory.

So, we are planning. We are making those efforts and we will continue to do so.

### **Question re: Special needs education programming**

**Mr. Tredger:** Shared resource rooms are an essential part of our education system. By creating a dedicated space within the schools, students with high needs who are unable to function in a regular classroom can receive special assistance in the least restrictive and most enabling way possible. This is spelled out clearly in the *Education Act*.

Last week I asked the minister why fewer and fewer special needs students are receiving individual education

plans, created in consultation with the student's parents. This also is a requirement mandated in the *Education Act*.

This week I would like to ask whether or not the resource rooms are still being used for their intended purpose. Is it still Department of Education policy that shared resource rooms are to provide students with support so they can, whenever possible, be integrated safely into the school community?

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** I would like to thank the member opposite for his question above.

As I tried to inform the member opposite last week, the Department of Education does in fact provide a number of supports in each of our classrooms. In addition to the individual targeted support — one-on-one intensive — we also provide more generic support as well as shared learning or shared resource programs.

The member opposite should know that we have shared resource programs that exist in four different schools: Vanier Catholic Secondary, Porter Creek Secondary, F.H. Collins and Jack Hulland Elementary schools as well, with a number of various programs supporting the needs of students with behavioural or academic challenges. We continue to provide those educational services in a very least restrictive but most enabling environment to enable our students to thrive and succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning.

**Mr. Tredger:** Demand for the resource rooms is increasing, but the government's commitment to their success isn't as enthusiastic. There isn't enough sport and resource rooms so that students can participate in their regular school programming and the school community in a supported manner. As a result, something of a vicious cycle develops. A student is unable to function in a regular classroom so they are enrolled in a resource room. However, there is not enough support in the resource room to facilitate their transition back into a regular class. The student remains in the resource room longer than they otherwise need to and makes it more difficult for other students to access dedicated support. How can resource rooms be the least restrictive and most enabling space possible when there is a shortfall of support needed for the student to fully benefit?

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** The Government of Yukon continues to do the best that we can and I certainly will point to record-level investment in the Department of Education, which is inclusive of 28 public schools in the territory. That includes intensive support — one on one — to more general supports in our classrooms. In addition to the shared resource programs, which we continue to look and review best practices across the country, again, providing educational services — how can we do that in the most enabling environment and in the least restrictive way of delivering those student supports in our classrooms?

We are working to work with all of our partners in education to improve that delivery of services. We'll continue to provide a record level of support in terms of providing that one on one, in terms of individual educational assistance and remedial tutors. In fact this year alone, that number continues to increase. We're providing over 177 FTEs of one-on-one

support and shared resources. We are very much committed to improving and looking at best practices across the country.

**Mr. Tredger:** More money is not necessarily the effective use of that money. Yukoners want the Yukon Party government to get its house in order. The mismanagement of the new F.H. Collins building, disregard for individual education plans that are mandated by the *Education Act*, centralizing substitute teachers' assignments to the detriment of a school's needs and preferences, the continued muzzling of our educators — the list goes on.

Our children deserve better. These failures of leadership are putting the brakes on our front-line educators' good work to help our students learn and grow. Half-measures don't solve the real and many problems facing our schools. Parents, teachers and administrators must be engaged.

When will the minister take the shortfall in resource room educational assistants seriously and what steps will she take to help these special needs students and their teachers?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Again, we're hearing from the NDP insinuations that are not based on fact. This is the party that went out — when it came to F.H. Collins, trying to tell everybody that we're building a school for 450 students — that we weren't going to build it to the building standards that were out there. I believe that the member opposite described it as an ice palace, even though we are building this to Silver LEED standards.

This is a party that knows how to spend money but opposes and obstructs every opportunity to grow an economy, to create opportunities for Yukon families, through jobs — creating prosperity — because I know that the Liberal-NDP coalition doesn't understand this, but it's really a strong private sector that provides funding for governments, which then provide programs and services that Yukoners appreciate.

This government will continue to focus on creating jobs responsibly for all Yukoners, to create wealth and prosperity for everybody in this entire territory.

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

#### Notice of government private members' business

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(7), I would like to identify the items standing in the name of the government private members to be called for debate on Wednesday, November 26. They are Motion No. 785, standing in the name of the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, and Motion No. 791, standing in the name of the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin.

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

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

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

*Motion agreed to*

*Speaker leaves the Chair*

#### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**Chair (Ms. McLeod):** Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Vote 8, Department of Justice, in Bill No. 15, *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

*Recess*

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

#### Bill No. 15: *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15* — continued

**Chair:** The matter before the Committee is Vote 8, Department of Justice, in Bill No. 15, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*.

**Department of Justice — continued**

*On Capital*

**On Community Justice and Public Safety Division — continued**

**On Old Corrections Centre Demolition — continued**

**Chair:** We are continuing debate on the line item, Community Justice and Public Safety Division, Old Corrections Centre Demolition.

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** First there was a revote of \$70,000 for the demolition of the old Correctional Centre. This revote was placed in order to complete this project.

During the demolition of the old Whitehorse Correctional Centre, the scope of the contract work required the contractor to perform a detailed examination of the site for hazardous material requiring special removal. This investigation was completed in January of 2014. The resulting additional costs for proper removal and disposal of found hazardous materials exceed the 10-percent contingency value included in the previous approved project budget.

Somewhat off the line item, but in relation to discussions yesterday, some information that I need to correct the record for — and this relates to yesterday's budget debate on correcting the record on how the contractor was hired to do the business requirement analysis for the land titles modernization project. The Land Titles Office business requirements analysis is being carried out by IAG Consulting based out of Mississauga, Ontario. In April 2014, IAG Consulting won a fully publicly tendered request for proposals — or RFP — for a standing-offer agreement — SOA — to

provide planning and business analysis services to the Government of Yukon to a maximum value of \$750,000. The SOA is administered by the Department of Highways and Public Works, ICT division. Contracts drawn under the SOA require their own funding and need to be coordinated with ICT to ensure compliance with the SOA. The Department of Justice worked with ICT to ensure that the work that IAG would carry out in respect to the Land Titles Office complied in every way with the publicly tendered SOA.

Funding for the work carried out by IAG in respect to the Land Titles Office comes from a Management Board-approved, one-time expenditure of \$200,000 that is part of the department's supplementary budget request.

There is also — on this line item — \$330,000 for the demolition of the old Whitehorse Correctional Centre hazardous material. There was a revote in order to complete this project. During the demolition of the old Whitehorse Correctional Centre, the scope of the contract work required the contractor to perform a detailed examination similar to the line item previous to this — but one was \$70,000 and one was \$270,000.

Yesterday, the Member for Klondike asked about outside legal costs for John Hunter. The outside counsel billings for 2014-15 were \$44,288.13 — that was as of November 5. An information note has been sent to my office, so I just wanted to put that on record for the Member for Klondike.

*Old Corrections Centre Demolition in the amount of \$340,000 agreed to*

*On Total of Other Capital*

*Total of Other Capital in the amount of nil cleared*

*Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$1,072,000 agreed to*

*Total Expenditures in the amount of \$1,987,000 agreed to*

*Department of Justice agreed to*

**Chair:** We are going to move on to Health and Social Services, which is Vote 15.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** I'm sorry — I didn't anticipate that it would be this quick, so can I get a short break while we get our officials down?

**Chair:** Ten minutes?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** Ten minutes will be fine.

**Chair:** Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes while we await officials.

*Recess*

**Chair:** Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Vote 15, Department of Health and Social Services, general debate.

**Department of Health and Social Services — continued**

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for the brief intermission.

I thought that before we get right into general debate on the bill itself, I would bring forward a couple of issues that have come up this week with respect to Health and Social Services. The first is a question I had yesterday with respect to the fact that some 100 contracts were deleted from the contract registry, and most of them were physician contracts.

Had the member opposite bothered to read the contract regulations — item 2, under “Scope” — she would have discovered that this regulation — contract regulation registry — applies to all contracts except: (a) employment contracts; (b) contracts for physician services as defined in the *Health Care Insurance Plan Act*; and (c) contracts for the practice of law as defined in the *Legal Profession Act*.

One of the big reasons that I wasn't fully up to speed on the contract registry is that it belongs in Highways and Public Works. When Highways and Public Works realized that an administrative error had occurred and these contracts for physicians were in error appearing on the registry, they apparently corrected the error and removed these contracts from the contract registry.

It's not a conspiracy. As far as I'm aware, nobody on this side of the House even realized that the error had occurred, let alone that it had been corrected. It was completely an administrative function and things are moving along, I suspect, as they should. As I said yesterday, I'm sure that there is a simple explanation, and despite the protestations of the Member for Riverdale South, the explanation, I hope, is good enough because it's the only one I have.

The second one was the number of people living — clients in hotels. In the month of October 2014, Health and Social Services provided assistance to 65 clients — well within the 40 to 80 range — staying in hotels or hostels. Sixty-four were in hotels; one was in a hostel. The total amount of money paid during that month was \$56,702. This is approximately the same number of clients as were staying in hotels this time last year in the fall and winter of 2013.

Some clients are short-stay clients — for example, a few days when they come in from the community — while others are staying at a hotel for the entire month. We do provide assistance for short-term stays if the client came into Whitehorse for medical purposes. However, most of the 65 clients have longer term hotel stays. The average cost per client was just under \$890, which is just under the maximum monthly amount for combined shelter and fuel utilities allowance.

Health and Social Services, I should add, Madam Chair, is in ongoing discussions with Yukon Housing Corporation and Community Services regarding long-term use of hotels as residence for some SA clients. As those discussions progress, we hope to have some resolution of the issue.

I think that covered the two issues from yesterday, and I would be happy to answer any further questions that may arise.

**Ms. Stick:** I thank the member for his response to some of the questions I had yesterday, but even as he was speaking, I did a quick check and there are still some contracts that I would question. I accept that that was error — that these

contracts should not have been listed, but they have been for a number of years now because I have looked at them in the past.

I would also point out that lease space in clinics — some have been removed, some have not. I found a number of instances of those in the current contracts, as of today. I'm also able to find doctors' contracts still on here for services that they are providing here in Whitehorse. So if this is in error, I think someone needs to go back and check it again and make sure that those things are removed, if that's the case.

I would also point out that there are nurse services in here that have been removed. That's not a physician, but it's a nurse. In some cases where the same person has more than one contract, one contract has been removed — which is for a fairly substantive amount of money — and the other two smaller contracts have been left on, even though they are for the same program.

I accept the minister's explanation that those are the reasons those were removed, but I would suggest that someone needs to go back and look at them again. I would also like an explanation as to why clinical rental space would be removed from contracts.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** Obviously this was done relatively quickly when there was an error discovered. HPW and my department will be conversing, because they are HPW's rules. We'll be happy to abide by those rules, but we want to make sure that they're done correctly. So we'll be working with HPW over the next little while to ensure that the contracts that should be there, are there, and the contracts that shouldn't be there, are not there.

It has really never come up in our discussions in the department previously and we were as surprised as anybody at the questions yesterday, but hopefully, during the discussions with Highways and Public Works, we will resolve the issues.

**Ms. Stick:** I find the contract registry very helpful when understanding where money is going. It also raises a number of questions when I am looking at them. One of the questions I do have is regarding the amount of money that we pay for group homes outside of the territory. Currently we are up to \$2.2 million. I wondered if the minister could tell us, please, how many individuals that covers and how many are adults — as opposed to children — and if I could have those numbers please.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** There are a number of different homes outside of the territory that we are forced to send people to, whether they are Yukon Review Board clients or others. We can do a breakdown of exactly who is sent out, but it is extremely expensive to send these people out and if there is any possible way of avoiding it, we do. However, unfortunately, from time to time, we don't have a choice in the matter. So we will get back to you with exact numbers and dollar figures.

**Ms. Stick:** This seems to be an increasing budget item and it seems more and more individuals are being sent out, whether through the mental health review or the Yukon Review Board. I am wondering if the minister and the department are considering looking at some new options. It

has been a long time since we have opened a new group home for adults in the Yukon. I know there is talk of expanding St. Elias into a larger group home for adults. We have OFI that is not necessarily a group home, but certainly is assisted living and that is appreciated.

I am wondering if there is consideration being given for some new group homes that would make it easier for these individuals to stay in the Yukon, closer to their communities, closer to their families and to their natural support systems, because it is one thing to have these individuals go out and presumably to be cared for. In some instances, I would hope there is some training, but they eventually do have to come back. If it is an individual with FASD, they are always going to need the same level of supports. I don't imagine it is the intention of the department to keep people out there indefinitely, so how are we going to make sure that supports are here — either first avoid having to send them out of the territory as far away as the east coast — to having them stay here in the Yukon in group homes or some kind of situation that hires local Yukoners and uses their expertise and keeps those individuals close to family and close to community.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** The people we are talking about here are not people that we would put in a normal group home in Whitehorse. We are talking about people with extremely complex needs and in many cases, more than one specific diagnosis, so it is not just that they may have only FASD, there may be other complex issues besides. We're not talking about people who we can place a St. Elias group home. We are talking about people with very complex needs.

**Ms. Stick:** I would ask the minister to be careful when he is talking about some of these individuals. I know a few of them who have been sent out, and some of them do have complicated issues. Not all of them are so complicated that they couldn't be provided for here, if there was space or if there was a service. Some of them have done well in group homes and might have run into other issues that end up with them coming before the Review Board and being sent out. The bottom line is that they have to come back. I would hope that we have not sent them away forever. I hope we have a plan in place to bring those individuals back and to provide service here in Whitehorse, probably — because we are centralized — or in their communities, if at all possible. Again, these individuals, I am presuming, will not be spending the rest of their lives Outside.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** We constantly are looking at every individual case. We evaluate on an ongoing basis, not only from a cost-effective point of view, but for effective treatment for the client, as well as the ability to place that client within a Yukon home. It's not like we send them out and leave them there. We are constantly reviewing what we have in place and what is best for the client, as well as what is most cost-effective, but the client's needs have to come first.

**Ms. Stick:** I think we will have to agree to disagree on this one. I do realize that clients' needs come first, but I do think that it's important that they be close to home, close to friends, family and their natural support systems, with the supports that they need here. I do know that some individuals

have been sent out for a specific period of time with the expectation that they will come back and receive an equitable or same level of service. Many of these individuals, when we send them out to group homes or treatment centres — there are all kinds of programs that we are sending individuals out for. We are not expecting them to be cured of their disability. We are expecting them to learn some skills that they can bring back and hopefully use in a group home here or with the supports they need.

I am going to move on because, on this one, I think we are going to have to agree to disagree, but I do know individuals who want to come home.

Another question I had on the budget had to do with the Yukon Hospital Corporation. This isn't a question for them, but it is a question for the department. One has to do with the dietary services and the fact that this government pays close to \$1.4 million for dietary services to the Yukon Hospital Corporation. I just wondered if I could get clarification on what that amount is for.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** I know that the Thomson Centre is part of the equation. Whether that's the total answer to the \$1.4 million, I'll have to check, but I know from experience that Thomson Centre receives their meals from the Hospital Corporation because they're attached and they're in the same building.

**Ms. Stick:** Is the minister aware of any other facilities or Meals on Wheels that this might cover? It seems like a big chunk of change to me, Madam Chair.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** As far as we're aware, Thomson Centre is the only one, but as I said, we can confirm that. You have to remember it's not only the food that they're providing, but the dieticians and the assistance of the Hospital Corporation as well — so we use their services as well as the food. We also evidently pay for the food for in-patient care as well so that would be part of the fee — Thomson and in-patient.

**Ms. Stick:** So just to clarify, any patient staying at the hospital is also covered by the Department of Health and Social Services and not by the Hospital Corporation? Does that include the kitchen staff, the staff who deliver it and the dietary needs?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** It's a transfer made to the Hospital Corporation to cover meals. We'll come back with an exact breakdown, but it's on a per-meal basis. We pay the Hospital Corporation a transfer for that amount of money.

**Ms. Stick:** Would that be separate from the general transfer that we look at when we're looking at the Public Accounts reports?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** We'll have to get back with an exact breakdown.

**Mr. Silver:** Thanks again to the department officials for their time here again today. I have two follow-up questions from last time. I forgot to ask about Macaulay Lodge. In the last session, the minister spoke about the building and the life expectancy of the current Macaulay Lodge. Are there plans to tear down that facility?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** It will have to be assessed at the time that it's no longer necessary to determine that, but at this point we haven't made any real plans. In cooperation with Highways and Public Works, that determination will be made at that time.

**Mr. Silver:** Thanks to the minister for his answer.

I'm going to move to the First Nation health program. Bear with me here as I kind of paint something here. There is a potential issue with the First Nation. Before I even begin, this is an excellent program. There is no doubt about that, and the community is extremely happy that we are moving forward and negotiations and consultations are being had with the medical fraternity and with the TH. We respectfully thank the minister and also the department and the Hospital Corporation for this initiative.

A potential issue with the First Nation health program is that it is assumed that it will be, or that it should be, something that resembles something like in these bigger, larger hospitals — programming and positions seen in larger communities. In a bigger community, you can employ somebody full-time with one department and give them all their hours. In Dawson, they are often hamstrung by part-time positions. For example, the government currently offers two or three days a week in Dawson and then expects the employees to spend another two or three days in Mayo — these are the nurses — or Ross River or Faro or Pelly or all of these communities — to fill out the week. This is what it looks like.

The department has a pool of money and how they use that is decided internally. They'll crunch the numbers and it will go through the formula and derive a number of hours a specific position should spend in each of the non-Whitehorse locations. Then they total up these to create a single 35-to-40-hour week position with appropriate allowance for travel, of course, between these locations. Now on paper it appears to work, but in reality it could potentially be a failure. We are noticing some problems with it now for these people who are living in these non-Whitehorse communities. This is a recipe for burnout, job dissatisfaction and also backlash from the community members, because what you hear is, "You are never here when we need you" — that type of stuff.

There are few employees who will tolerate that for a long time as well. Because these are often young and motivated people, they will quickly find other work that pays better, has more hours, doesn't involve travelling several hours each week and can do so having improved their resume with the previous position. The community ultimately stands a chance of losing out because of this system.

We are wondering — here's an idea for the hospital, the Health department and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and whoever else, to agree to share a position or more to ensure that we have people in Dawson to provide services like the First Nation liaison — a mental health nurse, for example — social workers, PT or OT and so on. The social workers or the First Nation liaison could be slated to spend a portion of their week seeing people in the community, working out of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in offices or from the hospital — and on-call, for that

matter — in the hospital or by phone to nursing stations in neighbouring communities that may be sending patients up to Dawson as a hub hospital.

There have been similar arrangements like this in the past in our community. Of course this would mean that all these different parties would have to agree to share and to contribute to that position. It would be very difficult to get — or is it going to be very difficult to get the Hospital Corporation to sit down with Health and Social Services and also with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in to hammer out some type of joint agreement? I guess that is the question. Piecing together an occupation from multiple sources is not a foreign concept in the community of Dawson. People do this all the time. It lets people actually stay in Dawson. It also builds relationships, and families have a sense of stability with this type of model. It is part of a bigger community health issue, which is creating stability for the residents. I guess the question is: Would the minister consider this approach and does he have any comments about my statements?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** The member opposite started off by saying First Nation health and I thought he meant the First Nation health program within the Yukon Hospital Corporation. If we're not talking about that, we are talking about something that is separate.

We do require our nurses to travel — there is no doubt about that — but we are looking at options, and you know I have talked to the same person in Dawson City about this issue as I am sure the member opposite talked to. I have told him as well that we are constantly working with the Hospital Corporation and there is no reason we couldn't work out some kind of an agreement. But I think it is really important that he understands that if you try to work a single position that is funded by three, you are going to have all kinds of problems with physician payment in each of the three organizations. Some have pensions, some don't. So there is a huge host of things to worry about.

I know that, at the present time, with the Hospital Corporation and the community nursing station there in Dawson, they have weekly meetings, I think, as part of the collaborative case management work going on in Dawson. Dawson, I think, will become a model for others in the territory. We have some discussions with First Nations especially over many of the positions that we have. In fact, we fund a number of positions in First Nations — in social services especially — not so much in health care. We look forward to discussing with them — we are just in the process right now of discussing with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in a memorandum of understanding with respect to children in care in Dawson. We are continuing that work and if there is any way we can work in a collaborative situation with them, we will.

**Mr. Silver:** Just to go back to my opening statements, I was using the First Nation's position and that consultation as a great starting conversation to this other piece, because it is an example of a partnership. It is an example of something that was based on consultation with the community and something

that the community obviously wanted and so desperately needs in this new facility.

The issue, I guess, is that I would like to see the minister comment maybe more on the potential of burnout in the current position from these nurses. You know, 35-to-40 hours a week, and you have the potential of — like I say — back and forth from all these different communities. For one, just the travel allowances alone is a huge concern, but also the potential for burnout and at this rate, if this is the plan, then we are not going to be able to retain a lot of our nurses.

As far as a cooperative approach to a position, this has been done before. A good example is in education. Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in took the lead one year on an independent learning centre position — a fulltime position. This is going back at least five to 10 years. The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in had their own independent centre and, at that time, the Minister of Education thought it was an excellent program so they partnered the next year. As far as the salaries went, that was all taken into consideration through the Yukon government. It was taken off of the budget of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in — but those other partnerships made and other contributions, like, for example, the building that they're in. So there is a method in order to do these partnerships when the minister talks about the complex situation of dealing with pensions and so on.

If the minister can comment on whether or not the current way that we are implementing nurses in the rural communities — if it's something that they want to continue with or if there is a better plan — if he can elaborate on that and maybe once again on the partnerships with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. Like I say, lots of people in that community wear lots of hats. I don't want to mention any of these specific names here, but there are a couple of different nurses — extended-scope nurses — who had an excellent rapport in the community and could fulfill that type of need inside the community.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** We're working with not only First Nations around the territory, but we're also working with the Hospital Corporation. I think that we recently began discussions with them to share one position in Dawson, an occupational therapist, who is required along with a physical therapist in the Hospital Corporation building there.

So we're working with them on a continuing basis, but we're also trying to cut down the amount of travel done by our nurses in the community and we're doing that through increased use of technology. We're aware of the difficulties of asking people to travel on an ongoing basis. The really unfortunate part is that, in most of the small communities, you only need a part-time mental health worker or whatever — a therapist — so it's really difficult to provide a full-time person in a community where their services aren't required on a full-time basis.

As I said, we're looking at it. We're working toward restricting or reducing the amount of travel, as I said. Technology is one of the things that we hope to utilize and, you know, the future, we think, will be much different from what we're doing right now.

**Mr. Silver:** I appreciate the answers and commitments from the minister. I'm going to move to social assistance in

Dawson. I wonder if the minister can give us an update on the status of social workers in Dawson. We're hearing that there is an issue and right now currently we don't have a full capacity of staff up in Dawson. We're wondering if the minister can comment on that.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** We normally don't comment on personnel issues, but I understand that there was a difficulty. I was visited by the chief and council and we had an interesting discussion. I know that the department is in the process of making some changes and I think that's about all I can say at this time. I understand there are some changes being made. I'm not really involved in that part at all.

**Mr. Silver:** Working through education, the communities are always — well, the department is always talking about the whole child. What we see when social assistance is not at full capacity — that concept of the whole child stops at 3:30, so I implore the minister and his department officials to please try to work through this situation as soon as they possibly can.

We are absolutely not laying any blame. Some of the students who are the hardest to reach are the ones who need the help most after school. It's hard to implement school programs when we don't have a full capacity in the social assistance office.

I was also approached by one of my constituents in the last week or so about maternity issues for rural women. She approached me about an issue of travelling to Whitehorse to give birth. The concerns are common, and I have heard this before as, I imagine, you have as well.

We are wondering: What is the travel subsidy for this event? Is the number of days capped for which you can apply for the subsidy? I'll start there.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** If a person in the community is expecting a baby and they are forced to travel to Whitehorse for some reason, as long as that is authorized by a doctor and they are coming in to see a physician here, then I don't see what the difficulty would be. I understand that there was some difficulty about one person travelling from Dawson, but I thought that one was resolved. I will wait to hear.

**Mr. Silver:** Could I just get an answer to the question: Is there a cap on that subsidy? The next question would be: When was the last time that the travel subsidy was increased?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** There is a cap. That's for sure. We don't pay unlimited travel. That's for sure.

If it's absolutely essential for the person to be in Whitehorse for treatment or if there is difficulty with the maternity — I am not sure what the problem would be. If we are talking about a person coming in to see a midwife, that is perhaps a slightly different question.

**Mr. Silver:** I don't want the minister to try to guess that this is about one particular issue. These are just general questions based upon, of course, a few different questions that have happened, but I really don't want to speak specifically about anybody in the community.

When was the last time that this travel subsidy was increased, and is there any additional funding for a single mother?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** I am not sure when the last time the travel subsidy was increased, but if a single mother qualifies for social assistance, then social assistance would fund the travel, care or accommodation. Other than that, I don't know of any other subsidies that we would pay.

**Mr. Silver:** I am sure the minister understands how difficult it is for parents with other children coming from the rural communities. In one of the cases, one of the particular constituents has a significant other and it was a full-time job just to have the caring for their own kids, and going through birth. There are really limited options if you have kids and you're coming from the rural communities, staying in the communities.

Again, it brought up the issue: imagine if you were a single mother with kids, coming in from the communities. It really does add to the stress of that whole process. Are there any other types of funding the minister can think of for these specific situations that puts a single mother at an unfair disadvantage, compared to someone who has a nuclear family or a partner, in that case?

Are there cases where the government will cover some of the costs for a travel escort — for example, if the mother is having a C-section and will have limited mobility for an extended amount of time? Currently, by how many days you stay in the hospital, and then when you're supposed to travel back out, this doesn't really jibe with the fact that, if you had a C-section — because the doctors will tell you that you're not supposed to be driving when you've had a C-section. So again, a single mother — a consideration where you don't have the money to be sticking around in Whitehorse, you want to get back to the community and you need to get back to your occupation, or what have you — is there any extra money? Would the government consider some kind of coverage for a travel escort, in this particular example, or other examples?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** At this time, no, there are no circumstances, other than if the person is in need of social assistance. At the present time, our social workers do make contact with expectant mothers or mothers who have recently delivered from communities to see if they can help in any way. So we are making that contact but, as far as actual payment, no, there are no other sections in regulations that allow us to pay those fees.

**Mr. Silver:** Does the minister agree that this puts a single mother from a community at an unfair disadvantage? Would the social worker drive one of my constituents back to the community? You know, you're told by the doctor that you've just had a C-section and you shouldn't be driving a car, yet you have to go back to your community. There's a certain amount of time that you can stay. This really does put a certain demographic at an unfair disadvantage.

When he says that social assistance reaches out to these individuals, does that mean they would provide this service, or are these particular women out in the cold on this one?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** I realize childbirth is a difficult time, whether you're from the community or from the City of Whitehorse. We're limited by the regulations, and we haven't made any plans to change them in the really near future to

what we can pay. There are other options available. Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre provides a suite for people from out of town who are in Whitehorse, so if that's available, that's a possibility.

I'm not sure exactly what the member opposite expects. If the person is eligible for social assistance or if they are in real financial difficulty, we can then provide assistance through social assistance. I can't think of any other way we would pay at the present time.

**Mr. Silver:** Social assistance is great, but I don't think it is going to be the option for a lot of my constituents. I don't think that they would want to go down that route, to tell you the truth, Madam Chair — I know that they wouldn't.

As far as the rural pregnant mom's suite at the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre — this is a two-bedroom suite and it's on the lower floor. It is free to stay for women travelling from the communities. Unfortunately, they do not allow children to stay there with their mother, so it isn't an option. There is no option for a single parent from the communities who is having a C-section, who is told by their doctor that they shouldn't be driving and they have a limited amount of stay at the hospital.

The minister can respond to that if he wants, but we are just identifying a serious problem here — that's all. I just want to get it on the record that this is a situation that deserves consideration.

I just have a couple more questions statistics-wise, and then I will sit down and allow other members to have some questions here.

I was wondering if the minister can tell us how many doctor FTEs there currently are in the Yukon. Of course, if he doesn't have these numbers at his fingertips, if we could get a response from him in a timely manner. Also, how many patients are currently without a family doctor? Are there any new programs from doctor, nurse and technician recruitment?

Again, thanks to the members from the department and for the minister's time.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** Doctors would be really uptight if we considered them as FTEs. They are private businesses. Presently, roughly 72 doctors are practising in the territory. I think yesterday I mentioned that we paid approximately \$39.4 million in fees to those doctors, and that is inclusive of their expenses as well. It's not only fees.

We just had a very successful recruitment campaign, as I understand it. We were at a recruiting fair and our recruiter was accompanied by a physician. I understand they received a number of serious inquiries about practice in the Yukon. What we found too — and this has been reinforced by the Yukon Medical Association — is if we can get new doctors into the territory on a locum basis — at least at first — that they get to know the territory, they get to know how things work here and it is by doing that that we later recruit them and they come to the territory on a full-time basis.

We really believe that with the current number of physicians that we should not have any individuals without family doctors. We understand it is still a problem. We are still working at recruiting. We do have — because of funding

that we have provided to folks in university — we have a number of doctors who have service agreements who will be coming to the territory over the next few years. So we know that we are going to have new doctors coming to the territory on return for funding agreements.

In talking with the YMA just lately, recruiting of doctors, especially out of the Canadian universities in western Canada — they seem to have tremendous success and I wish them all the best. Anything that we can do through our recruiting office, we're more than willing to do.

As for nursing, we also have a scholarship program operating there so we will have some return for service people in that area. Nursing recruiting is part of the ongoing process that we're dealing with there at the department so it's something that we just keep doing.

**Ms. Stick:** I apologize for going back to this contracting issue again but I do have some questions because technology is great and my iPad is even better. I looked up the procurement and contracting document that came into being in 2013. I was looking at trying to find where physicians were excluded and I found that, but I just wanted to — I have a couple questions around it because the more I think about it, the more I'm wondering.

First, the principles of the procurement and contracting regulations — it's about fairness, it's about openness and transparency, fiscal responsibility, competition, value for money and accountability. Under the scope, it says this directive applies to all contracts except employment contracts, contracts for physician services as defined in the *Health Care Insurance Plan Act* and contracts for the practice of law as defined in the *Legal Profession Act*.

In the *Health Care Insurance Plan Act*, physician services means any medically required services rendered by a medical practitioner. Now, not two minutes ago, the minister was very clear that physicians and doctors are private businesses and when I look at contracts they're all businesses. They are all many private businesses. Dentists are businesses. Of all the contracts, I'm wondering how did that decision ever come to be that, one, physicians could be excluded from the contract registry? What's the reason for that and not others? If there is a real reason for that, then my next question would be: How can it be open and accountable? Where do we find that information if not in the contract registry?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** I'm really not sure how or why this regulation was brought in. I'm just not sure. After listening to sage advice I'm going to leave it at that. But I do know that during the last round of negotiations with the Yukon Medical Association the question was asked if the Yukon Medical Association had any objections to fees being published — doctors' fees within the territory — now that's a separate issue. They said they didn't have any.

In fact, more recently, I listened to one physician in particular who said, "You should just put everything in the newspaper or publish a book and put everybody's salary in there and then they will get off the subject once and for all."

Madam Chair, with these physicians, you are talking about people — as I understand it — but again I haven't



looked at the contract registry, to tell you the truth, to see who was taken off the registry or who was put on. I know that in many cases, we are talking about physicians who we negotiate a contract with to go and work for us in a small community that doesn't have a full-time physician. In those cases, we are looking at physicians for the suitability of practice in a rural community. We are looking at feedback from the community with respect to who they would like to have. We are looking at the experience in a rural setting. We are looking at a number of different factors when we create these contracts with individual physicians to go to communities.

Maybe there was some kind of sensitivity there, but I know we don't send out RFPs for those people. Those contracts are negotiated individually with some physicians. I don't know what else I can tell you, other than — as I understand it, it is proprietary information, which means privately-held information for these individual contracts. That is about as far as I can go.

**Ms. Stick:** Every contract is proprietary. Every contract that a business contracts with the government is proprietary information. It is there in the public contract registry — it is there. It's the business, it's the name, it's the contract number, it is the amount and it is what the service is for.

Doctors are businesses. We have heard that over and over in this House — that they run businesses — so, great. What I am asking for is how this will be accountable and open for people to look at if this is something that maybe the minister needs to go back to the YMA and say, "Do you have a problem with this?"

I understand — I do look at the contracts — I do know what they are for and yes, it is to go to communities. I am not objecting to that. I want doctors to go to communities — every community — often, because most communities don't have a doctor. So I understand that; I support that. It is a good thing. I am not even going to get into whether it is a competition or not.

It is the open and accountability piece of it that is missing. They just disappeared — literally — from the contract registry. That is not open and accountable. So I am wondering if this is something that the minister does need to go back to YMA and say, "Look, this is an issue." Every other business in this territory and outside this territory has their information there on the public registry. Dentists have it, nurses have it, psychiatrists — it's endless. The minister might take 10 minutes and look at the contract registry, or I would be happy to share with him the one from last month that had everything in it. I don't have a problem with doctors being paid to go to the communities. That is not the issue. It is about the openness and accountability, and it is about me being able to do my job in asking questions in budget debate, as the Official Opposition, to hold this government accountable for the money because, as the minister pointed out, it is a lot of money and we do want good health care for our citizens.

I am not objecting to any of that. It's just, how did this clause get in here that allows them, for some reason, to not

have to be accountable or not have this department accountable for these contracts that we can't see? That's my question.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** As I said previously, I don't know why this was included in the regulations. I know that my department and the Department of Highways and Public Works are discussing the issue. I guess that physicians, as defined under the *Health Care Insurance Plan Act*, have been excluded for the exact same reason that lawyers, as defined under the *Legal Profession Act*, have been excluded, and I don't know that either.

**Chair:** We will proceed with line-by-line debate on page 9-4.

***On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures***

***On Corporate Services***

***Corporate Services in the amount of \$105,000 agreed to***

***On Family and Children's Services***

***Family and Children's Services in the amount of \$57,000 agreed to***

***On Adult Services***

***Adult Services underexpenditure in the amount of \$75,000 agreed to***

***On Health Services***

***Health Services in the amount of \$6,696,000 agreed to***

***On Community and Program Support***

***Community and Program Support in the amount of \$18,000 agreed to***

***On Yukon Hospital Services***

***Yukon Hospital Services underexpenditure in the amount of \$1,403,000 agreed to***

***On Total of Other Operation and Maintenance***

***Total of Other Operation and Maintenance in the amount of nil cleared***

***Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$5,398,000 agreed to***

***On Capital Expenditures***

***On Corporate Services***

***On Information Technology Equipment and Systems — Workstations and Hardware/Network Equipment***

***Information Technology Equipment and Systems — Workstations and Hardware/Network Equipment in the amount of \$81,000 agreed to***

***On Information Technology Equipment and Systems — Systems Development — Canada Health Infoway: Panorama (Public Health Information)***

***Information Technology Equipment and Systems — Systems Development — Canada Health Infoway: Panorama (Public Health Information) in the amount of \$122,000 agreed to***

***On Information Technology Equipment and Systems — Systems Development — Canada Health Infoway: iEHR (Electronic Health Records)***

***Information Technology Equipment and Systems — Systems Development — Canada Health Infoway: iEHR (Electronic Health Records) in the amount of \$836,000 agreed to***

*On Information Technology Equipment and Systems — Systems Development — Canada Health Infoway: HIS-EMR Connect (Hospital Information System and Electronic Medical Recording Connect)*

*Information Technology Equipment and Systems — Systems Development — Canada Health Infoway: HIS-EMR Connect (Hospital Information System and Electronic Medical Recording Connect) in the amount of \$194,000 agreed to*

*On Information Technology Equipment and Systems — Systems Development — Various Systems Development Projects*

*Information Technology Equipment and Systems — Systems Development — Various Systems Development Projects in the amount of \$121,000 agreed to*

**On Family and Children's Services**

*On Young Offender Facilities — Renovations*

*Young Offender Facilities — Renovations in the amount of \$9,000 agreed to*

**On Adult Services**

*On Salvation Army Redevelopment Project*

*Salvation Army Redevelopment Project in the amount of \$412,000 agreed to*

*On Income Support — Renovations*

*Income Support — Renovations in the amount of \$125,000 agreed to*

*On Income Support — Office Furniture and Equipment*

*Income Support — Office Furniture and Equipment in the amount of \$15,000 agreed to*

*On Alcohol and Drug Services — Operational Equipment*

*Alcohol and Drug Services — Operational Equipment underexpenditure in the amount of \$15,000 cleared*

*On Adult Residential Services — Operational Equipment*

*Adult Residential Services — Operational Equipment in the amount of \$7,000 agreed to*

*On Sarah Steele Building Replacement — Planning*

*Sarah Steele Building Replacement — Planning in the amount of \$1,266,000 agreed to*

**On Continuing Care**

*On Copper Ridge Place — Energy Projects*

*Copper Ridge Place — Energy Projects in the amount of \$32,000 agreed to*

*On McDonald Lodge — Replacement*

*McDonald Lodge — Replacement underexpenditure in the amount of \$4,577,000 cleared*

*On New Whitehorse Continuing Care Facility*

*New Whitehorse Continuing Care Facility in the amount of \$113,000 agreed to*

**On Health Services**

*On Community Nursing — Renovations*

*Community Nursing — Renovations in the amount of \$10,000 agreed to*

*On Community Nursing — Operational Equipment*

*Community Nursing — Operational Equipment in the amount of \$17,000 agreed to*

**On Yukon Hospital Services**

*On Yukon Hospital Corporation — Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)/Emergency Department Expansion*

*Yukon Hospital Corporation — Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)/Emergency Department Expansion in the amount of \$1,382,000 agreed to*

*On Total of Other Capital*

*Total of Other Capital in the amount of nil cleared*

**Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$150,000 agreed to**

**Total Expenditures in the amount of \$5,548,000 agreed to**

**Health and Social Services agreed to**

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** I just want to assure you that if any changes are made with respect to the registry, we'll bring that information back to the Legislature at the appropriate time. Thank you.

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** Madam Chair, I move that you report progress.

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

*Motion agreed to*

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

**Chair:** It has been moved by Mr. Cathers that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

*Motion agreed to*

*Speaker resumes the Chair*

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

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

**Chair's report**

**Ms. McLeod:** Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 15, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, and directed me to report progress.

**Speaker:** You have heard the report from the Chair of Committee of the Whole. Are you agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

**GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

**Motion No. 757**

**Clerk:** Motion No. 757, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Graham.

**Speaker:** It is moved by the Minister of Health and Social Services:

THAT Bill No. 78, *Act to Amend the Marriage Act*, be reprinted and tabled in the Legislative Assembly in its reprinted form before the House proceeds with third reading and passage of the said bill.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you are aware, we amended Bill No. 78 in Committee of the Whole and reported to the House as such. This motion is

simply a method of allowing the bill to be reprinted in total and tabled in the Legislative Assembly with the amendment in place.

*Motion No. 757 agreed to*

**Speaker:** We will now proceed to government bills.

## GOVERNMENT BILLS

### **Bill No. 83: Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, 2007 — Second Reading**

**Clerk:** Second reading, Bill No. 83, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Pasloski.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I move that Bill No. 83, entitled *Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, 2007*, be now read a second time.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 83, entitled *Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, 2007*, be now read a second time.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Since 2004, the Members' Services Board has been responsible for managing and investing the monies set aside from the consolidated revenue fund to meet future MLA benefits and severance allowance obligations in the same way that it manages the MLA registered pension funds. These funds are invested in a range of financial products, including equities. The changes to the legislation will clearly identify that any amount appropriated by the Legislature for the purpose of making payments to the MLA supplementary benefit and severance allowance may be invested in any investment permitted under the *Pension Benefits Standards Act*. The asset management agreement set up for managing and investing the MLA supplementary benefits, severance allowance and registered pension funds was signed on October 25, 2004; therefore, these amendments will be retroactive until October 2004. The housekeeping amendments were approved by Members' Services Board on September 19, 2014.

**Mr. Silver:** I just want to say thank you to the members of the Members' Services Board, including yourself, Mr. Speaker, for the briefing on this particular bill, and also thank you to Helen Fitzsimmons for her ability to explain a lot of these technical details. Although it would have been really tempting to get her in the Legislative Assembly to answer a couple of questions on this, I think we're all glad that she's not coming in.

*Motion for second reading of Bill No. 83 agreed to*

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

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

*Motion agreed to*

*Speaker leaves the Chair*

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**Chair (Ms. McLeod):** Order. Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 83, entitled *Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, 2007*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

*Recess*

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

### **Bill No. 83: Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, 2007**

**Chair:** The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 83, *Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, 2007*.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I really don't have much to add to what was said in second reading. I just want to say that these amendments were supported by Members' Services Board at a meeting in September of this year. I would like to acknowledge the work of the staff of the Legislative Assembly, specifically Helen Fitzsimmons and her work in ensuring that all members of this House were briefed and understood the reason for the proposed changes. The last comment I would make is, just for the record, to say that no member of this House is gaining in any monetary terms as a result of these proposed amendments.

**Ms. Hanson:** The Official Opposition, of course, does support these amendments, and I do echo the thanks to Helen Fitzsimmons. Her briefings and her general support of the Members' Services Board are much appreciated. As much as I would have delighted in her joining us in the Assembly today, these are, as the Minister of Finance has indicated, largely procedural and housekeeping amendments and so we, of course, do support them.

**Chair:** Does any other member wish to speak in general debate? We are prepared to go into clause-by-clause debate.

**Ms. Stick:** Madam Chair, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all clauses and the title of Bill No. 83, entitled *Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, 2007*, read and agreed to.

**Unanimous consent re deeming all clauses and title of Bill No. 83 read and agreed to**

**Chair:** Ms. Stick has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all clauses and the title of Bill No. 83, entitled *Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, 2007*, read and agreed to. Is there unanimous consent?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Chair:** There is unanimous consent.

*Clauses 1 to 3 deemed read and agreed to*

*On Title*

*Title agreed to*

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I move that Bill No. 83, entitled *Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, 2007*, be reported without amendment.

**Chair:** It has been moved by Mr. Pasloski that Bill No. 83, entitled *Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, 2007*, be reported without amendment.

*Motion agreed to*

**Chair:** The next item for business is general debate in Vote No. 11, Women's Directorate, in Bill No. 15, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*.

Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes.

*Recess*

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

**Bill No. 15: Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15 — continued**

**Chair:** The matter before the Committee is general debate in Vote 11, Women's Directorate, in Bill No. 15, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*.

**Women's Directorate**

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** I am indeed very pleased to present the supplementary budget for the Women's Directorate for 2014-15. The added resources for the Women's Directorate comprise a number of revotes from 2013.

Overall, there is an increase of \$68,000, bringing the budget from just over \$1.7 million to \$1.8 million. Changes include a total increase of \$54,000 in operation and maintenance.

This increase is for revotes from the previous fiscal year in two particular funding areas. It's a total increase of \$14,000 in capital expenditures, and the increases for the O&M portion of the supplementary budget include a revote of \$50,000 for year 2 for the prevention of violence against aboriginal women funding and a revote of \$4,000 to move funding from

year 1 to year 2 for one women's organization under the women's equality fund.

Finally, there is a \$14,000 increase in capital for Betty's Haven — Kaushee's second-stage housing initiative. This funding is to complete the final piece of work for Betty's Haven, which is to provide a stair lift to assist clients with mobility issues in the event of an emergency or when the elevator may be inoperable. The quote for that new stair lift is just over \$14,000. The Betty's Haven project was on time and on budget, and we were able to use the remaining capital funds allocated for this project to enhance safety under this particular line item.

I don't have to say for members opposite, but this initiative was indeed a platform commitment that we have met and is an example of how we have been working with the organizations with the community to enhance housing security for women and girls in this respect.

I would be very pleased to entertain any and all questions from the members opposite. I also want to take the opportunity to thank our director for the Women's Directorate, who has joined us here today, and all staff of the Women's Directorate. It has indeed been an honour to work alongside them off and on over the years since I was first elected back in 2002.

There are a lot of initiatives underway by the Women's Directorate. We have worked very much to expand the amount of programs and services being offered by the Women's Directorate. Of course, we continue to work with all departments throughout the Government of Yukon on a number of multi-departmental initiatives to further enhance women's equality in the territory.

With that, I will again thank members opposite for any and all questions that they may have in this particular department.

**Ms. White:** I thank the minister for her opening comments and, of course, I thank the representative from the Women's Directorate for being here today in the Assembly. I also thank the department for the great briefing and good discussion. There is always a lot of benefit in the discussions at the briefings.

I am going to start off around the gender-inclusive analysis policy and program training. The Institute for Intersectionality Research and Policy states that — and I quote: "There is growing recognition that governments should be evaluated by their ability to deliver and implement policy that can correct power imbalances and address differential and distributional health impacts including avoidable, inequitable and unjust differences in the health of diverse groups of people."

The Women's Directorate has taken up this challenge through its gender-inclusive analysis policy and program training, which it offers twice a year in a one-day workshop for Yukon government workers. But, as the 2009 Auditor General report on the implementation of gender-based analysis in the federal government indicates, when there is no government-wide policy requiring departments and agencies to perform it, the result is a wide variety of practices.

The report also found that very few departments used gender-based analysis when designing public policies and Cabinet submissions offer little specific information on how and when gender-specific impact policies affect women and men. As a result, the Auditor General recommends that the government work with the Status of Women to establish a plan for facilitating the implementation of gender-based analysis and better communicate to departments and agencies what their responsibilities are in this area.

So to summarize, Madam Chair — because there are a lot of big ideas there — the Auditor General noted that it is not only Cabinet submissions that require dedicated gender-based analysis, but rather this analytical tool is needed throughout the policy-making process and spending initiatives from development to implementation of government policies.

I thank the Women's Directorate for doing their good work and dedication to ensuring that government staff is given an opportunity to learn about gender-inclusive analysis and the need for an intersectional lens throughout the policy process but, as the Status of Women notes, all players within government share a responsibility for making gender-based analysis suitable. I wonder if all departments and agencies, and the Women's Directorate, are being sufficiently supported in ensuring gender-inclusive analysis is integrated throughout the policy-making process, from policy development to Cabinet submissions to policy and program implementation.

I realize it's kind of a lofty thing right there, but if the minister could speak to that, that would be fantastic.

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** I'm really pleased to speak to this initiative. It's an initiative that, I'm just reminded by our director from the Women's Directorate, Yukon does continue to play a leadership role in when it comes to this particular area. In fact, there has been a lot going on in terms of the promotion of gender-inclusive and diversity analyses. We were asked at a federal, provincial and territorial ministers meeting — responsible for the status of women — just recently in June in Yellowknife, to make a presentation alongside the Government of Quebec, which has also been working on these initiatives over the years — to provide some context as to where we've been and where we are today and the work, in terms of our analysis of the work that has been undertaken and where we go from here to further enhance this particular work.

Where I started in Yellowknife was really to provide that overall context through the Women's Directorate. It was a great reminder for myself to be able to turn back time to 1985, when the Women's Directorate became an independent department back then. Since then, we have grown substantially. One of the key areas of service delivery, when it comes the Women's Directorate, is that of policy analysis.

As I mentioned just earlier today, it's important to note that our budget, for example, has gone through significant growth in the last 12 years alone. In fact, our budget has more than doubled over the last 12 years, from approximately \$450,000 to where it is today. It has enabled our directorate to enhance funding to organizations — I just mentioned Betty's Haven — to help facilitate and fund that second-stage very

important housing initiative, and to undertake a number of marketing campaigns in support of prevention of violence against women.

Above all, policy analysis internal to government is a very important lever and one of the most influential tools that we do have to promote women's equality in the territory.

So, with that said, we have been actively promoting GIA — which is the acronym for that term — internally for some 15 years. That has come in the degree of many different forms and shapes and sorts and it has created an opportunity to integrate GIA throughout the Government of Yukon.

In 2003, the Women's Directorate undertook a survey of directors and policy analysts, as I understand and seem to recall, to determine the training needs for employees throughout the Government of Yukon at that time. The survey results really helped influence the development of that training module — the formal training course — by the Women's Directorate that is offered biannually, as the member opposite just referred to, through the corporate training arm of the Public Service Commission. Of course, a couple of years later, again, in an effort to improve the quality of analysis and advice of departments, the Women's Directorate has and continues to review Cabinet submission templates, which are used by all departments when advancing policies or program changes. But, at that time — that would have been back in 2005, I gather — we found that there was a lot of room for improvement in terms of strengthening the amount of analysis, based on the differences between men and women.

Again, as a result, our template for Cabinet submissions was altered to include that differential impact section, which has led to encouraging more rigorous analysis of our policies or our pieces of legislation. Earlier this year, we concluded a five-year evaluation of our GIA services and training, and it looked back to 2009, so over a period of five years — 2009 to 2013. It really highlighted and gave us a better understanding of what works well and obviously what isn't working as well.

As I mentioned, there are a few key levers in the Government of Yukon used to advance GIA and it can vary from our formal policy-making decision process. Examples of those include cross-departmental committees at various levels and it could include deputy ministers, ADMs, and directors, particularly through the policy review process.

The second is through our training, as the member opposite also referred to. It has been offered annually, as I said, over the years through corporate training through PSC. It is a one-day course that introduces some very basic concepts and focuses on practical case studies to help analysts from each and every department to learn about how to integrate GIA into their policy-making roles and process.

The third lever for us is the quality of advice that is provided through the Women's Directorate and through the use of evidence-based research and analysis.

I believe the Women's Directorate, again through our own team of policy experts, has generated a pretty good reputation for having excellent analysis that has brought value-added contributions to this process over the years. When you look at the actual evaluation that was comprised

over the five-year period — and I should say that was actually back in 2008 to 2013, not 2009 — it was to help the Women's Directorate take a look at what is working and what wasn't working, as well as to assess the overall effectiveness of GIA over the past five years and to look at lessons learned, identify gaps in data sources and data collection. That work would help inform a new evaluation framework that would support our directorate to be able to track and modify how and what is offered. That work certainly has been underway.

Some of the things that were highlighted throughout the evaluation — and I will just speak to some of the successes first. Broadly speaking, the evaluation noted that Women's Directorate's work, when it comes to GIA offering it, is indeed making a difference throughout the government. For example, internal stakeholders agree that they have had effective advice from the Women's Directorate, that there was widespread support for the training being offered from stakeholders and past participants, that training increases their level of confidence when it comes to incorporating this degree of work, and that there is greater consideration of gender, culture and diversity when designing this particular policy or any and all Government of Yukon policies.

In addition to successes, however, there were a few challenges also identified through the evaluation. We have been using these as opportunities to learn from, to monitor and to adjust what we offer and how we work. The first thing that came readily to mind is that training needs to be developed for new and experienced government employees. Obviously, any new employee coming into the organization requires a different skill set, has less expertise and less experience, and may need that generic, broad overview of GIA that is currently being provided, while the more experienced employees who have been around longer — it could be five years, it could be 10 years or it could be more — need more advanced learning opportunities. In other words, it really highlighted that the ongoing work for a policy analyst requires the ongoing support and the tools as they are often working in departments or branches where there is not a large group of practitioners. Not only do we have to come up with varying levels of training opportunities for our employees, but within our own policy team and network within the Women's Directorate, we need to also provide them with the tools necessary to provide the ongoing support to support other departments in turn.

The third thing that we learned is that we need to do a better job in terms of tracking our advice accordingly.

Over the years, as a smaller network and a smaller department so to speak, we take calls from individual analysts throughout the Government of Yukon on any given day. It could be a simple e-mail request — one or two lines — or it could be a formal request. So obviously we need to — this evaluation has really served to highlight the fact that we do need to perhaps have a better tracking system in place to determine that yes, it was responded to, this is how we responded — and to follow up with the analyst to see how that advice was taken into account and if it was effective, if it wasn't or if they need any additional follow-up. It's important

to follow up and to determine how the advice has been incorporated. Again, one of the important lessons that was highlighted for me is that also we have to continue to have a whole government approach.

I refer to our work with the French Language Services Directorate and how when you are charting upon a new course of action — we've really been able to help focus — target specific departments based on stakeholders' priorities and so through the Department of Health and Social Services, we've really honed in on home care and specialists' clinics and health care services in the Department of Health through the hospital. That has really helped us create some successes within that department and within those key areas, built upon the priorities that have been identified by the community. Based on those successes, then, we're able to then carry that forward and use that as the template for other departments.

That's exactly the kind of approach that we want to take with the findings of this evaluation as well — to really start off and target a department, to do well and to go through these particular areas, with the broader or longer term vision of expanding those services to other departments.

We are really looking forward to renewing our approach to delivering GIA within government — again building on our successes over the past 15 years and addressing those barriers so we can be more effective in our work.

There is certainly a lot going on in that particular area. It is interesting listening some of the unique challenges of other provincial and territorial governments — and under their own policy shops, very similar challenges but also similar opportunities. The work and the evaluation that was undertaken was very meaningful, it was very enlightening and now how we carry forward with implementing those recommendations is really the key. Currently we're doing just that.

Again, I'm very proud to say that we continue to take leadership and to very much contribute to that leadership when it comes to Canada and implementing gender-inclusive analysis in terms of creating and taking that information from the evaluation to be able to help strengthen how we improve our policy, our programs and services delivered in the territory.

With that, I just again want to say thank you to the Women's Directorate for all the work they have put into this evaluation — now being able to work now to follow through on those recommendations and to be able to carry that work forward, working with our respective departments and agencies.

**Ms. White:** I thank the minister for that answer. I believe I heard her say that all Cabinet policies go through the gender-inclusive analysis. My question is: Is all the other policy-making processes in all the other departments — from policy development to policy and program implementation — does all policy go through the gender-inclusive analysis?

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** Again, as I believe I articulated in my opening remarks, in addition to the Cabinet submissions, we do have a presence on policy review committees as well — providing that advice. We also have the requests that are

generated by individual departments. Again, I refer to the evaluation, right? To be able to be more sustainable and to be able to help provide a more effective response and approach to these things — we're looking at all the various levers, at how we can do that in a sustainable way — considering that we do have so many resources in our Women's Directorate as well — but again, through training opportunities and by being able to provide those varying levels of degree of training, depending on the level of expertise among our employees. That's a great lever as well — to be able to help train the trainer, so to speak.

Again, that's why I point to the evaluation being so very important in helping highlight some of the shortfalls and some of the areas that we can help to expand our effectiveness.

**Ms. White:** I thank the minister for the clarification. So within each government department, is there a dedicated person who has gone through the gender-inclusive and diversity analysis training? Are they able, within their own departments, to take that lens toward all the work they do, from programs or products to advertising? Does each department have one person who has gone through the program, through the Women's Directorate? Or do the departments have to specifically look toward the Women's Directorate for assistance in analyzing their next steps within their own departments?

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** Policy analysts are primarily the ones who we have been targeting over the past number of years — 15 years or so. Obviously, there is turnover from any given day or any given month from policy analysts. Those are the ones we have been targeting too.

I refer to the evaluation in terms of highlighting how we can extend that reach on a more sustainable basis in terms of expanding the reach of GIA analysis in our departments. Whether that continues to be policy analysts — but again those individuals may come into a particular department and may go into a different department under different terms or different positions. This is where we need to also — and I go back to — depending on the level of experience or how many years they have been employed in a particular department or with the Government of Yukon. We need to take that into account, and we need to come up with varying training opportunities for those individuals, as we heard in the evaluation. Specifically, training for new employees is obviously going to look a little bit different from those employees who have already received that initial orientation, but require a more in-depth review of policies and programs, depending on their positions and depending on their level of expertise.

**Ms. White:** Just to ask for clarification from the minister, she keeps referring to the evaluation. Is that the evaluation, implementation of gender — I didn't write that whole thing down in my notes — is that document publicly available?

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** I had just asked the Women's Directorate and it has not been made public, but we can certainly make that available to the member.

**Ms. White:** It would make it a lot easier to have my questions more relevant if I knew more about what had already been done and had been able to go forward that way.

The minister just mentioned that there was hope that the Women's Directorate would have a better tracking system for the recommendations that it makes to other government departments. Is one being designed or kind of tossed around, and when will that start? When can we expect to see that progress so that the good work that the Women's Directorate does is more known?

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** As I understand it, next year — early in the new year we will be working with a contractor. I believe that contractor has been secured or is about to be secured — is in the process of being secured — and will be able to help provide expertise on the data management in particular and to help formalize that tracking system from here on out.

**Ms. White:** I thank the minister for that answer and I look forward to talking about how that's going next year, when it gets set up and gets rolling.

We've talked a lot over time about the women's equity fund. I know changes have been made to make the application process easier and more straightforward for the women's organizations that are accessing that funding pot. At one point in time, it felt very cutthroat and it was challenging, because the groups all do very different things and they all have their own mandates and projects. I know it was a challenging thing.

I guess it's important to acknowledge that the \$300,000 is getting divided between eight different women's organizations and, again, they all have their own mandates and projects. I'm constantly amazed by how much work each group is able to generate out of such a relatively small amount of money. This government also routinely acknowledges the good work these groups have done, and are doing, and the contributions they have made to our community.

I guess that brings me back to the point, which is, why is the women's equity fund set at just \$300,000? We know that a lot of these women's organizations are filling in the gaps that government departments are not able to attend to. We know that they're offering services and supports to women and children in the greatest need. As it stands right now, why is the women's equity fund is set at just \$300,000?

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** First off, I do want to also recognize the ongoing work and contributions made by our women's organizations in the territory. I would concur that, over the years, even compared to 12 years ago, when I first became elected to the Assembly, we have grown in leaps and bounds in terms of the quality and calibre of work being undertaken to further advance women's equality on all fronts. Also noteworthy is the amount of collaboration and coordination between those organizations in working together and pooling resources and working on initiatives together. A Safe Place is a perfect example recently, where Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre came together with the Yukon Status of Women Council to provide A Safe Place housed at the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre. It has worked out very well. They have been able to leverage resources through the

Government of Canada and through independent funding sources — and then, of course, just recently through the Women's Directorate and through the community development fund — to provide that more informal analysis.

I do want to say that the Yukon government — I am very proud to be part of a government that does recognize the good work being done by women's organizations, whether that is direct, front-line services, advocacy efforts, or on the prevention side or in research — there are certainly a lot of innovative and creative initiatives being undertaken.

I want to say that back in 2002, when we were first elected, I seem to recall that there were only two organizations being funded at that time. In particular, the Status of Women Council — I was just asking whether it was \$15,000 or \$20,000 — and I think it was about \$15,000 that they were being provided. The Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre also, I think, was being funded \$50,000, if I am not mistaken. Since that time, we have been able to really enhance resources available to organizations.

I am very proud of the heightened level of resources being made available and, of course, we always strive to do more. I can say that the Women's Directorate today — from back in the day of \$65,000 — we now provide \$720,000 per year. That is in support of operation and maintenance and project funding going directly to equality-seeking organizations through a number of different funding options available and also one-on-one support for organizations.

Funding available, of course, includes the women's equality fund — funding of \$300,000. I might add that that fund did occur first off back when I was minister responsible for the Women's Directorate a number of years ago at \$175,000. That has now been increased to \$300,000 under the previous minister responsible for the Women's Directorate. In addition to that funding, we also provide funding of \$200,000 per year in support of the prevention of violence against aboriginal women fund. Women's community projects funding — \$10,000 per year. The women's advocate position at the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre — \$60,000.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the implementation funding of \$150,000 per year over the next three years to help support those recommendations coming out of the Yukon aboriginal women's summits. Members opposite may or may not recall, but back when we had the first national Aboriginal Women's Summit in 2007 in Corner Brook, Newfoundland, it was obviously an opportunity for us to come back home to share those recommendations with the rest of our communities in the Yukon.

We held a couple of summits in Watson Lake and also in Whitehorse and came up with our own Yukon Aboriginal Women's Summit's recommendations. From there, we were able to help leverage funding through the northern strategy of about \$150,000 over three years. So \$450,000 — that funding went to a number of key projects, again delivered by a number of aboriginal women's organizations that weren't funded many years ago — 12 years ago to be exact. That particular project funding ended a couple of years ago and we were able to — from our own source revenues — also continue that

good work of the implementation funding of those summit recommendations.

In fact, we had a second Yukon Aboriginal Women's Summit over at the Kwanlin Dun Cultural Centre a couple of years ago, as I recall. That helped renew — gave us an opportunity — to refresh and to renew and to really address the renewed priorities coming out of that Yukon Aboriginal Women's Summit — again, looking to the work that has been completed and looking to the next three years out. We're into the second year of that project funding — again, \$150,000 per year for three years.

All told, we have a number of resources available for organizations in the territory. I agree that the women's equality fund really was put into place to be able to — in direct response to what we heard from organizations — provide some core funding to be able to help, basically, in a lot of cases, to operate an office, to be able to help staff an individual and of course to help use that funding as leveraged funding.

A number of organizations, I know — you take a look at the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle. Over the years, they have been able to be very creative in making connections throughout a number of these different funds and have put some of these funds to good use. Through their good work, whether it is engaging men and boys, for example, the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle have done some work in collaboration with the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council and then they have also been able to leverage funding through the equality fund and, in some cases, also helped marry up the funding through the PVAAW funding as well. In particular, they have been able to use that to leverage additional sources through the Government of Canada through the Status of Women Canada and so forth.

As I just mentioned, there are other funding opportunities as well, through the Department of Justice, or whether it be through the Department of Economic Development — the community development fund — that just helped fund A Safe Place for the next year and a half out, again, providing that research assistance to provide a coordinator to help assist in carrying on the good work that they are providing. Again, it is something that we need to continue to ensure that we work with organizations and continue to strive to do better, but I am quite proud of the level of funding that has been initiated over the years.

I think that it has helped grow capacity significantly among the organizations. Not only that, it has helped to expand and has had broader reach into our communities. Even funding through the PVAAW, for example, has helped to really create some unique partnerships in different communities, from Pelly Crossing to Ross River to Teslin and so forth — again, providing an opportunity to come together either once a week or twice a week and to be able to share traditions such as sewing and First Nation crafts and having a very safe, open and welcoming place for being able to exchange information when it comes to some of the challenges faced by Yukon aboriginal women or Yukon women in any and all of our communities.



We have made some changes to the women's equality fund back a year ago I think it was — a year or two years ago — and helped strengthen that. Some of the project-based funding that used to be part of the women's equality fund was removed, as I seem to recall, and it was so that we could also help add capacity to the direct funding that was being received from women's organizations. We've helped expand the fund that way as well and helped to meet some of the other needs though some of our other funding mechanisms, either within the Women's Directorate or other funds such as CDF or the crime prevention funding mechanism available through the Department of Justice.

**Ms. White:** One of the reasons why I asked the question about the amount for the women's equality fund is that a lot of the women's organizations spend a huge amount of people hours trying to put together applications to secure additional funding to offer the programs that they offer.

An example was this summer — on July 16, there was a call put out: "A Safe Place Needs Your Help Filling a Need for Whitehorse Women!" You know, this document — I won't read the whole thing — but it goes to list off: "The program fills an important gap in services for women who need a place to feel safe, get a hot meal, warm up, or simply spend time in the company of other women. The program came out of the findings of the Yukon Status of Women Council's *Repairing the Holes in the Net* research project, which identified evening drop-ins with a hot meal for women and children-only as a gap in services. The low-barrier nature of the program allows women to come at any point that they feel they need to, rather than expecting that they be in a particular kind of frame of mind — provided that they are not a risk to themselves or others. If the women have other needs that cannot be filled by the *A Safe Place* facilitators, they are referred to other services around the city."

And then they go on to thank everyone who has helped them: "*A Safe Place* has been able to operate thanks to the support of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Mental Health Commission of Canada, the Women's Directorate and the United Way. Women who attend really value the program and say there is nothing to take its place should it have to close."

This is where the clincher comes in: "Unfortunately, that funding will be running out at the end of July, and as of yet no other funding has been secured.

"Thus, *A Safe Place* is putting forward a call to the community for short-term support while other longer-term funding options are explored and (hopefully) secured. The \$6000 operating costs we are hoping to raise for the month of August will cover the wages of the facilitators, food, supplies for personal care and activities and a small sum to the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre for the after-hours use of their space.

"Please consider donating to our campaign."

So that was the first time that Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre and the Yukon Status of Women Council went out toward the community to look for help for funding this project. That was released on July 16 of this year. Then here

again, we recently had another call-out for crowd-sourcing. This is an exciting one. This is on the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre website and it's dated Saturday, November 22.

"A Safe Place: Safe Again

"It's always nice to get an overwhelming reminder of the generosity of this community. When we put out the call for donations to keep the doors open for *A Safe Place*, our after-hours low-barrier programming for women facing mental ill health and homelessness, it was a desperate last shot in the dark.

"But within hours, donations came in on-line, over the phone, and in person. People gave as little as \$25 and as much as \$500. They told us loud and clear with their actions that they recognize women are falling through the gaps in Whitehorse; that they do not condone this inequality; and programs of this nature are valued.

"Although I won't specifically name the generous individuals who came forward, I do think it is worth honouring two local businesses that responded to our call. Subway selflessly and quietly offered a 4-digit donation as soon as the call went out, and Narrow Gauge Consulting went above and beyond our request with an even more impressive donation. To top it off, the owner also provided a personal donation from her own pocket.

"Now, we are happy to say our funding request to the Community Development Fund has been approved. We will be hiring a Coordinator to research ways to make this program sustainable for the long run, so that (hopefully) we won't be coming back to you with outstretched hands. (But don't despair: if you have money burning a hole in your pocket, our Community Kitchen could really use some resources.)"

This organization, two times in a year, had to go toward the community to keep a program running. What I'm talking about when I talk about the women's equality fund, is core funding to make sure these programs continue. When we talk about the community kitchen, it's a Wednesday lunch and it's open to all women from all walks of life. If you go there for a lunchtime event, it's pretty fantastic, because you have kind of a cross-section of the community.

Have there been conversations about increasing this amount in the women's equality fund, or finding some other way to support women's organizations with the core funding? We know right now they spend a huge amount of people hours trying to patch all those different funding pots together, to make sure that they can offer the programs that government doesn't, so that they can make sure that net is mended.

Has there been a conversation about extending, or helping them find a way to access more core funding?

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** Every day, officials on the ground in the Women's Directorate are working with organizations to assist them with any and all queries and interests and initiatives that organizations are looking to work on — working to expand, working to initiate. Again, I'll say thank you to the officials in the Women's Directorate for being creative and being very resourceful when it comes to helping

create those linkages between the various funding options and also helping bring together other departments.

A Safe Place — and I think I have answered this a couple of times in Question Period from the member opposite — I had the opportunity to meet with the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre and the Yukon Status of Women Council earlier this year and heard first-hand about the program's development and all of the success they have had. It has been an initiative that has operated for the past year, coming up — since December, as I seem to recall — and it really started out with support from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Mental Health Commission of Canada. We did provide a nominal portion of funding through the Women's Directorate and the United Way, as the member opposite referred to. Since that time, we have been working with those organizations to help facilitate a road forward for this.

As I mentioned before, the Community Development Fund — it was great to receive the news that just recently they had approved the application for funding. In fact, just over \$46,000 in funding was approved in support of A Safe Place. It was really to carry on the good work that has been undertaken and also to provide an evaluation of the program as to how it can help strengthen that particular program.

One of the areas that the funding will be allocated toward is the hiring of a research coordinator to compile the data, to create and establish policies and structural parameters of the program and look to build community partnerships and explore avenues for that longer-term sustainable funding as well as provide assistance to extend the program so that adequate data can be collected. Then we can carry on those discussions with other departments and other agencies to ensure that it is working well and that it is filling a gap that is a need.

I think that the work that will be undertaken in the next number of months will be of critical importance as we move forward. Those discussions are taking place with other departments — like the Department of Health and Social Services — in terms of their support that they currently provide in support of the more vulnerable populations of women and children whom this important program currently serves.

In the meantime, we have had and will continue to have discussions with these organizations in terms of looking at other funding mechanisms beyond that funding made available through the community development fund. PVAAW — I know there have been some discussions through that, and we think that that is a valuable resource that could in fact make funding available, depending on the outcome of the evaluation and depending on some of these other areas of research that these programming dollars will provide. It could provide for up to two years' funding beyond that. Likewise, I have also facilitated some discussions with the Department of Justice through the crime prevention assistance program.

There are a number of mechanisms, but I think, like the Department of Health and Social Services and the Minister of Health and Social Services, we have to ensure that whatever is being funded directly is backed up with an evaluation, with

research and other measures. Very much so, we are committed to working with Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre and the Status of Women Council on a go-forward basis, as we always have. I think that their rapport and relationship with the Women's Directorate has been generated based on many years of trust and also working to ensure that we are working and moving in the same direction in this regard.

Again, Madam Chair, I am very pleased that this particular program is going forth and that it will in fact complement services being provided by other agency deliverers.

**Chair:** Does any other member wish to speak in general debate?

We can go to line-by-line debate.

**Ms. White:** Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 11, Women's Directorate, cleared or carried, as required.

**Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 11, Women's Directorate, cleared or carried**

**Chair:** Ms. White has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 11, Women's Directorate, cleared or carried, as required. Is there unanimous consent?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Chair:** Unanimous consent has been granted.

***On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures***

***Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$54,000 agreed to***

***On Capital Expenditures***

***Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$14,000 agreed to***

***Total Expenditures in the amount of \$68,000 agreed to Women's Directorate agreed to***

**Chair:** We are going to move on to the Department of Economic Development, which is Vote 7. We will recess for two minutes.

*Recess*

**Chair:** The matter before the Committee is Vote 7, Department of Economic Development, continuing general debate.

**Department of Economic Development — continued**

**Ms. Hanson:** I quite frankly don't recall where I left off, and so I thought I would go to a number of questions that I do have for the minister, based on some of the conversations we've had in the Legislative Assembly so far this fall with respect to the supplementary estimates. One of the questions I have has to do with the funding that has been identified for work around the fibre optic line. There has been a fair amount of discussion about the \$600,000. I'm just trying to find the reference here, Madam Chair.

In the budget debate, the minister had made reference to — and I quote: “We’ve identified...” — this was in 2013 budget debate — “...\$600,000 in this budget to take the next steps.” That next step is in reference to the three First Nation development corporations, under the aegis of Dempster Energy Services, to assist them in conducting a feasibility study of a fibre optic link to the south. At that time, he said, “What those next steps include are yet to be determined in this more specific sense...” — but he talked about the development corporations organizing themselves and having discussions about how they want to participate.

I have a number of questions with respect to this — first of all, whether or not that proposal had gone through an application process — now that my colleague from Riverdale South has me so intrigued in the contract registry. I look to that and I see \$25,000 — I think it was \$25,000 — this fiscal for Dempster resources, but Madam Chair — we heard \$600,000, and if that was budget 2013-14, Public Accounts identified that the actual expenditure in the fiscal year 2013-14, was \$101,446. I guess what I am seeking clarification from the minister on is: Was the \$600,000 intended to be spent as an all-in project in the fiscal year 2013-14 or is it a multi-year project? First of all, what kind of an application process was there for this and what is the total funding? Is it all within that envelope of \$600,000 or what? That really is what I am looking for, and then I have other questions that will flow on from there with respect to this particular project.

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** There were a few questions there, I think, so I will try to touch on all of them.

The general topic is the diverse fibre project and the funding that is associated with it. I believe, in the spring of this year, the Premier made reference in the budget to \$600,000 that was identified for the development of this project. Initially, the work that was done by the Dempster Energy Services-led study — and of course, Dempster Energy Services is a First Nation consortium made up of the development corporations of the Na Cho Nyäk Dun, the Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in and the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nations.

That study was a project led by Dempster Energy Services that was awarded funding through the Department of Economic Development. That study, at least an executive summary, I believe, is available on-line and that study indicated that the project was feasible with a significant input of cash from government as well as a number of stipulations around service guarantees. That study also indicated that the Juneau option was the preferred option, and that was where we had that initial opinion from.

Since then, we have done a lot of things. Since then, we’ve taken a good look at that study and had some discussions with Dempster Energy and ultimately where that First Nation consortium wanted to go with the project wasn’t where we wanted to go. Our purposes were not exactly aligned and although the study by Planetworks out of southern B.C. was valuable and gave us some good information and some good starting point discussions, it ultimately wasn’t the pathway that we thought was the most appropriate to go forward.

Since then, we’ve engaged with Stantec to provide us with an analysis of investment models and business models for the development of a diversified fibre project in the territory. I believe the member asked how we selected Stantec. I would note that there was an RFP process and Stantec was the successful proponent. They were awarded the contract in September 2014 to develop and analyze the selection of investment models for the diverse fibre project. The analysis and recommendation of an investment model will be evaluated to ensure the following criteria are met: improve broadband service speeds to Yukoners; improve broadband service prices to Yukoners; improve broadband service reliability to Yukoners; and the maximization of benefit to Yukoners. In other words, we were focused on the outcomes of having fast, affordable and reliable broadband services for Yukoners while also maximizing investment and job opportunities here in the territory.

The investment models being considered by Stantec range from either public- or private-sector owned and operated entities. As well, a variation of public/private partnership mechanisms will be evaluated against a prescribed set of financial and socio-economic criteria to ensure the recommended option meets the business objectives of the project.

As I indicated previously, in 2013-14, a bankable feasibility study was undertaken by Dempster Energy Services. Dempster Energy Services approached the department for support to undertake a diverse fibre optic line from Yukon to the south. This support was provided through a contribution agreement with Dempster Energy Services. Along with the Juneau-through-Skagway fibre link, other route options were considered in the study, including the Dawson City-to-Inuvik via the Dempster Highway, connecting with the Mackenzie Valley fibre project in the N.W.T., as well as a Haines Junction-to-Juneau via Haines Alaska route. The Dempster Energy Services feasibility study concluded that the Whitehorse-to-Juneau route was the most cost-effective means of meeting the business objectives of the diverse fibre project.

Northwestel is currently promoting the consideration of the Dempster Highway route as an all-Canadian route. Senior Northwestel officials have discussed this publicly at the Opportunities North Conference on October 10 and in a response to the October 3 letter by me to the editor on the project in the *Whitehorse Star*.

This proposed Dempster Highway route may or may not meet all the business objectives as a diverse fibre project. As a part of the analysis done by Stantec for the investment model selection, the consultants will be engaging Northwestel to ensure Government of Yukon objectives are met and the perspectives of industry stakeholders are considered. A study on the feasibility of a large-scale data centre in Whitehorse determined that a data centre in Yukon was feasible, provided that a diverse fibre optic link was in place. As well, Yukon and Alaska signed a memorandum of understanding, entitled “A Yukon to Southeast Alaska Economic Corridor Development Project for Electrical Generation, Transmission

and Telecommunications”, on October 11, 2013 in Skagway, Alaska.

To reiterate, the contract that Stantec was awarded with was through an RFP competitive process that Stantec was the winner of. The contract is valued at \$184,000 approximately. That is out of that \$600,000 pot that was identified for the development of a diversified fibre in the territory. The rest of that money will be used in the coming stages of the project. Once we receive the report from Stantec, that will give us some guidance as to how to move forward and further develop the business case and the business model, and from there, we would further develop the project and ultimately, once a decision is made on the investment model, we would see investment either from other levels of government, from private sector, from First Nation development corporations or simply from general revenue of the Yukon government for the development of that project.

What that project looks like from an investment model perspective hasn't been determined yet, but once we have that report from Stantec we will be better positioned to identify what the remainder of those funds will be used for.

**Ms. Hanson:** So if I understand correctly then, we've had a \$600,000 multi-year amount to be spread over multiple years. Last year, Dempster Energy Services received, according to Public Accounts, \$141,000 and change. This year, Dempster Energy Services has \$43,315. Now we're told that Stantec has \$184,000. So we're over \$300,000 with not getting out of the study-to-talk-about-what-we're-going-to-study phase. So what I would be interested in is: What is the product that the minister is hoping to have in hand with which he would then be able to make an informed decision as minister or a recommendation to Management Board about the next steps?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** I suppose to clarify: the funding that was provided in various means to Dempster Energy Services was prior to this year's budget. It was from last year's budget and it was aimed at achieving that report that I mentioned. Since then — and since we've decided to go in a different direction than the Dempster Energy Services report — we've engaged Stantec. Stantec now will develop a report for us that will give us an analysis of potential business and investment models for this diverse fibre project. So the product that we're looking for would be a report that looks at a number of different investment models and business models for the development of diverse fibre project in the Yukon.

**Ms. Hanson:** So then can the minister explain what he got for the \$43,315 to Dempster Energy Services in June when he then went to Stantec in August? What was wrong with the \$144,000 in expenditures on that — a quarter of the allocation for this project that — in terms of making the decision earlier to take the escape route off that consulting consortium and going with a new one?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** What we received for the money that we invested with Dempster Energy was a feasibility report on a specific model that would see Dempster Energy Services essentially start a business that would be a telecom provider and would essentially compete with Northwestel for

the broadband and other telecommunication services in the territory. That feasibility study looked at that specific model and found that, yes, the project would be feasible, given a significant input of financial resources from the public government, as well as the First Nation development corporations, as well as a guarantee from the Yukon government of the use of the services provided by the new company.

As I said, ultimately what we decided was that that wasn't the model we wanted to pursue and we wanted to look at other models, so we parted ways with Dempster Energy Services, having supported them in the development of that feasibility study, and have now engaged Stantec, through the competitive RFP process I mentioned earlier. Rather than a specific feasibility study for a specific model, we've asked them to look at potential models that might exist to allow us to make a decision about which one we would choose, and then take it from there.

Now, any ranges of possibilities exist, including the development of one or both of those lines to both Juneau via Skagway and Inuvik via the Dempster Highway. They aren't mutually exclusive; they could go together, or one or the other could be chosen. These are all decisions we will be making, based on the input we receive from Stantec. Stantec is doing a number of consultations currently, including with the Northwest Territories and Northwestel, to give us that advice. Ultimately, once we have that in hand, we'll be in a position to make a decision about how to move forward.

**Ms. Hanson:** I thank the minister for his response. It helps to clarify that the government, the minister and his department are still looking at both the north-south option and then what has come to be called the northern — or Canadian — routing of the fibre optic link.

He referenced some of the conversation that occurred at the Opportunities North Conference and certainly in correspondence from Northwestel. My question has to do with the concerns that they have raised in numerous venues that using the Alaska fibre project approach would involve losing network capacity from American telecommunications carriers, which, as the minister has alluded to, may generate significant long-term costs to Yukoners. The concern that has been raised by some — particularly those who are along the Dempster or those from Pelly Crossing, Dawson and up — is that it would benefit Whitehorse, but not a lot of other Yukon communities.

What I'm concerned about, and would be interested in hearing from the minister is: Will his assessment — and when he makes this decision, will the factors that he takes into consideration — include the lifetime cost of each proposed route? Will they be setting out what discount rate is used to evaluate and compare the options? Will there be public knowledge or public disclosure of the ongoing payments that might be required to American or U.S. companies to maintain that critical communications link? Not the least of all, in the minds of many people, is with respect to the implications of a southern link through the United States, with the *National Securities Act* — legislation that certainly has gained an awful lot of pre-eminence. Certainly, we may see changes to our

security legislation in this country, but so far, we don't have it quite as intrusive as it does exist in the United States, so I am looking to the minister for assurances or a sense of how major projects like this would be weighed. Are all those factors going to be taken into consideration and how?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** The short answer is yes — all those factors are taken into consideration. I will provide a little bit of commentary on them. Regardless of which direction — which route — is chosen, whether it is down through Skagway to Juneau, or up the Dempster to Inuvik, at either end of those, an IRU would need to be established with whichever provider we are dealing with. If we're going south into Alaska, yes, there would be an IRU necessary with the American company, but if we're going north, then we would need an IRU with the GNWT, who owns the fibre line down the Mackenzie Valley and then Northwestel, who owns the fibre line essentially to the Northwest Territories' border with Alberta.

Whether the long-term costs associated with an IRU go to a company in the United States or a company in the Northwest Territories and Northwestel, that is something we'll have to consider. The cost to Yukoners — that is something we'll have to consider as well. If one is more financially beneficial than another, that's something we'll consider.

As to the issue related with the sending and security of information and whether or not we're concerned about data being shipped through the United States, I think some of those fears are somewhat overblown. I think that, right now, when you log on to your computer here and go on to send some data through Facebook or through Google, those are going through American servers anyway. The point of diverse fibre is to make us more connected with the world, and that's the reality of today's world, that we're becoming increasingly interconnected.

So right now, the route by which those bits travel is the Alaska Highway down to Alberta, and then from there, points unknown. This is not a new issue. These issues are being dealt with by provinces and states across the Canadian-American border and across the world. If you send an e-mail or send data from Nova Scotia to Toronto, there's a very likely chance it may travel through the United States. If you send data from Victoria to Vancouver, there's a chance that it may go through the United States.

If you're a company or a health provider — and I know that members want to comment on this, and they'll have a chance — if you have specifically private data and it needs to be protected, then it needs to be protected anyway. There are ways to do that, and there are ways to ensure that there's a safe and appropriate pathway for that data to travel. These are not new issues; these are issues that are being dealt with throughout Canada currently.

There is a range and web of fibre cables that transverse the border throughout North America and throughout the world. In fact, if one were to take a look at the world map of fibre, it's a pretty interesting one because the amount of underwater fibre is significant. The Northwest Passage Arctic fibre project that is being developed currently is an example

that would provide connection between Asia and Europe, particularly England.

These issues are not new ones. They are not ones that have not been dealt with by other jurisdictions and ones that I'm sure we will find solutions for. To circle back to the member's initial question, yes, these are all considerations that need to be taken into account as we make our decision. How certain data is transmitted and through which channels it is transmitted is something we need to consider as well as the long-term costs of any irrevocable right-to-use licence that would need to be established with whomever it is at the end of whichever route we pick.

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

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

*Motion agreed to*

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

**Chair:** It has been moved by Mr. Cathers that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

*Motion agreed to*

*Speaker resumes the Chair*

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

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

### Chair's report

**Ms. McLeod:** Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 83, entitled *Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Act and the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act, 2007*, and directed me to report the bill without amendment.

Committee of the Whole has also considered Bill No. 15, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, and directed me to report progress.

**Speaker:** You have heard the report from the Chair of Committee of the Whole. Are you agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

As the hour is close enough to 5:30 p.m., this House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

*The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.*