



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 91

2nd Session

34th Legislature

HANSARD

Monday, October 1, 2018 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2018 Fall Sitting

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

CABINET MINISTERS

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

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

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

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

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

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

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

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Monday, October 1, 2018 — 1:00 p.m.**

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

I would like to begin the 2018 Fall Sitting of the Legislative Assembly by respectfully acknowledging all Yukon First Nations and also that we are meeting on the traditional territories of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.

We will proceed at this time with the prayer given to us by former Speaker Sam Johnston. Mr. Johnston was the Speaker from 1985 to 1992 and was the first First Nation Speaker of a Legislative Assembly in Canada.

Prayers

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Prior to proceeding with the introduction of our pages, the Chair will make a statement regarding the artwork that is now featured in the Legislative Assembly Chamber. Members and others will by now have noticed the four showcases on either side of the Chamber. I will now briefly describe how they got here — how this came to be.

At its first meeting on February 23, 2017, the Members' Services Board of the 34th Yukon Legislative Assembly agreed to form an all-party subcommittee to consider changes to the decor of the Legislative Assembly Chamber. The subcommittee was authorized to make recommendations to the board regarding any such changes. One change that was agreed to was to include more art by Yukon artists in the Chamber.

When the Legislative Assembly first sat in this Chamber on November 2, 1976, the only artwork on display was the tapestry behind me. It is impressive artwork and when we do tours of the Legislative Assembly, we certainly get a lot of questions about it; however, the artist who created it was not from the Yukon.

The Legislative Assembly office worked with the arts unit of the Cultural Services branch of the Department of Tourism and Culture to identify works of art for display in the Chamber and for arranging the proper manner of display of these works.

The artwork was to be chosen from the Yukon permanent art collection. The collection was created in 1981 by a group that is now known as "Friends of the Yukon Permanent Art Collection". The Government of Yukon funds the purchase of new acquisitions every year. Since its creation, the collection has grown to more than 450 original works of art created by more than 225 artists. These works are collected for the people of Yukon and pieces from the collection are on display in more than 30 locations in Yukon, including now the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

After careful consideration, eight pieces were chosen from the permanent art collection for display in the Chamber. The pieces are as follows: *Traditional Doll — Girl* by Annie Smith; *Tlingit Eagle Frontlet* by Keith Wolfe Smarch;

Arrival of the Dog Team by Deb Enoch; *Caribou Flagan* by David Ashley; *Fire Bag* by Gertie Tom; *Raven's Flight* by Eugene Alfred; *Forget-Me-Not Mukluks* by Mary Deguerre and *Wood-Ash Glazed Vessel With Lid* by Monika Kate Steputh.

The display will be officially unveiled at a reception later this month. The current collection of pieces will be on display until the fall of 2019 and then a new collection will be put on display.

The Chair thanks all members for their attention and looks forward to hosting them and members of the general public at the official unveiling. Thank you.

INTRODUCTION OF PAGES

Speaker: Now it gives me great pleasure to announce the following students who will be serving the House as Legislative pages for the 2018 Fall Sitting. They are: Trisha Schamber and Tenesha Christiansen from Porter Creek Secondary School; Sya Berkman, Sasha Emery and Martina Vos from F.H. Collins Secondary School; and Heather Mislant and Phoebe Qiu, as well as Gavin Spence, from Vanier Catholic Secondary School. Today, we have with us Trisha Schamber and Tenesha Christiansen.

I would ask the members to welcome them to the House at this time.

Applause

Withdrawal of motions

Speaker: The Chair wishes to inform the House of changes which have been made to the Order Paper. The following motions have been removed from the Order Paper as they are now outdated: Motion No. 56, standing in the name of the Member for Porter Creek Centre; Motion No. 125 and Motion No. 194, standing in the name of the Member for Copperbelt South; Motion No. 138 and Motion for the Production of Papers No. 10, standing in the name of the Member for Lake Laberge; and Motion No. 264, standing in the name of the Member for Watson Lake.

The following motions have been removed from the Order Paper as the actions requested in the motions have been taken in whole or in part: Motion No. 133, standing in the name of the honourable Premier; Motion No. 150, standing in the name of the Member for Mayo-Tatchun; Motion No. 160, standing in the name of the Member for Kluane; Motion No. 211, standing in the name of the Member for Copperbelt North; Motion No. 270, standing in the name of the Leader of the Third Party; and Motion No. 299, standing the name of the Member for Takhini-Kopper King.

Motion No. 263 standing in the name of the Member for Porter Creek Centre has been removed from the Order Paper at the request of the member.

Finally, Motion No. 309, notice of which was given by the Leader of the Third Party, was not placed on today's Notice Paper as it is similar to Motion No. 19, adopted by this House as amended on November 22, 2017.

We will proceed at this time with the Order Paper.

DAILY ROUTINE

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would like to acknowledge in the gallery today that, sitting with my Executive Assistant Emily Farrell, is the Grand Chief of the Council of Yukon First Nations Peter Johnston.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would also like to acknowledge a Klondiker in the gallery as well. Coming down from Dawson City, we have Serge Lamarche — not to be confused with a lawyer in town — who is one of my constituents in the gallery, with his son Yves as well. Thank you for coming.

Applause

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I would like to take the opportunity to welcome members of our cultural community who are here for the tribute that will follow: Mr. Casey Prescott, Ms. Michelle Emslie, Ms. Mary Bradshaw, Ms. Heather McIntyre, and Ms. Heather Steinhagen. We have here today our Deputy Minister of Tourism and Culture Valerie Royle and my executive assistant Jessie Stephen.

I would like to welcome you all here today and thank you for coming.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I would also like to take the opportunity to say hello to some of our staff and volunteers who were part of the United Way breakfast. This will tie into our tribute in a few minutes. I would like to recognize Mr. David Whiteside who is here, the president of United Way. As well, from the departments of Economic Development and Community Services, Mr. Jason Rayner, Mr. Jason Seaton, Vanessa Innes, Kathryn Ives and Lauren Muir.

Applause

Ms. White: I would ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming Sue Greetham and thank her for her continued work with Fair Vote Yukon. It's important and we're happy to have her here. Thank you for coming.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this moment to recognize Information and Privacy Commissioner Diane McLeod-McKay, who has joined us this afternoon. Please join me in welcoming her to this House.

Applause

Mr. Hassard: I ask the House's indulgence to help me in recognizing a few people today in the gallery: Mr. Connor Whitehouse, as well as Ms. Amanda Leslie and Mr. Jonas Smith, who was recently acclaimed as the Conservative candidate for the upcoming federal election.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Just a couple of colleagues who are here who are working on an information system — Mr. Luke DeCoste and Wes George.

Applause

Speaker: I note that one of my constituents and a friend, Fred Smith, is in the gallery today. Welcome to the Legislature.

Applause

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I would like to recognize in attendance today Annette King, the Child and Youth Advocate.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors?

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Culture Days

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I rise today on behalf of the Liberal government to pay tribute to Culture Days, an annual three-day celebration of Canadian culture. I am so pleased that this is the first topic to be discussed in a Fall Sitting of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

From September 28 to 30, this past weekend, people across the country celebrated, appreciated and participated in free cultural events and activities in their community. Culture Days is a collaborative, pan-Canadian initiative to raise awareness, accessibility, participation and engagement with all forms of art and culture. Activities and events featured a multitude of creative professions including artists of all types, heritage experts, curators, architects, designers and many, many others. As stated in their mission, Culture Days aims to foster appreciation and support, promote interaction and affirm that every citizen is a guardian of their cultural community.

I am pleased to share that this year, 35 events took place in Whitehorse and Carcross as part of Culture Days. In Yukon, Culture Days was combined with another event called "Doors Open" which provided free access to the public to culturally and historically important buildings. Dozens of Yukoners, artists and organizations coordinated and presented a fantastic range of events for all interests and ages. From art tours to performances, workshops, open houses and much, much more, Yukoners spent the weekend exploring our diverse historic heritage, indigenous and arts communities.

I was lucky enough to participate in the opening ceremony at the cultural hub at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre on Saturday, which was followed by a very enthusiastic cultural display in the parade. I took the time to explore our cultural community throughout the weekend and it was fantastic. I am proud to say that several programs for the Department of Tourism and Culture were part of Culture Days, including Yukon Archives, the arts unit, historic sites,

the Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre and the heritage unit at 133 Industrial Road. This is where our archaeology and palaeontology collections are held.

The Yukon government is proud to support Culture Days events through the Culture Quest fund and I would like to thank the Yukon Arts Centre, the Yukon Culture Days steering committee, for coordinating Culture Days this year and the Doors Open, as well as the community partners that participated in the event.

Thank you again to everyone who attended here today. You are doing very important work on behalf of all of us and thank you so much. Taking time to enjoy and appreciate our local arts, heritage and culture is essential to our well-being. Making it accessible, inclusive and fun is just as important, and I'm honoured to pay tribute to this annual event. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Applause

Ms. Van Bibber: It is an honour to rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to the arts and culture sector of Yukon's Culture Days held this past weekend, September 28 to 30.

Each year across Canada, Culture Days is celebrated during the last weekend of September. This year, Yukon has joined the celebrations, and although we differ on the theme, it is still a welcome addition to our calendar.

The national theme was "OnBeat", encouraging an array of drumming and rhythm-inspired events. Yukon's theme is "Doors Open", which is self-explanatory — visiting various sites where doors were open for free and hands-on, interactive activities. We are blessed with such a wide range of talented and gifted artists, musicians and ideas that are shared freely. From events such as the Scottish dancing give-it-a-try sessions to the heritage highlights scavenger hunt hosted by the Yukon Historical and Museums Association to the National Film Board shorts for the whole family, there was something for a wide range of interests. Art matters, and culture is meant to be shared. These two sections can and do contribute to a healthy, stable society. Concepts, notions and facts are shared during Culture Days and I am so pleased that Yukon has joined this fantastic endeavour.

Events such as Culture Days will allow a glimpse into a wide range of backgrounds and dreams for those willingly giving of their expertise and talents. We encourage all Yukoners to get out and enjoy, learn and engage in the arts and cultural life of the communities and regions during the coming years. Kudos to all who participated and assisted in making 2018 a success.

Applause

Ms. White: I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP caucus to celebrate the wonders of Culture Days. I would like to think that culture had an early start on Friday morning with the musical performances at the United Way breakfast and then with the opening of Yukon's first mosque. Congratulations to the Yukon Muslim Society on this glorious accomplishment.

Friday morning was just the beginning. The festivities and activities were spread throughout the community for three solid days. With so many interesting and engaging activities, it was hard to keep up. From printing presses to roving ravens, the creation of glass percussion instruments, exciting museum scavenger hunts, inflatable planetariums and hands-on workshops, the fun never ended. Thank you to all of the artists, facilitators and volunteers who made Culture Days 2018 such a colourful success.

Applause

In recognition of United Way Month

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I rise today on behalf of the Liberal government to pay tribute to the United Way Month, which is the start of the annual fundraising campaign in support of Canadian charities. This year's theme is "Better Together". This year, United Way Yukon is supporting 12 local charities, which include: Big Brothers Big Sisters of Yukon, the Child Development Centre, the Freedom Trails Therapeutic Riding Association, Skookum Jim Friendship Centre and the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre — to mention a few.

These are all amazing organizations with programs that support Yukon families, respond to the needs of those with disabilities, work to address alcohol and drug abuse and aim to reduce the impacts of poverty. These programs make real differences for some of Yukon's most vulnerable members of society. This year's fundraising campaign began on September 22 with seven teams participating in the second United Way plane pull event.

Several members of the Yukon Legislative Assembly participated on Team All Stripes with other political leaders from our community. I will quote Whitehorse City Councillor Jocelyn Curteanu in saying that we didn't come in first, second or third. Actually, I think we came in last, but our politicians definitely went the extra mile, pulling that plane further than we had to. I will thank the Member for Takhini-Kopper King for leading us the extra 75 metres. At the end of the day, the big winner was the United Way Yukon and all the charities they support. Close to \$13,000 was raised during this year's plane pull. I would also like to thank Roslyn Woodcock, who was the 2018 United Way campaign champion, for pulling our team together.

The most recent fundraising activity took place just a few days ago, Mr. Speaker, with the departments of Economic Development and Community Services taking the lead on the annual United Way pancake breakfast. Yukoners came together and helped raise more than \$20,000 at this year's breakfast and silent auction. Many members of this Legislative Assembly were celebrity chefs and I would like to thank you for your support.

I wish to recognize the contributions from local businesses, media and all the sponsors who came on board to make this event a success.

I would also like to recognize the Yukon Energy Corporation for their efforts during their annual United Way fundraising week, which will take place from October 9 to 12. I understand that they will have their own kickoff pancake

breakfast, silent auction and sign-up drive for payroll deductions.

I encourage everyone to support the United Way Month in whichever way you choose, whether it be through personal involvement or corporate campaigns and sponsorship.

We are joined this afternoon by David Whiteside from the United Way and I would also like to thank and recognize the members of the organizing committee from the departments of Economic Development and Community Services, some of whom we welcomed earlier today. Those would be Amelie Quirke-Tomlins, Andrew Seymore, Ann Bowen, Carolyn Derkatch, Charmaine Cheung, Jason Rayner, Jason Seaton, Melissa Ordish, Nancy Lewis-de Graff, Rosemary Fordyce, Shelly Jeffrey, Vanessa Innes, Aisha Montgomery, Brian Ng, Damien Burns, Ellen Andison, Jon Trefry, Kathryn Ives, Kayla Jurovich, Lauren Muir, Marie Cairns and Sara Russo.

I also wish to acknowledge the Yukon Wildfire Fire Management branch, including David Johnson, for the support provided during the breakfast set-up and tear-down.

Finally, a big thank you to the celebrity servers, the RCMP M Division, the live entertainment and numerous other volunteers who generously donated their time in making this event such a success.

Applause

Mr. Cathers: I am pleased to rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to tribute United Way Yukon and the efforts of Yukoners who rally together to raise money through a number of events for the 2018 United Way fundraising campaign.

United Way Yukon has been an integral help to countless organizations since 1995. Yukoners volunteer in force to support United Way, especially at this time of year.

This year, money was raised to help fund 12 Yukon organizations with projects and programs that directly help families and individuals in a range of areas. It has been wonderful to see how event turnout increases as word spreads about just how much one person or a family can help their community. It is as easy as getting together for breakfast. I was pleased to participate once again in the United Way breakfast this year as a celebrity server.

This year, the departments of Community Services and Economic Development put on an excellent, fun and very successful breakfast. Thank you to every one of them and the other volunteers who contributed to that event.

It's not an easy feat serving an entire community, so thank you to the staff of both departments as well as the other volunteers and performers who came out to make the event a success.

The other major component of fundraising for United Way Yukon is the plane pull, for which teams of 15 sign up to have a chance of competing for the fastest time in pulling out an Air North 737.

Thank you to everyone who took part in a United Way event this year and to those who volunteered to make United

Way Month a success, as well as those who contribute to the United Way on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: Today I rise on behalf of the Yukon New Democratic Party to congratulate the hard-working staff and volunteers who put in the hours and energy making not only this year's but every year's United Way fundraising drive such a success.

United Way fundraising ensures that many non-government organizations receive funding for projects and services that they might not otherwise be able to provide. We know that these services are often those that fill in gaps in service and help to build stronger community. We as a community owe a huge debt of gratitude to those who volunteer to serve on the board of the United Way. As my colleague here mentioned, it has been since 1995 — and I can tell you that I don't think it has changed too much over the last 23 years in terms of the difficulty of both attracting and maintaining that dedicated core of people, because it's no small challenge to find new and ongoing dynamic ways to work together with a goal of helping those who are really the unsung heroes who help in our community across Yukon.

The United Way is encouraging all Yukoners and large and small businesses to consider new ways to donate, including corporate donations or payroll deduction programs. I am often thinking, Mr. Speaker — as a territorial government of 5,000 employees, imagine, if 50 percent or 75 percent of those employees enrolled in a payroll deduction program, how the United Way would flourish.

So again, thanks to those volunteers who work so hard for the United Way Yukon — and, through their efforts, the many Yukoners whose lives are enhanced in ways both small and large.

Applause

Speaker: Tabling returns and documents.

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Speaker: The Chair has for tabling the annual report of the Conflict of Interest Commission for the year ending March 31, 2018. This report is tabled pursuant to section 19 of the *Conflict of Interest (Members and Ministers) Act* and was distributed to members and made public on June 28, 2018.

The Chair also has for tabling a report from the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly on the absence of members from Sittings of the Legislative Assembly and its committees, dated October 1, 2018. This report is tabled pursuant to the direction of the Members' Services Board.

Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I have for tabling the *2018-19 Interim Fiscal and Economic Update*.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Pursuant to section 103(1) of the *Workers' Compensation Act*, I have for tabling the 2017

annual report of the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I have for tabling two legislative returns. The first is a letter sent to the Member for Kluane in response to Written Question No. 27, and the second is a letter sent to the Member for Lake Laberge in response to Written Question No. 25.

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to table three responses to questions raised by the Member for Porter Creek North on April 16 and 18, 2018.

Mr. Cathers: I have for tabling today a memorandum to all deputy ministers re: 2018-19 period four detailed variance report and 2018-19 period eight detailed variance report, which CBC made public earlier today.

Speaker: Are there any reports of committees?

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Mr. Adel: I have for tabling the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees, dated September 14, 2018, and the committee's ninth report, dated September 20, 2018.

Speaker: Are there any further committee reports to be presented?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 207: *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Silver: I move that Bill No. 207, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 207, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 207 agreed to

Bill No. 22: *Act to Amend the Forest Resources Act and the Territorial Lands (Yukon) Act (2018)* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I move that Bill No. 22, entitled *Act to Amend the Forest Resources Act and the Territorial Lands (Yukon) Act (2018)*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources that Bill No. 22, entitled *Act to Amend the Forest Resources Act and the Territorial Lands (Yukon) Act (2018)*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 22 agreed to

Bill No. 20: *Societies Act* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I move that Bill No. 20, entitled *Societies Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that Bill No. 20, entitled *Societies Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 20 agreed to

Speaker: Are there any further bills to be introduced?
Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT the Yukon Legislative Assembly, pursuant to subsection 12(1) of the *Elections Act*, recommends that the Commissioner in Executive Council appoint Maxwell Harvey as the Chief Electoral Officer of Yukon, effective October 1, 2018, for a term as stipulated in subsection 12(2) of the *Elections Act*.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to:

- (1) follow through on the review of the medical travel program that it committed to on March 14, 2018, which is intended to ensure that it is meeting the needs of all Yukoners;
- (2) confirm if work has begun on this review and provide an update on work completed to date;
- (3) commit to public consultations as part of this review; and
- (4) provide a deadline for completion of the review.

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

THAT this House recognizes and congratulates the Government of Canada on reaching an agreement in principle on a modernized trade agreement for North America, including Canada, the United States and Mexico.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Canada to ensure Yukon has flexibility to work with First Nation and municipal governments to spend federal infrastructure dollars in the best way to meet our communities' and territory's needs.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to table a plan detailing how many affordable and social housing units they will build by the end of their mandate.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to table in this Assembly the implementation plan for actions to be taken by the Yukon government in response to the May 2018 *Whitehorse Correctional Centre Inspection Report*, including clear action items and timelines.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to tell Yukoners what services will be affected by this government's across-the-board, ongoing, two-percent cut to all departments.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?
Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Interim fiscal and economic outlook

Hon. Mr. Silver: I rise today to provide Yukoners with an update on the state of Yukon's public finances and our economy.

The mid-year fiscal and economic outlook tabled today presents a snapshot of current expectations for Yukon's finances and Yukon's economy. It highlights key changes from the forecast in the spring. The fiscal picture has not changed significantly since the release of the 2018 budget in April.

As a result of better forecasting, this government's spending, outlined in the main estimates, remains on track and accurately represents spending that will occur this year. On the economic side, Yukon remains one of the best places in Canada to be, with the lowest unemployment rate in Canada and some of the highest weekly earnings. Strong retail sales as well as high levels of construction activity are reflective of a positive economic climate. The mid-term economic outlook remains positive. Future gains are expected in population, along with continued strength in the labour market and growth in real gross domestic product, or GDP. Yukon's unemployment rate is on track for a record low in 2018, after averaging 2.6 percent over the first eight months. The unemployment rate is forecasted to average 2.8 percent this year, which is well below the budget forecast of 4.3 percent.

Yukon continues to have a robust mining sector. Current estimates put exploration spending at \$172.3 million for this year, the highest since 2012 and the fourth in the country in terms of spending. Development of the Victoria Gold Corporation's Eagle Gold project is in full swing, with major earthworks well underway on the site as we speak. Goldcorp's Coffee Gold project is now in the environmental assessment process. The proponent indicates that the company is on track for construction to begin in 2020.

The real GDP forecast for 2018 is now forecasted to be 2.5 percent for 2018. Beyond 2018, real GDP gains are expected every year out to 2022, spurred by high levels of mine development and production from new mines.

Mr. Speaker, the development of new mining projects will also boost local private sector investment, positively

impacting Yukon's construction industry. Local construction activity will continue to be supported by public spending, particularly on key infrastructure, such as highways, water services and schools.

The tourism industry continues to gain momentum for a record year in 2017. Growth has continued into 2018, with gains in the first six months in key tourism metrics, supported by positive feedback from tourism operators.

A strong economy is reflective in retail sale performance. Following a record \$800 million in 2017, further gains have been registered in the first half of this year, with retail sales up 6.6 percent from the same period in 2017.

With a strong labour market and positive economic conditions, Yukon's population is projected to grow as well, increasing 1.7 percent this year. Our population is now forecasted at over 42,400 for 2022. At the same time, our low unemployment rate is expected to continue, averaging about four percent over 2019 to 2022.

Mr. Speaker, the economic indicators in today's outlook are mostly positive. They match what we're hearing on the ground.

Mr. Cathers: I'm pleased to rise today as the Official Opposition Finance critic to respond to the Premier's ministerial statement about the 2018-19 interim fiscal and economic update. The most notable part of his statement is what he conveniently glossed over — notably, the fact that he and his Liberal Party repeatedly told Yukoners during the 2016 election campaign that the Yukon had the worst economy in Canada.

One of the Leader of the Liberal Party's favourite claims used to be that we were in a made-in-Yukon recession under the Yukon Party. In the 2016 election, the now-Premier said this to media — and I quote: "We have the worst economy in Canada."

As recently as April of this year, his Minister of Economic Development publicly stated that Yukon had the worst economy in 2016. These two statements are in stark contrast to the Premier's own economic update that he released today.

In fact, according to that report, the Yukon's GDP grew by 8.3 percent in 2016. Let me repeat that point: the economy grew by 8.3 percent during the last year the Yukon Party was in office. On page five, this report refers to that as robust growth. In fact, according to Statistics Canada, the Yukon had the highest growth rate in Canada in 2016.

The Premier's report also states this: Yukon's real GDP contracted 1.4 percent in 2017. Mr. Speaker, that means that during the first full year the Liberals were in power, the Yukon's economy actually went downhill and saw a reduction of 1.4 percent — again, according to their own report. I think we know why the Premier glossed over that important detail about the 2017 economic downturn under the Liberals.

The report also states this inconvenient detail that the Premier glossed over in his opening remarks — that the 2018 growth rate for real GDP has been revised down. That's a quote from the report, and it is contrary to the claim that the

Premier made in his opening statement because, in fact, the picture has worsened since this spring. While the revised forecast for growth in 2018 does suggest that the economy will make up what it lost during the 2017 economic downturn under the Liberals, it is only forecasted to do slightly better than that.

In conclusion, like we saw in the Financial Advisory Panel report, when you dig into the details of the Yukon's fiscal and economic picture, the Liberal talking points fall apart. Will the Premier now show the courage to apologize to Yukoners for misleading them during the 2016 election campaign?

Ms. Hanson: In responding to the ministerial statement made by the Minister of Finance this afternoon, the clearest reaction that the New Democratic Party has is that, again, what we're experiencing is really radio silence by this government on the options and provocative questions that were raised by what was an ostensibly independent expert financial panel. Two years into this new government, I would have expected a government that had claimed to be serious about diversifying its economy for the long-term would have started to create the building blocks for that diversification, for exploring — as the panel very vigorously suggested — the obligations and benefits to modernizing the revenue options from our non-renewable resources sector to create wealth now, not just for the current period of time, but for years into the future.

I would have expected that this government would have looked at the options that the panel talked about in terms of creating — by engaging in that robust and provocative conversation — measures whereby we can begin to build now a sovereign wealth fund for the future, for generations to come. Instead, we see that the Minister of Finance's statement offers much of the same as we have heard for the past 15 years. It has been 15 years, Mr. Speaker, since the Yukon government assumed the authority, the responsibility and the opportunities afforded to this government when Canada transferred the provincial-like responsibilities for land and resource management in the Yukon, to work in partnership with First Nation governments.

Quite frankly, as a citizen and as a member of this Assembly, I am disappointed in the continuation through this statement and the unimaginative — some might say "timid" — response of this government to exploring, through robust dialogue among, for starters, members of this Assembly as elected representatives of all citizens, some or all of the ideas generated by the independent Financial Advisory Panel — ideas that would move Yukon from its current transactional status — that is that it spends all it can get from Ottawa without real or serious consideration of options or opportunities lost by refusing to take the leap toward self-government as was contemplated by both the implementation of First Nation final and self-government agreements and the Yukon devolution.

Today, we are hearing again that the Liberal government, like its Yukon Party predecessor, can spend whatever money

it receives from our federal government, but lacks the creativity and courage to take steps toward a government focused on creating wealth, for not just the current, but future generations of Yukoners, by beginning to take those hard steps on making and using critical thinking to analyze that government is not just about spending money. It is about thinking about how we do it in a more effective and efficient way.

It is nice to have some statistics thrown at us, but it is a repeat of what I have heard for the last 15 years.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would respectfully disagree with the member from the Third Party, the Leader of the NDP. I think we are boldly doing different things, starting with the signing of the chapter 23 implementation agreement increasing the First Nation portion of shared resources. That would be one example.

Our tourism strategy — the first time in 17 years — would be another example. The Yukon Forum has 16 working groups right now with indigenous governments right across Canada, not to mention a plethora of subcommittees from those working groups. There is a five-year capital plan as well.

Negotiating a cap on cannabis-related taxes going to the federal government and the 75-percent share of the federal excise tax, carbon levy exemptions for aviation and dollar-for-dollar rebates for the placer industry — I would say that this government is doing an awful lot different compared to the narrative being perpetuated by the member from the Third Party. Our government has, for the first time in Yukon history, laid out a five-year capital plan that will be updated with each budget and will bring even more clarity for Yukon government expenditures, which the member opposite is clearly interested in.

I want to thank the opposition for their comments today. Under our government, the economic outlook in the spring and an update in the fall have become a norm. This wasn't always the case in recent years. The outlook is an opportunity for members of this House and the public to understand and see the hard numbers. We are not throwing statistics at the opposition; we are showing hard numbers that underpin our economy and our budget. It is also available to potential investors in Yukon's economy so that they can make informed decisions about the future.

I will note that forecasts are simply that, Mr. Speaker. Some of what is included in the document may not come to pass. That information may not come to pass. However, it is our best estimate at this time as we see what is coming down the pike.

On the economic side, Yukon remains one of the best places in Canada to be, and we have the lowest unemployment rate in the country and some of the highest weekly earnings. Strong retail sales as well as a high level of construction activity are reflective of a positive economic climate. The mid-term economic outlook remains positive, with expectations of further gains in population, continued strength in the labour markets and growth in the gross domestic

product. The economic indicators in today's economic outlook are mostly positive, and I am happy to report them to the Legislative Assembly.

I thank my colleagues for their comments today.

Speaker: This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Water quality

Mr. Hassard: Mr. Speaker, this summer, the government started testing the lead levels in drinking water at Yukon schools. During the course of the testing, they found elevated lead levels of this water at a number of schools. However, the government did not notify parents, teachers or students of the elevated levels until three weeks into the school year. So we're curious, can the minister tell us why this government did not notify parents before the beginning of the school year?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: The health and safety of Yukon students and the staff in schools are of course always our first priority. Government is taking proactive measures to ensure that the water in Yukon schools remains safe to use and to drink and that it meets the requirements set out in the Canadian drinking water guidelines.

In August 2018, we completed water tests for lead levels at all schools that were built before 1990. We have shared the results with the school communities at the earliest possible time. Mitigation work is taking place at any schools that have had results above the national guidelines to ensure the water in the schools remains safe for students and staff over the long term.

The chief medical officer of health advises that there is no short-term risk to health associated with water fixtures, the levels above the national standards that were found in our tests and in a general way. The national standards are based on exposure to lead over a lifetime, and children drink water from multiple sources. Therefore the occasional consumption — if that has taken place — and we hope, of course, that it has not — from those fixtures is enough to proceed without any ill effects on behalf of the children.

Mr. Hassard: It's interesting to note that the minister certainly didn't answer the question about why it took so long to notify parents.

On September 14, the *Yukon News* reported that the government was refusing to release the detailed figures of what the lead levels in the drinking water at our schools are. I believe that parents, families, children and teachers have the right to know what those lead levels are in the schools' drinking water. Why is this Liberal government refusing to share this important information with Yukon parents?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: In fact, I did answer the last question, but apparently the member opposite didn't hear what I said about the testing and when that took place.

With respect to the figures of those test results, they are relatively complicated in determining what the readings mean, but they are available to the public electronically now on the Department of Education website and have been for a bit of

time. I couldn't give you the exact date, but I can certainly look it up and provide it to the House in the near future if that was something that is of concern. They are available.

Mr. Hassard: Just for clarification, is the minister saying that those levels are available to the public at this time?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: That's the information I have been provided. I spoke with the department as late as last week to determine that those figures would be going up on the website for anyone to review.

Question re: Fiscal management

Mr. Kent: This morning, the CBC obtained and made public a document written by the Deputy Minister of Finance to all departments, telling them that the Liberal Cabinet had directed them to all come up with a plan to cut two percent from their operation and maintenance budgets. Mr. Speaker, a two-percent cut to the Department of Education's O&M budget would be \$3.6 million.

Can the minister tell us where the Liberals are intending to cut the \$3.6 million from Education's budget?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to comment on the document that the member opposite is referring to. Suffice it to say we've seen this style happen before and the results of those leaked documents didn't come to fruition. There is a reason why we have ATIPP — access to information to get current documents — but I'll stop on that. I will say that it's not news to anybody in the Yukon that the government is looking for new ways of being efficient. That was one of the central recommendations of the Yukon Financial Advisory Panel. We are looking now at how services are organized. We're looking at management and delivery of services and we're looking for efficiencies to better deliver services to Yukoners.

We are also getting ready to launch a comprehensive review of programs and services delivered by the Department of Health and Social Services and that will be coming later on this year.

I am very comfortable with the financial direction that we are heading in as I outlined today in the ministerial statement. I'll keep the speculation that the opposition will continue on hard facts, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Kent: Over the course of the summer — actually, over the course of the last two years — we know that the Liberals have a tendency to take no responsibility and blame others when things go wrong. The letter was pretty clear. I mean, it even has the new logo and the fancy wave. It says that Management Board, which is made up of Liberal Cabinet ministers, has given direction that departments need to come up with a plan for two-percent cuts to operation and maintenance. The letter is from the Deputy Minister of Finance.

Is the Premier suggesting or denying that Management Board has told departments to find these cuts?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I'm saying that we're going to govern based upon official documentation on this side of the House and they can keep on speculating on omnibus bills or some kind of cuts.

You know, honestly, when it comes down to it, Mr. Speaker, we do need to curtail the spending here as a government. You know, the trend from the previous government was to spend \$1.50 for every dollar earned and that has to be taken into consideration. Now what we're going to do is make sure that we do the best we can to find efficiencies without cutting programs and services. That's the goal. That's what we're going to keep to.

Again, I am completely happy with the changes we've done to my department — the Finance department. In previous years, it was more of a budgetary consideration. It's now a comprehensive financial department and it's working in a whole-of-government approach to make sure that we right-size this government and make sure that our programs and services are not affected because Yukoners have come to appreciate those programs and services.

Mr. Kent: As we've said, the document that was obtained by the CBC and tabled earlier today by my colleague for Lake Laberge clearly states the Liberals have given direction for departments to come up with plans to achieve two-percent cuts in their O&M budgets.

As I stated earlier, a two-percent cut to the Department of Education's O&M would be \$3.6 million. So at Education, O&M is services and programs for students as well as salaries and benefits for teachers and those who work in the department.

Will the Premier today then rule out any budget cuts to any of those areas in the Department of Education?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I appreciate the question from the member opposite. He may speculate on things to come — I will not. He may speculate on leaked documents and their government may table supposed Management Board documents, which is interesting for a former minister to do, but I am not going to comment on that document or on the accusations from the members opposite, but I will say again that we are looking at being more efficient. We spent good money with the Yukon Financial Advisory Panel to do so. The previous government spent more than they earned to the tune of \$1.50 for every dollar earned. We need to right-size this government and we need to curtail that spending and we need to make sure that we don't affect the programs and services that Yukoners have come to appreciate.

Question re: Financial Advisory Panel

Ms. Hanson: Since the Minister of Finance is on it, it has been a year since the release of the Yukon Financial Advisory Panel final report. A year later, Yukoners are naturally curious as to the outcome of this \$300,000 exercise. Nowhere in the report was it suggested to blindly cut every department's O&M budget by two percent, yet this is what the government seems intent on doing.

Various ministers have repeated many times, however, that at least one of the recommendations or observations made by the panel would be followed. For example, the Premier said — and I quote — that we are — not future — we are conducting a “comprehensive review” of Health and Social Services' programs and service delivery.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier tell Yukoners when this review started, what the key terms of reference are, who is conducting it, will the public have a say and when can we — Yukoners — and members of this Assembly expect it to be finished?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I'm glad the Leader of the Third Party came off of the lead, which is to speculate. I don't expect that from her party. I do expect it from the members of the Official Opposition. However, she does bring a good point to bear, which is talking about the Financial Advisory Panel. I will talk in specifics and I will let my colleague, the Minister of Health and Social Services, talk about the specifics of the Health and Social Services' review.

We were presented a number of options for the Yukon government to return to a healthy fiscal position and we will do so. This includes raising revenues through taxes or fees or cutting government spending. Those were some of the suggestions from the Yukon Financial Advisory Panel. The panel noted that fees and fines in Yukon were considerably lower than other jurisdictions in Canada and that the cost of providing services to Yukon was considerably higher than fees charged by the government. The Yukon government has conducted a preliminary review of those fees and fines and the sale of government goods and services.

So to talk specifically about what we're doing with the Yukon Financial Advisory Panel, there is another advance right there.

Public engagement with the Financial Advisory Panel — we heard that Yukoners were not supportive of raising additional revenues or new taxes. Fifty percent of the survey respondents identified a reduction of government spending as a preferred option to return ourselves to a healthy financial position. I can guess from the chagrin next door that this is not what the NDP would do.

Ms. Hanson: Rather selective hearing of what Yukon citizens said. However, the Yukon Financial Advisory Panel did make numerous observations about how the Yukon government currently manages the non-renewable resource sector.

The panel pointed out that Yukoners own the natural resources and that it is up to the Yukon government and First Nation governments to manage Yukon resources on behalf of all. However, as they pointed out, the current fees and royalties don't come close to covering the cost of the services provided to the industry. That is why the panel recommended that the Yukon government review resource sector policies — and I quote: “... with a particular emphasis on ensuring fair and efficient royalty rates, fee structures, permit and licensing costs, tax exemptions...”

When will the Premier engage with First Nation governments, industry and the public to ensure that Yukoners receive fair value for the non-renewable resources owned by all citizens of Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Silver: It is always a great opportunity to talk about success stories in First Nation relationships and mining with this territorial government. The minister signed an MOU with the First Nation governments and made sure that their

priorities were identified through that memorandum of understanding, and that is where we are going to focus our attention. One of the things that I am extremely proud of from this whole-of-government approach in the Yukon Liberal Party government is the signing of that *Chapter 23 Implementation Agreement* increasing the First Nation portion of shared resource royalties. That is an extremely important position when you take a look at Victoria Gold coming on line — hopefully within a year — which will be producing to the tune of 200,000 ounces of gold a year. That is where the money is. That is where the First Nations have definitely been happy to see the increased share of royalties.

I will let the minister speak in specifics about relationships with First Nations and mining, but we are very pleased with the mining MOU that was signed with the First Nation chiefs. We are very pleased with shared priorities being identified therein, and we are going to stick our attention to those shared priorities.

Ms. Hanson: The Financial Advisory Panel listened to Yukoners, other governments, businesses and financial experts. Some of the suggestions are already at work elsewhere — for instance, creating a payroll tax for fly-in/fly-out employees of large mining companies who earn income here but do not pay income tax to Yukon. This is but one example put forward by this independent expert panel. The most significant response to date by this government is silence, and now it appears that this government is ignoring the panel's recommendations to raise additional revenue and is simply applying a two-percent cut to all departments. Why did the Premier order a \$300,000 report by an independent panel if his plan all along was to simply blindly cut across all departments?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, we keep on giving answers and the members opposite are still saying that there are no answers. It is hard to respond to that, other than to say that we are taking a look at all of the options from the Financial Advisory Panel. We heard from Yukoners about some very specific major suggestions like the harmonized sales tax in Yukon, and Yukoners gave us a resounding “no”. We are focusing in on reviews. We are focusing in on a Health and Social Services review. That department has been growing to the tune of 14 percent per year and we need to curtail that.

But again, as we are doing this — in opposition to what we are hearing from the NDP — our focus is to make sure that the programs and services don't suffer when we do this. There are so many efficiencies that we can work on. I am very proud of our progressive agenda in this legislative session, for example, with the *Societies Act* to make sure that there is clear guidance and understanding of the rules and regulations within the *Societies Act*, so that individuals have a more efficient approach when they are dealing with their individual societies and that the paperwork that we're asking for as a government is less onerous.

These are the things we can do to increase efficiencies. We're working on a whole bunch of different initiatives, and we will see as we move forward how well this happens as far

as turning the ship around and getting us back onto financial footing that is necessary for Yukon businesses to succeed.

Question re: Affordable housing

Ms. White: Yukon's housing crisis is not new and it continues to be a problem for workers, young families, employers and for everyone in between. This summer the government got a taste of what other employers are facing when they had trouble recruiting staff for the Whistle Bend continuing care facility because of the lack of housing in Whitehorse. In an unprecedented move, the department literally asked its current employees to open their homes to new employees. It would be funny if it weren't for the thousands of people struggling to get by because of this ongoing housing issue. The government has known for years that it would need to hire hundreds of new staff for the Whistle Bend continuing care facility but somehow forgot that these people would need places to live.

If this government can't plan housing for their own employees, how can Yukoners trust that they can solve the ongoing housing crisis?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Thanks for the question. I would like to start by saying that we do acknowledge the pressures. The pressures have been there for many, many years with the planning of the Whistle Bend facility — recognizing the growth of the Yukon population and the pressures with respect to the growth in our government. Obviously it's evident that we would have compounding pressures, and we recognize that.

We are working with our stakeholder groups and we're working with our partners. As well, we are working with Canada as we look at one of our major partners on improving the delivery of affordable housing to Yukoners. We look at trying to balance the pressures by better aligning our funding initiatives with that of our stakeholder groups by creating the Housing First initiative project this past year, the partnership build initiative. We've contributed a significant amount of resources in this year's budget to better align with the pressures that we're seeing and we will continue to do that into the future.

Ms. White: If government employees are struggling to find a place to live in Whitehorse, imagine how people in the private sector are feeling. Around the same time this summer, the government put out a tender looking for a consultant to help it solve its staff housing problem. The tender documents asked to: "... gather information on potential solutions to overcoming the lack of available rental accommodation." It is good news that the lack of available rental housing is now on the government's radar, but you would think that with the 200 or so people on the wait-list at Yukon Housing, it would have given them a clue that this isn't a new problem. I'm not sure how that tender went, but here's a revolutionary idea: let's build affordable housing.

Mr. Speaker, when will this government actually do something about the housing crisis and build more affordable housing?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Let me start by saying that we are addressing the need for housing in a number of ways. We have released a number of lots recently in Whistle Bend. We're working with the construction of a 16-unit Housing First residence in downtown Whitehorse. We have worked at expanding funding programs through the Yukon Housing Corporation, and we will continue to work with our partners.

As a note with respect to affordable housing over the past two years we've invested and we're seeing an increase in new affordable housing units. We work with the Da Daghay Development Corporation and the Klondike Development Organization. We've worked with the victim of violence funding for Blood Ties Four Directions. We will look at affordable micro-units. In Whitehorse, we're looking at working and expanding our municipal matching grant. We've also looked at our funding programs for this last year, Mr. Speaker, which will result in an increase in housing, so we're seeing now an increase in total units of 363 for the last year.

Ms. White: With 195 people self-identifying as being homeless in the last point-in-time count, I'm not sure that one Housing First project is really going to solve the problem. Mr. Speaker, this project won't help employers retain staff who can't find an affordable place to stay — or any place to stay, let's be honest. It won't help minimum-wage workers who can't afford Yukon's housing market.

Affordable housing isn't a money-making business, Mr. Speaker. Most private developers will go for more lucrative options, like building condos — and why wouldn't they? We can't blame them. That's why the government needs to step in. Affordable housing won't build itself — or we wouldn't still be in the middle of this never-ending housing crisis.

Mr. Speaker, how many new affordable rental units will this government build in the remainder of their mandate?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thank the member opposite for the question. She talked about the need for our businesses that are growing here in the territory and where they can find homes. We look at housing as a spectrum here, and on that spectrum we're working at all ends.

I thank the minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation for talking about how to work at the affordable housing end and we're working today. The supplementary budget was just given its first reading today, and within that budget we're increasing the investment in land development so that we see more lots coming online by \$4 million.

I'll stand up later and we can talk further about what that will create in terms of new homes and houses — not just single-family homes, but duplexes, townhouses and multi-family homes that will be there for the spectrum of needs for Yukoners.

Question re: School bus service

Mr. Kent: Mr. Speaker, with the start of the school year, we've heard a number of complaints from parents about school buses — everything from overcrowding to no assigned seats for younger students and bad behaviour of some of the

students on these buses. The parents I've spoken with are working through these issues with departmental staff.

However, one issue that I asked about in the spring was about who actually knows which students are on which buses, particularly at the end of the day. The minister said at the time — and I quote: "The drivers are aware, the school is aware, and I know that there is close monitoring, particularly of younger children, to make sure that they are on the right bus at their school — because they are getting on a bus that they did not arrive on — or at a transfer that is required." Mr. Speaker, if for some reason a parent isn't sure which bus their child got on at the end of the day, who are they supposed to call? Would they call the department, do they call the school or do they call the busing contractor?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you for the question. I would hope that they could call any of those locations if an error had been made. I certainly am aware that the individual staff involved with busing at the Department of Education are extremely responsive to a parent's concerns.

Whether that concern comes through the school or through the busing company and contractor, clearly the most important thing in all of those situations is ensuring that students have safe and effective transportation to and from school and that they arrive where their parents need them to be in a safe and efficient fashion.

Mr. Kent: At a recent school council meeting that I attended, this very issue came up and it was determined that neither the school nor the contractor would know on a day-to-day basis which students got on which bus at the end of the day. Unfortunately, it appears the minister was incorrect in the spring when I asked her about this particular issue.

Given this information that I heard about, what actions will the minister take to make sure parents know who they can call if they're not sure which bus their child is on?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: This is unfortunately the very first time that I have heard of this particular situation. The member opposite did not contact my office. I think he will have to admit that when he does contact my office about anything, that we respond as immediately as possible and often within hours, if not a day or so, to give him the answer he needs.

Certainly, if it's about a busing situation and a young person here in the territory, we would want to take that as seriously as it should be, deal with it immediately and do so. I don't disagree, Mr. Speaker, that —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I'm sorry. I'm not sure who's talking, but I think I have the floor.

I'm not sure about the details of this particular situation. I would urge the member opposite to please advise my office or me personally of those so that we can determine that. I certainly agree that everyone should know where the children are on the bus — their families, their school and the bus company.

Question re: School structural safety

Mr. Hassard: Mr. Speaker, in a 2013 report, there were seismic deficiencies identified in eight Yukon schools. Those

schools were Kluane Lake School, the Nelnah Bessie John School, St. Elias Community School, Wood Street Centre, Christ the King Elementary School, Selkirk Elementary School, Takhini Elementary School and Whitehorse Elementary School.

The total cost estimates at the time to address these issues were just short of \$20 million. According to a report on the HPW website, short-term mitigations have been completed as well as planning for long-term mitigations.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Education update this House on where we're at in regard to seismic mitigations in these identified schools? Are there updated cost estimates, and when will the work be completed?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We do take the responsibility for our buildings and making sure they're safe for our students and our staff who use these buildings — the public.

As the member opposite has noted, we are in the process of evaluating and taking care of all of the work that needs to be done on our schools and public buildings in terms of seismic mitigation. We will roll out those — we want to ensure the safety of our students in our schools. We have been very clear about that up in the Ross River area with the Ross River School and we will continue to do that with all of our schools — making sure that they are safe for our students and doing the work that needs to be done in a timely manner.

Mr. Hassard: So it appears we're not going to get any updates today.

When the Liberals tabled their five-year capital concept this spring, only two of the eight schools identified in the seismic report were included — Christ the King Elementary and Kluane. We noted at the time that one of the Yukon's newer schools — Holy Family elementary — also made the cut as part of the government's school revitalization plan.

Can the minister tell Yukon parents if the remaining six schools that have seismic deficiencies will enter the queue for either renovation or replacement?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I have just answered the question for the member opposite. We have said that we are monitoring our buildings very closely in terms of the work that needs to be done — the seismic work. We do robust and comprehensive building analyses on the buildings and their condition. We will make sure that our buildings are safe and we will take care of the appropriate work to make sure those buildings remain safe in a responsible and methodical fashion.

Mr. Hassard: Another school that was left off of the five-year capital concept was the Ross River School. We know that the government received an engineering report that said the school needed to be relevelled last summer. However, they didn't take that recommendation, so they went and got a second opinion so that they wouldn't have to fix that school.

Can the minister tell us what the government's plans are for the Ross River School and can this government assure parents and teachers that this facility is safe?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I can assure parents, teachers and staff in that Ross River School facility that it remains safe. That school has been settling due to freezing and thawing of

permafrost under the school for many years. Over the years, a number of structural repairs and interventions have been made to that school. A recent building condition report was completed by engineers in February 2018 on the structure and confirms the school remains structurally stable and safe for occupancy. We are continuing to monitor, as recommended in the report.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of the House to call at this time the motion for which I gave notice earlier today regarding the appointment of a Chief Electoral Officer of Yukon.

Unanimous consent re calling Motion No. 312 for debate

Speaker: The Government House Leader, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, has requested the unanimous consent of the House to call at this time the motion for which she gave notice earlier today regarding the appointment of a Chief Electoral Officer of Yukon.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: There is unanimous consent.

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 312

Clerk: Motion No. 312, standing in the name of the Hon. Ms. McPhee.

Speaker: It is moved by the Government House Leader:

THAT the Yukon Legislative Assembly, pursuant to subsection 12(1) of the *Elections Act*, recommends that the Commissioner in Executive Council appoint Maxwell Harvey as the Chief Electoral Officer of Yukon, effective October 1, 2018, for a term as stipulated in subsection 12(2) of the *Elections Act*.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I have very little actually to add with respect to this. I think the motion says it all. The proper process, selection and evaluation assessment of candidates was followed. This matter comes to the House with respect to this motion recommending that Maxwell Harvey be appointed as the Chief Electoral Officer for the Yukon Territory.

Mr. Kent: I'll be brief in my remarks as well. I was fortunate enough to be selected as a member of the interview committee, as well as the Member for Porter Creek Centre and the Member for Takhini-Kopper King. I would also like to thank Helen Fitzsimmons for all of her work in helping us through that process. I would like to congratulate all of the candidates that put their name forward and, of course,

congratulations to Mr. Harvey as well. We wish him every success in his new role as Yukon's Chief Electoral Officer.

Ms. White: I would just like to echo my colleague in saying that it was almost pleasurable to go through the interview process, mostly due, in fact, to the work done by the director of the Legislative Assembly. So a big thank you to Helen Fitzsimmons for walking us through that process and again just for the good candid conversations we were able to have — the three of us who were on that committee. We're excited that Mr. Harvey has taken up the offer of the position. We thank the other candidates for their application, and I think that Elections Yukon is in good hands.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, we look forward to the vote.

Speaker: Is there any further debate on this motion?

Before putting the question, the Chair must draw members' attention to subsection 12(1) of the *Elections Act*. That subsection requires that the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly to the Commissioner in Executive Council respecting the appointment of a Chief Electoral Officer be supported by at least two-thirds of the members of the Assembly. The effect of subsection 12(1) is that, for the motion to be carried, at least 13 members must vote in favour.

Division

Speaker: In order to ensure that the requirements of subsection 12(1) of the *Elections Act* are met, the Chair will now call for a recorded division.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

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

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried by the required support of two-thirds of the Members of the Legislative Assembly and that the Legislative Assembly recommends to the Commissioner in Executive Council that

Maxwell Harvey be appointed Chief Electoral Officer of Yukon.

Motion No. 312 agreed to

Hon. Mr. Silver: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of the House to move at this time the motion for second reading of Bill No. 207, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19*, which received first reading earlier today.

Unanimous consent re second reading of Bill No. 207, *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19*

Speaker: The Hon. Premier has requested the unanimous consent of the House to move at this time the motion for second reading of Bill No. 207, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19*, which received first reading earlier today.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: There is unanimous consent.

GOVERNMENT BILLS

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

Clerk: Second reading, Bill No. 207, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Silver.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I move that Bill No. 207, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19*, be now read a second time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 207, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19*, be now read a second time.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you to my colleagues in this House for unanimous consent. I am pleased to rise this afternoon to outline the spending requests as part of the first supplementary estimates for 2018-19. In the spring, this government stressed the importance of supplementary estimates as an exercise in accountability. At that time, we said that these appropriations are an opportunity to further clarify Yukon's financial situation. They are also providing insight into the government's approach to fiscal planning. Outside of exceptional circumstances, supplementary estimates should not be very far off a government's intended annual spending plans. When they vary significantly, as they have in the past, it is clear that the territory has only a rough fiscal plan.

Our government is committed to ensuring that the government's finances and the government's actions are clear and understandable to Yukoners. This work begins with tabling a main estimate that accurately represents the spending that will occur during the year. As we know, unexpected events have happened and the timing of some of the projects can have an impact on the government's financial situation. This is the purpose of supplementary estimates. They are not, however, an opportunity to propose new spending on major projects. This has been our commitment in the past and we remain committed to this into the future.

This year, things are no different. The story that we are telling with the first supplementary estimate is the same as in the spring. The purpose of this spending is to capture largely unexpected expenses. With this approach, we will be improving Yukon's long-term financial position by avoiding unnecessary burden.

In 2017, we set out to establish a more strategic and sustainable approach to fiscal planning. We examined the true state of government finances and confirmed that the government has been spending beyond its means. While I am very pleased with the first steps that we have taken as a territory and as a government, there is more work to be done. The Yukon Financial Advisory Panel was the first step in this process and it led to several clear commitments from this government. The input the panel received and the insights that they provided to the government are informing our budget process and will for years to come. We announced several explicit undertakings in the spring, but I will restate them for the members.

One key focus for this coming year will remain a comprehensive review of Health and Social Services, as the panel suggested. We will also strive to increase both the efficiency and effectiveness of delivering services to Yukoners. We will look not just at what government does, but also how it does it. This government is also committed to getting out of the business of doing business by getting out of work that elsewhere is done by the private sector. This government heard loud and clear that the people of Yukon are not in favour of a sales tax. This government was clear and deliberate: There will be no sales tax in Yukon. While a sales tax is off the table, a key finding of the Financial Advisory Panel was that the own-source revenue in the territory is drastically lower than every other jurisdiction in the country. This may be an area where Yukon needs to catch up as we move forward.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to now spend a few minutes detailing changes to spending between the main estimate and the supplementary estimates. In its entirety, the 2018-19 first supplementary estimate contains \$13.4 million in additional spending. This is less than a one-percent increase over the main estimates. It is made up of \$4.8 million in operation and maintenance and \$8.6 million in capital. Revenues, which include recoveries of operation and maintenance and capital costs, have increased by \$2.5 million. The transfers from Canada remain unchanged. Forecast net financial assets have decreased by \$7.4 million since the main estimates were presented this spring. This change can be attributed to timing of special projects and an increase in capital expenditures related to tangible capital assets.

Mr. Speaker, I will remind members that Yukon must continue to invest in its infrastructure. In evaluating how best to return to a path of fiscal sustainability and returning to surplus by 2020-21, this government is looking further than the next budget cycle. Aging infrastructure presents a very real financial risk to provinces and to territories if left too long and can severely compromise our ability to offer those services that Yukoners require.

We weighed the options carefully and decided that the most pertinent course in 2018-19 was to take advantage of money that Ottawa has put on the table through its generous infrastructure funding programs. Mr. Speaker, we will not allow Yukon communities to fall into disrepair or pass the burden of maintenance on to future Yukoners and Yukon governments. We are reducing the infrastructure deficit that we inherited. This government will continue to invest in roads, bridges, hospitals and schools used by Yukoners and we will make use of federal funding, whenever available, to do so.

Diving into O&M spending, the single largest contributor to additional spending in this area can be attributed to fire suppression. In North America, we know climate change is not just a theory. It is the cracks in our highways; it is the shifts in the foundations of our buildings and a significant increase in fire suppression activity due to the lengthening and variability of the fire season. I think we are all aware of the challenges of this past fire season in western Canada. Not only are we empathetic to the damage caused by wildland fires in British Columbia, but Yukon faced its own challenges related to those fires. In 2018, these changing circumstances translated to \$4.4 million in additional wildfire costs, not only in southeast Yukon, but to our support of our neighbours as Yukon fulfilled its commitment to assist other jurisdictions under mutual aid agreements.

The other major increase is in the area of funding for the Yukon Hospital Corporation in the form of \$1.3 million for higher chemotherapy treatment costs, as well as \$1.6 million for union staff collective agreement funding, medical imaging and lab services.

Another important addition this year is the work being completed in cooperation with the Child and Youth Advocate. In March, this government made a commitment to complete an independent and impartial systematic review of the transitional support services program.

This \$100,000 commitment to the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate will support her work in undertaking an independent and impartial review of this program. This review was requested as part of our work to ensure that children and youth in our care are receiving the best care and support possible that meets their needs.

In terms of additional funding that contributes to Yukon's thriving economy, this government saw increased uptake of the Yukon film development fund. This additional \$956,000 is a key factor in a company's decision to shoot in the Yukon and to hire and to train Yukoners for field production. These projects significantly impact the growth of the Yukon film and media sector and the local economy.

This government has also made its commitments to reconciliation a priority. We remain committed to work together with our First Nation and Inuvialuit partners to foster reconciliation. Our work with the Inuvialuit to implement their final agreement in Yukon includes management of Herschel Island Territorial Park, as well as collaborative management of fish, wildlife and habitat on the North Slope. A \$408,000 increase in this agreement is made up of \$242,000

in funding received late in 2017-18, for which projects could not be completed prior to year-end and a further \$166,000 which forms the annual increases to this agreement.

Also in the area of sustainability, I am pleased to say that Energy, Mines and Resources has seen a considerable uptake in its energy rebate program. 2018 marks a significant year of investment for the Government of Yukon in energy-efficiency rebates in our territory. Our energy rebate programs are very popular and assist businesses and homeowners to make investments in buildings and heating systems to reduce energy consumption in Yukon and to convert to renewable forms of energy. This additional interest has led to an \$800,000 increase over the main estimates.

In addition, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources has identified some non-compliance at the Wolverine mine site. To ensure that conditions do not deteriorate, the department has begun remediation work in the amount of \$6.5 million and will use the security posted to fund the work.

Mr. Speaker, this government also has two noteworthy decreases in operation and maintenance spending. The first involves a \$17.8-million decrease for Assessment and Abandoned Mines as the federal government takes over the Faro mine work plan. As the regulator and members of the oversight committee, the Yukon government will continue to ensure that the Faro mine site meets existing standards necessary to protect the environment and ensure human safety.

Discussions are ongoing between the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon and affected First Nations on the management of the Faro mine remediation project. We are looking forward to seeing businesses and employment opportunities for Yukon First Nations and local residents related to implementing these projects.

The other decrease of note is \$950,000 for the Kluane First Nation windmill project. This project progressed more slowly than anticipated, but definitely will continue.

There are also a few notable changes to capital spending. Of the \$8.6 million in additional capital spending, the most significant piece of the pie is related to land development at \$4 million.

We all know that housing stock is becoming increasingly tight in the Yukon. These funds are largely being dispersed to address demands through the completion of phase 3 of the Whistle Bend project, continuation of phase 4 and initial work of phases 5 and 6. For context, phases 3 and 4 are expected to release over 200 lots in 2019 and phase 5 generating over 160 lots in 2020.

The other major expense is a real allocation of \$3.8 million in funding not spent from 2017-18 for the completion of the Whistle Bend continuing care facility, which recently opened on budget.

All other changes to capital spending are related to the purchase of two new fire trucks by Community Services or to address lapses in funds from the previous year being spent this year.

We also have some changes to recoveries included in the first supplementary estimates. Of additional note is a \$6.2-million reduction in operation and maintenance recoveries. Included in these changes is a \$14.4-million reduction as part of the changes in governance related to the Faro mine, once again. This is offset by a recovery for the Wolverine remediation work that I mentioned earlier.

I would like to continue my summary by speaking to some increases in revenue. As many prospective homeowners know, we are in an increasing interest rate environment. The Government of Yukon has benefitted positively by the latest interest rate increases to the form of \$118,000 in additional revenue on government investments.

The largest area of growth, however, is in land sales. As a result of higher than anticipated demand for lots, we have seen an \$8.6-million increase in revenue. This is largely as a result of the successful lottery held earlier this year and goes hand in hand with the additional capital spending I mentioned earlier in order to continue to meet this demand.

I would like to conclude my remarks by restating the purpose of supplementary estimates. While we may be used to conveying any new and unexpected changes to the main estimates, it will be always in our aim to make realistic assessments of our annual spending as the year starts. We will always work to account for any expenses we know will occur based upon the best possible information at the time.

Today, our government presents a first supplementary estimate that does not stray far from the 2018-19 main estimates. This is an important step toward long-term fiscal sustainability, but there is still a lot of work to do — work that I am excited to see progress in the next coming months and years ahead. We look forward to working with all members and Yukoners to take the necessary steps to create a sustainable and prosperous path for the territory.

I invite members to treat Committee of the Whole as an opportunity to request further detail on any areas included in the supplementary estimates, and I look forward to comments from my colleagues.

Mr. Cathers: I'm pleased to rise here this afternoon as the Official Opposition Finance critic. I will be making most of my remarks in that context, though I would also like, at this point, to thank my constituents in my riding of Lake Laberge for the continued opportunity to work with them and to serve as their MLA.

I would like to thank as well the Leader of the Official Opposition for the continued opportunity to serve as the Finance critic, as well as all of my caucus colleagues and our staff for their continued support and the work that each of them do each and every day.

Mr. Speaker, in talking to Yukoners over the past several months, it's clear that Yukoners are becoming increasingly upset with this Liberal government's lack of action on important issues. This is the Liberal government that is full of platitudes but weak on substance. There have been plenty of photo opportunities and platitudes but we see a complete lack of vision. In fact, the single-most comment I hear from

ordinary Yukoners about this Premier and the Liberal government is this: What have they actually done?

The Premier is two years into his mandate. The sand is slipping out of the Liberal hourglass fast. They have largely squandered 40 percent of their mandate or as much as half if the election is called before year mark. What have they actually done? That is what Yukoners are asking.

Yukoners want their government to take issues that matter to them seriously. Photo opportunities and platitudes are very nice, but they don't actually fix any problems. A few of the issues ordinary Yukoners care about and that they have brought to my attention include: the hospital bed pressure crisis; the delay in opening the Whistle Bend continuing care beds; growing wait times for procedures, including cataract surgery; issues around support for our EMS volunteers in rural Yukon; highway safety; a desire to see expanded cell service; a desire to see the government move forward with the review of medical travel and to see increases in that area; concerns about our education system; land availability; housing; availability of land; the cost of living; and, of course, the economy — all issues that are top of mind for Yukon citizens.

I would like to note in remarking about Whistle Bend Place that I want to thank and congratulate all the staff of contractors who have worked on it for doing a great job on construction of this facility. We're certainly very pleased to see this facility constructed as well as seeing the Premier and government have a change of heart on this facility and, in fact, recognizing now the need for it.

What I am concerned about is we have yet to see a timeline from the government on the speed with which that facility will be filled and we continue to hear from Yukoners who are concerned about the number of citizens who are in Whitehorse General Hospital awaiting a bed in the continuing care facility as well as those who are on the wait-list.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, the Liberal government appears to be out of touch with ordinary Yukoners and their priorities. The issues that seem important to them are not the ones we hear about from ordinary Yukoners. The Premier indeed talks today about raising fees and fines and potential cuts to departments, but Mr. Speaker, there are decisions which have been made by this government which they had a choice not to make. It reflects their spending priorities, but the examples that I am about to list do not reflect the priorities that we hear from ordinary Yukoners.

A few of these examples — one minister was able to find \$144,000 to renovate office space for a new judge, but the same minister in a different portfolio of hers did not see fit to ensure that Golden Horn Elementary School received a portable they need or that Hidden Valley School received a portable they had asked for.

As one of my colleagues brought forward in Question Period today, there are a number of other schools within the Whitehorse area that are facing significant pressures.

Despite the Premier's repeated claims that the government is committed to getting out of the business of doing business, they proceeded with cannabis legalization using a model that actually grows the size of government and

insisted on spending \$3 million on purchasing cannabis inventory for the first four months of operation alone, as well as setting up a public retail store. We proposed an alternative similar to what the Province of Saskatchewan is doing, which leaves the private sector taking the risks and spending private sector dollars instead of public dollars on retail, but the government refused to listen and insisted on growing the size of government.

In the first year of the Liberal mandate, by the Premier's admission, the Liberal government added to the size of the government by some 240 new full-time equivalent employee positions, virtually none of which were related to continuing care. I would point out, the reason for the reference to continuing care is that tends to be the Finance minister's favourite area to point to as an excuse for the growth of government.

Despite the attempts to blame red ink and spending down the surplus on the O&M costs of Whistle Bend Place, it's now almost halfway through the mandate that Whistle Bend Place is only about to get its first residents. During the first year and the second year of the Liberal mandate, over 480 new full-time equivalent positions were added to the Yukon government, by the Premier's own admission, during debates in this House as reflected in Hansard. That is an increase of approximately 10.4 percent to the size of government in just two years since the Liberals took office. So again, as we see with the Premier's ministerial statement earlier today in referring to what's in the interim fiscal and economic outdate and the rhetoric which has been used around the state of the government's finances when they took office, upon examination of the details and the facts, the Liberal talking points fall apart.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to refer to another few areas that just show or demonstrate some of the areas where government's spending choices — the Liberal government's spending choices — were not in line with what we hear from Yukoners and are areas where, had they chosen to do so, they could have saved a significant amount of money. We've seen the government embark on the development of a new logo and new website at the cost of around half a million dollars. We've also heard that some of the costs that have been seen since that time do not appear to have been reflected in the government's initial statements about what the bill would be. Those include seeing a new letterhead, new signage, new nametags for employees, new signage on vehicles and so on. So we look forward to hearing what the total bill is, but we use the number they have of half a million dollars for the moment.

We see as well the \$300,000 that they spent on the Financial Advisory Panel report. I would agree with the Leader of the Third Party that the government seems to be ignoring it and set on taking their own approach. We've seen \$120,000 spent spraying water in the air, hoping for ice at Dawson City. We've seen \$105,000 spent by Cabinet upon taking office on personal electronic devices that were not due for replacement, and we've seen \$40,000 on Cabinet office

renovations, including the new glass wall that fortified, one might say, the Cabinet office.

Mr. Speaker, if you add up those areas, those few examples alone add up to an excess of \$1.2 million. We could go through — and will go through — other examples in the future. The point I am making is this: There have been choices made by this Liberal government that we believe are wasteful or, at the very least, non-priority items. Added up, they add up to a substantial amount of money. The government could choose to sharpen the pencil in those areas rather than looking at blanket cuts across departments.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, CBC today reported another revelation from a whistle-blower with an internal memo from the Department of Finance sent by the Deputy Minister of Finance to all deputy ministers, asking departments to find two-percent cuts. The Premier has also repeatedly touted his plan to have a health care review to make cuts in the area of health. The current O&M budget for Health and Social Services is \$403.796 million. A two-percent cut is over \$8 million. We are left with the question: Are the Premier and this Liberal government planning to cut funding for Health and Social Services by over \$8 million? If so, what area do they plan to make those cuts in? If not, why did a letter from the top official in the Premier's own department direct all departments, including Health and Social Services, to look for ways to cut their budget by two percent?

There have been times in the past when Health and Social Services has been given a different target than other departments in recognition of the fact of the growth of health care needs of our aging population and the importance of investing in our health care needs. Those were in years when we were actually increasing the funding across the board in all departments.

Again, if the Premier is not looking at cutting health care by two percent, why did this memo direct all departments, including Health and Social Services, to look for ways to cut their budget by two percent? Meanwhile, I have to point out that they do have the brand new logo on this memo that was sent to departments, demonstrating — at the top of the page — one area where the Liberal Cabinet themselves could have chosen to save money.

How are medical wait times going to improve if \$8 million is cut from health funding? How will people on the wait-list for continuing care beds get the care that they need if the budget for health is cut by two percent? How, when health care costs right across the country are the number one cost pressure in provincial and territorial budgets, does the Premier labour under the illusion that this government can cut health care by two percent without seeing dire consequences for Yukoners? What does the Premier or the Minister of Health and Social Services have to say to people who are currently waiting two years for cataract surgery, or to my constituent who needs a spot in continuing care and still cannot even get an estimate of when he will be off the wait-list and receive the care that he needs? It is time for this Liberal government to start treating the issues that matter to Yukoners seriously.

Ordinary Yukoners do, and they expect their government to do that as well.

The Premier's lack of leadership is causing serious problems, and sending in the plumbers to silence government employees is not a solution. Whistle-blowers appear to be coming forward in unprecedented numbers and the reason they are is because there are serious problems. Silencing them does not fix the problems. The Premier's reaction to a leak might be to call in the plumbers but that will not fix the problem.

A few areas I would like to touch on before wrapping up my comments, in the interest of expediting debate — again, as my colleague, the Member for Watson Lake, pointed out earlier today, Yukoners are very interested in seeing progress on medical travel. They want to see increased coverage that addresses the current needs of Yukon citizens, because of course, as members know, the last significant changes and increases to this program were made about a decade ago when I was Health and Social Services minister at the time, and there is a need for an update in this area.

Our motion, as proposed by my colleague, the Member for Watson Lake, was supported in this House in the spring, which we appreciate, but we have not seen any signs of action on it.

The Financial Advisory Panel, in their report, twice recommended that government do budgets on a consolidated basis to show a more accurate picture of government's finances and their report — again, the government's own panel — noted that the consolidated financial picture shows a healthier picture than the government's budget would lead one to believe, and they said, and I agree, that it represents a more accurate picture of the government's finances. Their report, and the numbers shown in it, in fact, directly contradict the Liberal government's repeated claims about a dollar of revenue and a dollar and a half worth of spending and show it to be absolute poppycock.

Mr. Speaker, I would note as well that the government has their much-touted five year capital plan. We've seen a lack of detail; we've referred to it and characterized it as better being referred to as a five-year capital concept and, in fact, Yukon contractors are becoming increasingly frustrated by the lack of action in the government fulfilling the commitments that they made.

Mr. Speaker, in the interest of expediting debate and dealing with our priority, which is getting to asking detailed questions on the finances, I will leave my remarks there for the moment but, as I have noted in the past — and I will not reiterate all of them this Sitting, but they stand in Hansard for the record — there are a number of areas we have identified where government could have chosen money but where this Liberal government has chosen not to save money. There are a number of areas where their spending has been wasteful and appears to respect their personal priorities or their personal pet projects rather than the priorities of Yukon citizens, and we will continue to call the government out on those areas and hold them accountable on behalf of Yukon citizens.

Mr. Gallina: I'm pleased to rise to speak to the first supplementary estimates of this year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the constituents of Porter Creek Centre for their time this summer in helping me further understand what's important to them and to their families. The conversations we have are invaluable and help shape the priorities our caucus brings forward through legislation, main estimates and, in this case, supplementary estimates. Thank you to everyone who attended our all-caucus barbecue at Shipyard's Park on July 10, to everyone who joined my family and me at my constituent barbecue in Whistle Bend on July 14 and to the many people who met my colleagues throughout the summer months as they hosted constituent and community events. It's encouraging to connect with so many Yukoners and constituents who truly want the best for the people of this territory.

Mr. Speaker, as I prepared and researched for this Fall Sitting and reflected on the interactions I was fortunate enough to have with people, I was reminded how the key priorities of this government align with the priorities of Yukoners. They want us to continue to prioritize a people-centred approach to wellness that helps Yukoners thrive. They have come to see the value that's created through strong government-to-government relationships with First Nations as reconciliation is fostered. They know that a diverse, growing economy is providing good jobs for Yukoners in an environmentally responsible way, and they know that strategic investments are building healthy, vibrant and sustainable communities.

Mr. Speaker, Whistle Bend Place and the programming and services being provided to Yukoners aligns directly with our people-centred approach to wellness that helps Yukoners thrive. This facility is the largest capital project in Yukon's history. It is an honour to have this facility in the riding of Porter Creek Centre and I am happy to report that it was completed on time and on budget.

It is encouraging to know that all eligible Yukoners on the wait-list for long-term care will be accommodated once Whistle Bend is ready to receive residents later this month. Whistle Bend Place requires approximately 250 staff for a full staff complement. Seventy percent of the staff needed have been hired, with approximately 140 staff being hired locally, including transfers from other facilities.

On September 12, 2018, I joined more than 1,000 Yukoners who attended a very successful grand opening of Whistle Bend Place. Inside the facility, we saw many spaces for a variety of activities and specialty programming. This includes a large multi-purpose room for special events and larger gatherings, a nicely appointed woodworking shop, arts and crafts studios, indoor and outdoor gardening areas and a quiet room for devotion and personal reflection.

There are also a number of small and large activity rooms that can be used for many special interests. Family rooms with kitchen appliances can be used for personal social gatherings or family dinners, as well as for a variety of programs, such as resident dining and breakfast clubs. There is also a central

therapeutic gym, as well as smaller therapy rooms and neighbourhoods on each storey.

Of particular interest to people I spoke with at the open house was the kitchen set up to receive and prepare wild game and the First Nation healing lodge with its central fire pit and its connection to the water with a running fountain.

More than 1,200 people contributed to the design and construction of this facility and, as the MLA for the riding of Porter Creek Centre, I want to thank them and have them know their contributions have created a tremendous Yukon asset that will serve Yukoners for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, this government has taken great strides in addressing strong government-to-government relations with First Nations to foster reconciliation.

Again, as I meet with constituents and discuss ways in which people of this territory can thrive and be prosperous, it is evident — and I am reminded daily — that collaboration, partnerships and positive working relationships between the Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations are vital to fostering reconciliation and the overall success of the territory on many, many levels.

Our action, as a government, to this priority is evident in the revitalization of the Yukon Forums. The Yukon Forums are now regular meetings of the political leaders of the Government of Yukon, Yukon First Nations and the Council of Yukon First Nations. The Yukon Forum was created in the spirit of reconciliation to develop strong government-to-government relations and collaborate on priorities shared by the Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations.

The Yukon Forum approved the joint action plan last September and, since then, we have made significant progress on a number of initiatives. We overcame a long-standing issue by signing an agreement that clarifies how resource royalties will be shared under chapter 23 of final agreements.

Significant federal child welfare funding is now flowing directly to Yukon First Nations rather than through the Yukon government, and a trilateral table has been established to discuss child welfare issues with the federal government.

Intergovernmental workshops have been held on child welfare, land-based healing, justice and land use planning. These workshops will help inform the improvements we can make together as governments.

Again, it's about understanding the priorities of Yukoners and being able to translate those priorities into action. This is evident in the progress of this government, which I have outlined above. These priorities are reflected in the legislation we'll be bringing forward for debate this fall, as well as in the supplementary estimates on the floor for debate today.

As we can see in these supplementary estimates, there has been little change since the 2018 budget was released in April. The forecast is still for small deficits in 2018-19 and in 2019-20 before a return to projected surplus in 2020-21. This government is very serious about being diligent in our forecasts and tabling main estimates that are an accurate reflection of the projected revenues and expenses that will occur during that year.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the upfront work this caucus has done and the work of the administration because, for the second year in a row, we have tabled fewer and smaller supplementary estimates. Consistent with 2017-18, the budget tabled in April 2018 took a more comprehensive view of Yukon's finances and information on government's planned capital investments over the next five years. The long-term capital plan allows Yukon government to address planning, forecasting and timing of procurement for development and maintenance contractors.

This approach attempts to limit funding requests made through supplementary budget exercises. Consequently, the 2018-19 *Supplementary Estimates No. 1* represents an increase of less than one percent of the main estimates. When we look at this change of \$319,000, or one percent in the accumulated surplus end of year and compare that to previous years in the same category, we see a trend in how the previous government forecasted its spending.

For the 2014-15 main estimates, there was an increase of \$3,024,000 — or 23 percent — added to the accumulated surplus end of year in the first supplementary estimates of that year. For the 2013-14 main estimates, there was an increase of \$3,944,000 — or 31 percent — added to the accumulated surplus end of year in the first supplementary estimates of that year.

I make this point to help Yukoners understand how this government is committed to the necessary work to accurately forecast the main estimates and making allowances in the supplementary estimates only for those unexpected and unforeseen circumstances. This is concrete evidence that this government takes the job of managing the territory's finances very seriously.

In closing, I would like to once again thank the constituents of Porter Creek Centre for allowing me to represent them here in the Legislative Assembly and for their time to help me understand what is important to them and to their families. I will continue to work hard for Yukoners and keep them apprised of the progress we're making as a government.

Ms. Hanson: My comments this afternoon with respect to the *Supplementary Estimates No. 1* will be brief. Just on reflecting on comments made by my colleague from across the way on the government side, I am reminded yet again of the importance of having the opportunity to move the discussion of — as I think the Minister of Finance talked about — the importance of ensuring the efficiency and the effectiveness of financial resources that are voted in this Legislative Assembly.

I'm reminded again of the importance of moving that conversation to a conversation that is the non-partisan venue of public accounts or a finance committee, a process that we in this Legislative Assembly are moving toward — at glacial speed, I would suggest, but we're moving toward it.

It's easy enough for politicians to get into great rhetoric about whether we did or did not campaign on this or whether this politically is something that is important, but the fact of

the matter is that last spring we voted on main estimates. We voted on and agreed to, with the majority of this Legislative Assembly, a budget that was to be disbursed among departments and agencies and then spent. What happens when we come into this Legislative Assembly and we try to debate that — then we get into — as opposed to — was that money spent? Equally important is that, if it was not spent, why not? It has nothing to do with us in this room or the politics in this room. It has everything to do with how effectively our departments and agencies are managed.

It's about the accountability, then, of the 5,000 public servants who work on behalf of Yukoners to deliver, not on the political commitments, but to deliver on the commitments made in this Legislative Assembly to take and steward the resources that are given to them.

It's equally important — when we talk about this fact that this supplementary budget is relatively minor in the scheme of things — to focus on those areas where we're not spending. That kind of debate and discussion is not going to happen very effectively or efficiently — or, quite frankly, very intelligently — in this Legislative Assembly because we don't, as politicians — and I will say, with great respect, that even the ministers don't have that level of detail. It's the officials we charge to carry out that responsibility on our behalf who do.

I will just use one example. In the area of Energy, Mines and Resources, for example, there is a story to the fact that, with respect to assessment of abandoned mines, there are changes that reflect a revised work plan approved by Canada. There is a story to the change in the type 2 funding agreements with Canada that sees \$17,815,000 less being spent under the direction of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources — the deputy minister responsible for that department and the officials there. It is a story that would be most effectively told and understood — and perhaps lessons learned carried forward by all members of this Legislative Assembly — if that story, in my opinion, was being told and shared in the context of the finance committee of Public Accounts. Because there are lessons to be learned when, since 2002-03, Canadian citizens have transferred to this territory over \$400 million for a project that was initially set up to be managed by Yukon government, an oversight committee of Yukon First Nations and territory by an independent entity — the activities managed by an independent entity — and, 15 years and \$400 million later, the federal government is now resuming responsibility.

That may be a story that the Auditor General in the future may look at, but I would think that, from an operational point of view, all of us have a keen interest in knowing what we can learn as we look at the other six type 2 sites. What can we learn as we go forward with respect to the kinds of issues that arise, for example, with Wolverine — with Ketza, which is a split federal and territorial responsibility?

I know that goes beyond the scope of a normal comment or discussion around supplementary estimates, but my two colleagues from across the way will be aware that some of us had the opportunity — I look and I'm saying this with sincerity to my colleagues from the Official Opposition. I do

encourage us all, as Members of the Legislative Assembly, to begin to think about making that transition to a fully accountable Legislature where we actually do understand our roles with respect to the finances of government. It's not about politics; it's about getting the best value for the money that Yukon citizens and Canadian citizens, quite frankly, are investing in this territory. That means sometimes taking it out of here and getting into the nitty-gritty of each department and each agency in a non-political but non-partisan way. That's what Public Accounts is about, and we're not quite there yet.

We'll have to continue to have hope on that and we will be coming back. We will be, as the New Democratic Party caucus, asking a number of questions on specific aspects of departments because, as I said in my comment, it's not just more money but sometimes it's the story behind "why not the expenditures" that is equally revealing about management and management decisions.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: First of all, I would just like to begin by thanking all MLAs for allowing us to proceed with the debate on second reading today on the supplementary budget. I think it's terrific that we can make better use of this time.

Just sort of following on the heels of the comments made by the Leader of the Third Party with a notion about how we work to try to get information more available for all Yukoners and members of the Legislature to try to remove the partisan nature or the politics out of the notion of a debate around our budgets in order to create better effectiveness of our spending and accountability. I think those are excellent words.

I also note the comments regarding the lack of spending. It is tougher to follow that stuff always. I think it is important that all of us as legislators seek to find that information.

Mr. Speaker, just as it's my first moment to stand to debate here in this session — as we were coming back to the Legislature, I started to put on my dress shoes again and I tripped going up the stairs because I'm just not used to wearing them, so it's always a moment to transition as we come back into this House.

I am standing to speak on this budget for a couple of reasons, predominantly because the Department of Community Services is seeking some supplementary funds on both the O&M budget and the capital budget. I will speak about each of those individually. Let me also mention, though, that notion of where we are not spending money. Just as we try to track things, I can say to this Legislature that, as we approach legalization of cannabis in a couple of weeks' time, that spending is on track. We are ready to introduce legalized cannabis here and will transition very quickly to support the private sector in retail, and we are looking forward to that.

Also, today we had the *Designated Materials Regulation* come into effect. I know that everyone in this House has followed this with interest over the past five years, I think — but over some time. Those programs are doing well and the funding for them is on track.

Let me turn to those areas where we are seeking some supplementary funds. First, let me start with the O&M budget,

and that is with respect to wildland fire. We are seeking an additional \$4.5 million. This wildland fire season, the Yukon experienced 66 wildfires that burned approximately 85,000 hectares of forest. This has been a typical summer in recent years. I say "in recent years" because, as we have been warming in the Yukon and in neighbouring NWT and Alaska, what has been happening is that our fire regime is increasing. Even though it is typical for recent years, it is not typical over the long term and it is an increase. Therefore, we did spend more money, although I want to say that you always hope that it will be a small fire season and that there won't be any damage or risk to our communities — however, it is getting more challenging. The risk continues to increase. We just met last week with the ministers of infrastructure from across the country to talk about such things as the disaster mitigation and adaptation fund. We discussed where, across all jurisdictions of the country, there are risks that we really need to address, and wildland fire is one of the ones that we have to deal with here.

When the fires hit in British Columbia, especially in the northern half of the province, and as our nights were starting to cool and the risk was starting to diminish somewhat here in the territory and resources began to free up — on the day that the fire hit in Telegraph Creek, I got on the phone with my colleague from British Columbia — the parliamentary secretary, Ms. Jennifer Rice — and we talked about how, as Yukoners, we would try to support our neighbours. We had already helped with launching some water bombers from Watson Lake, and that community got up to speed and support right away. I thank the Member for Watson Lake — or I thank the citizens of Watson Lake, and I pass that through her. When we talked to our counterparts in British Columbia, they listed four key things that they needed. We responded right away that we would be able to supply all of those.

That has nothing to do, ultimately, with the supplementary budget because we have an agreement of all jurisdictions across Canada. I apologize — I know the acronym — it is CIFFC. I think it is the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre. I will get it for Hansard. That agreement will allow us to send that support where the host jurisdiction will cover the costs, but you know when you need to get capacity and address those fires in a timely manner, it is important that we get those resources right away, and we were able to do so.

I'm thankful that we didn't have the same kind of disasters here in the Yukon, but the risks are always there.

What I really want to say is thank you to our wildland firefighters, whether they be members of our own Yukon government protective services team or one of the many First Nation crews who contract to do the work over the summer. They did a stand-up job, as always. It is very hard for those crews. I know when the fire hit along Windy Arm, there was a lot of smoke and concern and citizens needed to be informed about the level of risk. It is hard when you see those fires. We need them to burn in our wilderness zones so that the risk doesn't continue to increase, but it's difficult to watch. I know in that instance there was a lot of concern raised and each

year, as we go forward, we recognize that we'll need to take some more proactive measures in order to address the risk — more to come on that in time, Mr. Speaker.

In this supplementary budget, what we are looking for is to cover the additional costs that were incurred through a new normal of a higher level fire season than we have had over past decades.

The second aspect where I am coming forward to speak today is on the capital side of the budget and it is with respect to lot development and capital investment that we are putting into that lot development. There are two pieces within it. Predominantly, it is investment in Whistle Bend as a subdivision. I said today during Question Period — I mentioned it in one response — that there is an additional \$4 million that we are seeking in the supplementary budget to continue to ramp up the development of Whistle Bend. That will lead us to releasing 132 single family lots, 54 duplex and townhouse lots and 19 multi-family lots, as well as 35 commercial lots next year. We're on track for additional increases in 2020 and the whole notion there is to make sure that we have a two-year supply of lots available in Whitehorse.

At the same time, there is money that is being moved and it is not an increase to the budget overall, but what we are doing is shifting rural land development from Energy, Mines and Resources, where it had gone several years ago, to bring it in line with Community Services' lot development and bring those two teams together.

We do hope to get efficiencies out of that, Mr. Speaker. I believe it's around \$1.7 million. Again, that's money in and out, but for transparency purposes, we discuss it here. The idea is that when we get those two units working together we hope to get some efficiencies and that those efficiencies can result in productivity gains around lot development or in reduced costs, or both, and so we see it as a good move.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, let me address some of the comments that I heard from the Finance critic, the member for Lake Laberge, and just a few things that I wanted to discuss. I think that, first of all, he criticized that we were discussing the \$1.50 spent for every new dollar in revenue and was talking about that as not being correct information; however, my recollection is that it was the Financial Advisory Panel that actually laid that out for us and was borne out by the department as well, and so the very panel that he's suggesting we should listen to more is the group that is bringing that information forward.

I do agree that the Whistle Bend continuing care facility is an important facility; I think we all agree on that here in the Legislature; however, our concern was that there had been no consultation with Yukoners about where it should be located. Our concern was that if we're going to develop a plan, we would need to talk about it in the broader sense of aging in place, so it's good that we're getting the Whistle Bend continuing care facility. I heard him criticize that it was overbudget and not on time and I actually thought that it is on budget and on time, and I look forward to hearing from the Minister of Health and Social Services with that information.

There was some discussion around growing the public service. Well, that is one of the places where we naturally need to grow the public service — of course we need to staff it. So that is a growth — I'll acknowledge that — and yes, it is under our watch and yes, it is the right thing to do. The thing that seemed like the wrong thing to do, for me, was, Mr. Speaker, was when we first landed and saw that there were, I think, under the Department of Health and Social Services, but also under the Department of Education, new hires which hadn't been brought through this Legislature. Those are concerns to me. How do we create transparency and accountability if there is spending that doesn't pass through this Legislature? So I do think it's good to sharpen our pencils and I do think it's good to watch for where can create efficiencies. I do think, as I heard the Premier during Question Period say today, that we do need to look for ways to make sure that each of our departments is working to try to control the increase in spending while maintaining the level of service that we have for Yukoners. That is exactly what he has said to me and said to all of us as ministers and that is what we will do, working with our departments. We will continue to look for some of those ways.

Mr. Speaker, overall I'm happy that we're able to bring forward this budget close to where we had originally projected it, and a couple of the larger ticket items are within my department, so I will speak more about this, I'm sure, during Committee of the Whole where we can respond to questions regarding those changes to the Community Services budget, both in terms of operation and maintenance and the capital budget.

Mr. Kent: I'm going to be brief in my remarks at second reading. First of all, I would like to thank Finance officials, not only in the Department of Finance but throughout all departments in government, for their work in preparing the supplementary estimates that are before us here today. They do a tremendous job and we certainly appreciate that work that they put in on a day-to-day basis on behalf of Yukoners.

I guess my remarks will follow up along the same themes from what the Leader of the Third Party, the Member for Whitehorse Centre, spoke about and that's about the process for us to ask and get questions answered on the record with respect to departments that either aren't seeking an increase or have a decrease. It's my understanding that those departments will not be called for debate with ministers during Committee of the Whole, so at this morning's briefing with officials from Energy, Mines and Resources — and, again, I thank all those officials who participated in that as well as provided briefings last Thursday and Friday on the supplementary estimates in the departments that will be called — but my remarks to those officials this morning is that we will have to take up questions that we have about budgetary line items or other aspects for those departments that we don't anticipate being called during general debate with the Premier.

For instance, my critic responsibilities are Education and a portion of Energy, Mines and Resources. Education isn't

seeking any funds in this supplementary and Energy, Mines and Resources is looking at a reduction. I anticipate that neither of those will be called for debate during Committee, so any questions that I have with respect to those departments I will take up with the Premier, I guess, during general debate, unless other arrangements are made at House Leaders' meetings, but it has always been — my understanding is that those departments that aren't seeking additional funds or that have a reduction aren't called for debate.

I did mention again to officials this morning to pass that on to the minister and the Premier, that many of the questions that we have — I'm just going through them and I apologize, I don't have the actual documents, I'm working off of my phone. In some of the bigger departments, such as Education and Energy, Mines and Resources as I mentioned, we see Finance and French Language Services — Highways and Public Works is obviously a department that we have a number of questions about with respect to how projects were procured this summer and any dollars that may have been moved around within those budget line items to accomplish some of that work. Tourism and Culture — obviously with the tourism strategy, we would certainly like to question the minister with officials present on that, but again, given the process that we'll have to undertake, we don't anticipate that department being called with officials present. Yukon Housing Corporation and the others — I won't mention all of them — are the big ones where we will certainly have some questions, again recognizing that unless there is some other way to do it, we'll take those questions up with the Premier during general debate on this particular bill.

With that, that's the only thing that I wanted to say on behalf of myself and colleagues who are critics for those departments that may or may not be called. I just wanted to again thank officials for their work, and we look forward to debating this bill through Committee and into third reading during this fall session. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Hutton: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to acknowledge that today we're back together on the traditional territory of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.

As we discuss the first supplementary estimates this year, I wanted to take some time to discuss the great work that our wildland fire team has been doing this year. Climate change is happening and we're witnessing it first-hand here in Yukon. You can see it all around us. One of the effects of the changing climate is more forest fires as well as more intense forest fires. This summer was no exception.

Fires are still burning across the territory from Mayo Lake to Isaac Creek to the Robert Campbell Highway, and climate change knows no borders. Our neighbours to the south in British Columbia were ravaged again this year by wildfires. As we all know, many communities were affected. Several communities were evacuated and many individuals and families were displaced. We're fortunate to have many dedicated individuals who work tirelessly to manage wildfires,

protect property and help keep people safe when wildfires get out of control.

As a government, it's our responsibility to ensure that Yukoners are protected from the risks of wildfire. That's why we see an increase of over \$4 million in the first supplementary estimates going toward Wildland Fire Management suppression. That's important work and the efforts extended beyond our borders. We helped our friends in British Columbia, like those in Telegraph Creek who have strong connections with many of us in the territory. Yukoners are compassionate and generous people, Mr. Speaker, and I believe this is money well spent.

There are also increases in the operation and maintenance budget for the Climate Change Secretariat. This is partly to help in predicting forest fire risk across Yukon under a changing climate and to help track changes in Yukon forests during long-term monitoring. These projects fall under the climate change preparedness in the north program and will help us to better inform our understanding and response to forest fires. In addition to dealing with the most tangible effects of climate change, it's important that we do our part to work toward reducing our energy consumption and transitioning away from the use of fossil fuels to meet our energy needs.

That's why I'm very excited about our government's new innovative renewable energy initiative, which supports the development of public and private sector renewable energy projects. Earlier this summer, my colleague, the Minister responsible for Yukon Development Corporation, was in Old Crow to announce a \$500,000 investment for the installation of a 940-kilowatt solar ray for the community. This community-driven project is a partnership between the Government of Yukon, the Vuntut Gwitchin government and the Yukon Development Corporation that will help reduce the community's dependence on diesel fuel and help to create a sustainable energy future for the people of Old Crow. This project is expected to save up to 189,000 litres of diesel each year.

That will create substantial cost savings both in terms of the fuel itself, but also the cost of transporting it to Old Crow by air. In addition, the Vuntut Gwitchin government has entered into a multi-year purchase agreement with ATCO Electric for renewable energy generated by the solar project. This means that the project will offer long-term revenue potential for the community, and it has already created local employment opportunities. This is a great example of how we can work together with partners to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and strengthen our communities while creating economic opportunities. We committed to Yukoners that we would increase the availability of renewable energy by promoting and developing energy policies, initiative and programs that source future needs from renewable technologies.

The Old Crow solar project is just one example of how we are delivering on this commitment. There are other examples too. In partnership with Yukon First Nations, we have installed three new solar energy generating systems on

buildings owned by Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, White River First Nation and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in capable of generating a total of over 76 kilowatts of electricity.

Additionally, with the help of the Government of Canada small communities fund, we are investing in a 12 kilowatt solar energy storage project at Moosehide, which will reduce the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in reliance on diesel at this important community site. These renewable energy projects will help to reduce Yukon's reliance on non-renewable sources such as diesel, lessen energy consumption and help to transition the territory toward a sustainable and self-reliant energy supply. Our efforts to address climate change go hand in hand with our efforts to protect the environment.

The Yukon is filled with some of the most pristine wilderness in the world, and many of these areas have great cultural significance to Yukon First Nation people, who have lived here for millennia.

This summer, our government signed a historic management plan with the Dhaw Ghro Habitat Protection Area with the Selkirk First Nation and the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun. The Dhaw Ghro Habitat Protection Area is approximately 1,600 square kilometres in size, located between the Pelly and Stewart rivers. The area was identified by the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun, Selkirk First Nation and the Government of Yukon under chapter 10 of their final agreements as an environmentally and culturally rich area of great significance to the Northern Tutchone people. The work to establish this plan began in 2000 — 18 years ago, Mr. Speaker. By working together with First Nations, we were able to develop and agree upon a management plan that will preserve this area as a legacy for our future generations.

I had the opportunity to be involved in part of the Dhaw Ghro management plan, and I would like to take this opportunity to recognize one of the individuals who was absolutely key in the development of that plan. I am really sad that he didn't stay around long enough to see it signed off. Pat Van Bibber, when he was a young man, trapped in that area. His traplines were in there, and when the government decided to shut that area down, they just moved the Van Bibber family out of there. When it came time to develop the management plan for Dhaw Ghro and they asked Pat what he would like to have done with area, he said to leave it as it is. He wanted it kept the same. I think we owe a debt of gratitude, not just to the minister and all of the other people involved, but to Pat Van Bibber and the excellent work he did to protect Dhaw Ghro.

Hon. Ms. Frost: I am pleased to be here today with my colleagues to speak to the *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19*. Two of my departments are seeking additional funds for this year — Health and Social Services and Environment.

Our government wants Yukoners to live longer, healthier lives. We are working hard to advance this significant portion of the supplementary budget for Health and Social Services to support the important work that the Yukon Hospital Corporation does in improving quality acute care for people of this territory. Medical science continues to make advances in

the treatment of cancer. Improvements to chemotherapy drugs are leading to better outcomes. Advances and treatment have also led to escalating costs for drugs associated with these treatments. Additional funds are included in the supplementary to cover the rising costs of these drugs.

The supplementary estimates also contain funding for a project we are undertaking as part of a new agreement with the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer. This funding will be used to train health care professionals here in the Yukon in best practices in palliative care approaches. This funding is fully recoverable and will be available for the next four years.

On the capital side of expenditures, the department's supplementary includes a budget adjustment for the new Whistle Bend continuing care facility. These are funds not used last year that are being allocated to this year's budget for the completion of this new facility. We are extremely pleased to officially open the Whistle Bend facility in a few weeks. We look forward to welcoming residents who will begin moving into their new home after this month. This new facility, with rooms for 150 residents, is an important part of our commitment to helping Yukoners age in place.

Our commitment does not stop there. We have launched a broad conversation with Yukoners to help us to identify ways to support aging well in Yukon and, in particular, in rural Yukon.

The first aging-in-place summit was held this past summer in Whitehorse. More than 200 people attended and we are planning similar events in communities across the territory.

We are also continuing to apply a home-first philosophy to support Yukoners who need support. By providing enhanced home care services, these Yukoners have the opportunity to remain in their own homes longer. Yukoners are continuing to live in their own homes because of this initiative. In the last year this has resulted in approximately 2,800 days in which clients have stayed out of the hospital.

These are some of the programs that this government is taking action on to help Yukoners live longer, healthier lives.

In the coming weeks, I look forward to sharing with members of the House other initiatives to ensure Yukoners have access to services they need.

As I indicated, the supplementary estimates also contain funding to support the ongoing and important work of the Department of Environment. Our government is working with First Nations and our partners in Yukon to develop and manage our natural resources responsibly. The supplementary for the Department of Environment includes funding to support specific projects as part of our commitment to responsible management of our many natural gifts. More specifically, there is increased funding to support implementation of the *Inuvialuit Final Agreement* and project funds related to this agreement. As well, there's funding for our ongoing effort around climate change preparedness, for vegetation assessments and the Nisutlin River Delta National Wildlife Area and for the Yukon healthy air program. These costs are all fully recoverable from the federal government.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the department is carrying out many initiatives that advance our government's commitment to a healthy environment and sustainable wildlife populations. This year, our government took the final steps in establishing and protecting the Dhaw Ghro Habitat Protection Area with our partners, the Selkirk First Nation and the Na Cho Nyäk Dun. This historic agreement protects the current and future generations in an environmentally and culturally rich area located between Stewart Crossing and Pelly, an area that is of the utmost importance and of value to the Northern Tutchone people.

In August, our government and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board released for public review a draft conservation plan for grizzly bears. It is the first comprehensive plan for this species in Yukon and reflects work with First Nations, communities, stakeholders, organizations and the public.

Our government is also working closely with our partners in the *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement* to address the proposed drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and continuing our efforts to support our partners in northern Yukon — in particular, the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation. We are collaborating on environmental impact processes that the environmental impact process has in place for leasing lands in the refuge for petroleum exploration. Our next step is to review and respond to the environmental impact assessment once it is released. As well, our government continues to work and provide financial and professional supports to the Vuntut Gwitchin Government as they advance the advocating work for the protection of the Porcupine caribou calving grounds in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Mr. Speaker, the Yukon Housing Corporation does not request additional funds from the supplementary estimates; however, I do want to take a couple of minutes to talk briefly about some of our government's initiatives on housing. We all know how important affordable housing is to the well-being of our citizens in our communities. Mr. Speaker, our partners are key to making sure that quality affordable housing is available for all Yukon people, and our government is actively working with many levels of government, First Nation development corporations, non-profit organizations and the private sector on housing.

In May, we launched the housing initiative fund, a \$3.6-million fund for innovative housing projects to meet local needs. Our partners have responded with projects that will create 144 affordable housing units within the next year. As well, our developer build loan program is providing developers with financing to build modest, sustainable housing in Yukon communities.

We are taking steps to ensure that our most vulnerable populations have a safe place to live. Construction is underway on a 16-unit Housing First residence that will offer affordable, low-barrier permanent housing to Yukoners who require ongoing support. Those in our NGO community are important partners in meeting housing needs. Funding assistance from government is helping them realize new housing initiatives. Two of the key initiatives are the

Challenge Disability Resource Group plans for the new mixed-use cornerstone housing project and the Blood Ties Four Directions tiny homes project, which is now well underway.

Before closing, I would like to take a few moments to speak about my own riding of Vuntut Gwitchin. This summer has provided me an opportunity to spend some time with my constituents, my family and my friends in Old Crow and to spend time on the land. I always welcome this opportunity as it is something that is very near and dear to me. Earlier this summer I returned home with some of my colleagues and representatives from the Assembly of First Nations to celebrate Vadzaih Choo Drin, which is Caribou Days. It is an opportunity for us to acknowledge the traditional ways of the Gwitchin people and celebrate and honour the return of the Porcupine caribou. This occasion gave us the opportunity for community discussion on climate change, food security and some of the other important issues that have been raised with respect to the Old Crow solar project, which is very innovative and progressive thinking on behalf of the Vuntut Gwitchin looking at reducing their reliance on diesel and taking some advance innovation initiatives with respect to building and super insulating homes and looking at climate change and adaptation measures.

On the National Indigenous Peoples Day, we hosted a community barbecue in conjunction with the Old Crow cooperative, which is an organization that is owned by the Vuntut Gwitchin people as an indication of innovation and progressive thinking.

Being in my community provides me with the opportunity to meet also with the Vuntut Gwitchin government and the constituents to hear about concerns. I'm extremely humbled to serve my community and all Yukoners as we work to build a stronger and more resilient territory.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I won't be too long but I will take the opportunity to provide some brief information and to respond to some of the comments that have been made already.

First of all, I take the opportunity today to thank the people of Riverdale South. We had an amazing summer here in the Yukon and a lot of opportunities to meet with constituents in the various ways.

One of the highlights of our opportunity this summer was on August 24 when the Speaker, who represents Riverdale North, and I joined forces to welcome over 250 guests and provide local entertainment at a local neighbourhood business. We welcomed families and created an opportunity to talk with our constituents to learn about what interests and concerns them and how we can make their lives better. We also provided local entertainment at that time — Mr. Jeff Wolosewich, who is an amazing singer/songwriter who happens to live in my riding and is newly exploring his musical talents. We look forward to more from him as well.

It is an honour to be back here in this House, as has been mentioned, on the traditional territory of the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and the Kwanlin Dün First Nation. We are discussing

today the first supplementary estimates for the 2018-19 budget, and I will keep my remarks rather brief.

Neither the Department of Justice nor the Department of Education figure in this supplementary budget. I think I heard criticism about that earlier in some of the comments, but I am very proud of that and this is, in fact, a good thing. The purpose of a supplementary budget is to account for unforeseen expenses that come up between budget cycles. Our government has made it a priority to reduce those unforeseen expenses by integrating fiscal and economic forecasting in order to make our budget more accurate and efficient and by — may I say — exploring what those expenses will be very thoroughly in the budgeting process.

It is not simply a matter of it being “x” last year so it is going to be “x” this year. We clearly and carefully question each and every one of those entries to determine its significance and its importance in going forward. It has, in my view, resulted — as you can see here in this supplementary budget — in more accurate information. Our improved approach has led to this year’s supplementary estimates, which see an increase in spending of less than one percent over the 2018-19 main estimates. This variance is historically low and shows that our hard work is paying off.

As I said this year, there are no increases for the departments of Justice or Education compared, for instance, to the 2016-17 supplementary budget, which was presented not long after we were elected, when the Department of Education produced an increase of over \$12 million in the first supplementary estimate. That was shocking to me as a newly elected and appointed minister. It was nearly as much as this year’s entire supplementary budget just for one department. Certainly, that caused me concern as a person trying to learn the budgeting process and learn the department expenditures. It harkens back to a time when the former government would use a supplementary budget to account for expenses that were, in my submission, Mr. Deputy Speaker, foreseen. They could have been but were not dealt with — in my view — properly or properly portrayed in the budgeting process.

Our government was elected on the commitment of increasing transparency and openness. Our improved budgeting process is just one example of how we are delivering on that commitment as a whole-of-government approach. We are working very hard to show Yukoners the true cost of government and ensuring that our territory moves forward with strong fiscal management.

With respect to some of the comments made a bit earlier today, I don’t disagree with the Leader of the Third Party. I too hope — perhaps eternally — that we could together discuss, debate and decide on the responsibilities of spending the Yukon taxpayers’ money. It is a responsibility I can assure you that our team — my colleagues and I — take very, very seriously. Such frank discussions, however, require pulling together in making the best possible decisions and being accountable. In order to do that, they require honest, forthright debate.

Unfortunately, in some of the debate here today, I didn’t hear that frank exchange and it is, of course, frustrating.

I don’t believe that Yukoners think that the opposition’s job in holding us to account means just saying “white” if we say “black” — in other words, just taking the opposing view or stance. I believe that Yukoners want us to make the best possible decisions on their behalf. The Minister of Community Services earlier in his comments pointed out several of those inaccuracies where information just isn’t truthfully being presented.

Our one-government approach has led us to ask each and every department to look at where they can find deficiencies, to consider what we spend money on and if we are achieving what we hope to in the spending of that money — serving Yukoners as best we can. Are we spending wisely without reducing services? It is quite surprising to me that there seems to be serious concern, as evidenced by some of the questions that were in Question Period today, that just one of the possible options being explored is to ask government departments to see how they might be able to save some money, save some on the expenditures, without reducing programming. We are doing as has been suggested by the Leader of the Third Party: We are seeking the expertise of those who know best how departments are making their spending decisions. To do otherwise would, in my view, be irresponsible.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank all those departments doing this very important work on behalf of Yukoners. I urge the Official Opposition and the Third Party to hold our government to account with honest, accurate questions and debate that promote the interest of Yukoners, not politics, and require us to be held accountable in the best possible way on behalf of each and every Yukoner. We came here to represent them, to work for them. We continue to do so every possible day and we certainly hope that we can do so with great vigorous debate with the opposition so that we come up with the best possible ideas going forward.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you’ll give me a little bit of flexibility just before I speak to the supplementary budget, I would also like to take a quick opportunity to thank my constituents in Porter Creek South for giving me the opportunity to be part of this Legislative Assembly. Time does not go by where I don’t take into consideration the privilege that affords me and I absolutely respect the opportunity I have to work on their behalf, on specific constituents’ issues or on broader policy issues here in the Legislative Assembly.

I also would just quickly — as we get into the response — I want to truly thank the departments that I get to work with. This was an extremely busy summer. The Department of Economic Development and the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, as well as those at the Yukon Development Corporation and Yukon Energy — all of those entities have taken on immense portfolios and projects. When the economy is in the state that our economy is in, it also leads to challenges as well as opportunities. Specifically, when I think about the Mineral Resources and Agriculture branches, just to name a few — an immense amount of work and people —

you know, it's unfair to even just name a few branches. Really, all these departments and also those individuals who have taught me that — as public servants — how important that work is and how vested they are in that work as they serve Yukoners.

I am absolutely happy to rise to speak to the first supplementary estimates of 2018-19. This supplementary budget speaks to the work our government has done to ensure our budgets are well-planned and executed. It is important to us, as a government, to be transparent and accountable in dealings with the people of Yukon. This was a promise we made to Yukoners during the 2016 campaign.

The highlights of the increases requested for the Department of Economic Development and the Yukon Development Corporation are a result of increasing population and an economy that is thriving. This year, we have seen increased interest in the Yukon film location incentive fund. This rebate-based fund encourages production companies to film in the Yukon, spend money locally and hire and train Yukoners. For the 2018-19 fiscal year, this fund has been over-subscribed. There have been three eligible applications, receiving a total of \$1,065,000.

The total increase being requested by the Department of Economic Development is \$956,000. The combined budgeted spend for the three projects is \$5.65 million and there are 128 Yukoners who have been employed or will be employed through this spending. We are truly happy to see the film industry growing here in the Yukon, and our government will continue to support this sector as we make progress in the diversification of our economy.

This morning we did hear from opposition benches some concern about what we are doing to diversify and what we are looking to do in the long run. Understanding that a portion of our economy, which tends to be a large portion of our economy, comes from the resource sector, I think that just the support that we are putting behind the film industry — and I will touch on a number of other areas of our economy — truly shows that we understand that you have to walk and chew gum at the same time. There are many things that we have to keep an eye on, and we have to ensure that all areas of our economy are supported and we have strategies for them.

Our 2018-19 budget also included a number of other projects and investments aimed at growing and diversifying our economy. As announced this spring, we have done our due diligence on the selection of the route for the diverse fibre project and are moving ahead with the Dempster route. This project will improve telecommunications reliability to Yukon businesses and residences. This is a necessary step to growing our tech sector here in the Yukon, and I am proud of the work that has been undertaken by the departments of Economic Development and Highways and Public Works on this to date.

Our government also included funds in this budget to support the innovation hub, now known as the NorthLight Innovation hub. NorthLight Innovation brings business, industry, Yukon College, the Yukon Development Corporation and public programs together under one roof to create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs and to

promote the development and growth of innovative businesses in the Yukon.

The official opening will be taking place on October 11. I know there will be invitations granted to all members of the Legislative Assembly for that exciting and important event. Part of the goal with this particular type of infrastructure is to ensure that you build the appropriate ecosystem and culture for investment in the tech sector. We have not even seen the announcement for the official opening. We have seen a well-known entrepreneur in Canada, Mr. Brett Wilson, on his first visit making a commitment to invest financially in a Yukon-based tech company. What an exciting thing that is. We are seeing the companies that are in this particular space now quickly looking to scale and looking for expansion.

We have lots to discuss, share — debate policy — hopefully in the Legislative Assembly — about the strategy we are looking at integrating into our economic strategy and how we focus on these particular areas within the hub. There is a real opportunity for cross-pollination to capitalize and to enhance the knowledge-based economy here in the Yukon. It is truly a positive example of public, private and non-profit educational sectors coming together for a common purpose. The Yukon is a desirable place to work and live, and we are seeing that in our population growth.

It was touched upon early this afternoon that the July 2018 preliminary numbers for population are 40,476, which is a 2.1-percent increase over July 2017. Our economy is one of the strongest in the country, and this government is proud of that. The projected GDP growth for 2018 is 2.5 percent.

We have a truly strong labour market. We're seeing record low unemployment rates — in fact, the lowest unemployment in the country at 2.6 over the last eight months. Although our economy, compared to Ontario and British Columbia, is relatively small when it comes to total capacity, the economy is still the envy of Economic Development ministers and Energy, Mines and Resources ministers sitting at the national table with us.

Yukon's average weekly earnings have averaged \$1,099 over the past six months, which also is the fourth highest in the country. Retail sales are following a record \$799 million in 2017, but they continue to rise up. They're up about 6.6 percent in the first half of 2018. Mineral exploration estimates from Natural Resources Canada are expected to increase at about 4.4 percent to \$173 million over the last year. We do understand — my colleagues in opposition who have worked on these files and I know that there is still sensitivity. Capital can travel quickly and capital will go where it's wanted. That's why it's important to continue to look at all the variables that investment takes into consideration, whether it is regulation or certainty.

We were quite happy our teams that work on these subjects — Energy, Mines and Resources and Economic Development — I'm happy to see that Yukon was ranked second in North America this spring by the Fraser Institute when it comes to short term acceptance of permitting. I think that is a first — I could be wrong — to be rated that high.

We're seeing that the respect and collaboration with our First Nation governments continue to build a platform of certainty and that, of course, is a key driver for investment. But we will see.

Capital is seeking other opportunities in this country. We think a lot of it has moved into the cannabis space — about \$40 billion of capital moving into that space. So we will have to see what happens this fall but that, of course, was a lot of available capital that used to fuel the junior sector, and we'll have to see what plays out with these companies and if they are overvalued or if they can actually maintain the value and deliver what they have committed to as the markets open this fall.

Tourism numbers are up 16.1 percent this year from the same period of 2017. Again, I commend my colleague. We're excited about the strategy. We're excited about where this strategy — what opportunities this strategy will provide us. We know that it is even tough — they used to say the shoulder season was something that the — whether it be the local airline or the hoteliers — they would ask us to work in concert with them to make sure that those shoulder seasons were filled but now I think even this fall when you think about what we're hosting — world-class speakers and significant events. But certainly the industry and the private sector have given us an opportunity to look at the ability to grow even more in that sector.

So this population growth that I referenced, along with the increased electrification of homes, is the reason why the Yukon Development Corporation has requested an increase of \$170,000 for the 2018-19 budget. The rebate is meant to offset the cost of electricity for residential customers in the Yukon. As it currently stands, 95 percent of the Yukon's energy portfolio comes from renewables. Our government is committed to increasing the availability of renewable energy in reducing community reliance on diesel.

Last year, we launched the innovative renewable energy initiative, which provides support for small-scale renewable energy projects. The \$1.5-million fund is now fully subscribed for the 2018-19 fiscal year. Over the past two-year period, we have provided financial support to 10 projects across the territory. This initiative also supports economic reconciliation for First Nations by providing funding for First Nations to achieve their priorities in renewable energy. My colleague can touch on it. The Member for Mayo-Tatchun had mentioned one example. He spoke about the Old Crow solar and LED streetlight conversion project in partnership with Vuntut Gwitchin. It was quite a pleasure to be there and meet and speak with the individuals who have driven that project on the ground. We're looking at displacing just under 200,000 litres of diesel with that project on an annual basis and about, I believe, just around 5,000 litres of diesel with the conversion to LED streetlights. That really outlines — I'll have an opportunity to speak to these specifically when we present the departments.

In the budget, what you're really seeing from this government is strong reins when it comes to the budgeting process, ensuring that the dollars are spent as they were meant

to be spent and that we're forecasting appropriately. I'm proud of the work that the deputy ministers are doing, where we're bringing in the private sector to actually have conversations with public servants and decision-makers so they can understand capacity and so they can understand where there is the potential for growth — not just from a capital spending perspective where you're looking at that sweet spot of capital spending. You know, in the past, we've seen lapses of \$70 million, \$80 million. We're really trying to focus on areas of — I could be wrong; my colleagues will probably speak to this — that \$280 million, but also then disseminating the lines of business that exist in the private sector so that we can understand whether it's dirt-moving or subcontractors or how we maximize opportunities for Yukon business.

Once again, I thank my colleagues. We have areas that we also will focus on or that need attention. We touched on a few things today and we have to take into consideration part of our — we talk about our housing portfolio. I commend my colleague on her work when it comes to continuing to deal with deficits that have been in place for quite a while when it comes to housing for those in need, but also taking into consideration that part of the pressure when it comes to housing comes from really the dramatic turnaround in the economy, which also puts pressure on.

When it comes to ensuring, it is just nice to know that there are people who are coming to the Yukon who want to buy homes; it is nice to know that Yukoners' children can come home and find a job, whether it is working in the environment or working in the resource sector or working in the technical sector.

I think that we must take into consideration those perspectives. Certainly, we see that with the growth in the population and those coming back from post-secondary.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for giving me an opportunity to speak to this. I look forward to debating policy and discussing budgets over the fall, which we, of course, are put here to do.

Mr. Adel: It is an honour to be back in this Chamber on the traditional territory of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Ta'an Kwäch'an Council. I would like to take this opportunity right now to thank my constituents in Copperbelt North for their input over the summer. I was enjoying the wonderful weather as I was walking through the neighbourhood, talking to people and meeting with them on the street and coffee shops. It was certainly enlightening.

We are looking at the supplementary estimates for 2018-19 — the money that is required for the government to deliver programs and services that enhance the lives of Yukoners across the territory. All of our budget decisions are made in order to support Yukon's priorities. A people-centred approach to wellness helps Yukoners thrive. Strategic investments build healthy, vibrant and sustainable communities. Strong government-to-government relationships with First Nations foster reconciliation, and a diverse, growing economy provides good jobs for Yukoners in an environmentally responsible way.

My colleagues and I have been working hard to advance these priorities and improve the lives of Yukoners. Talking about the supplementary budget is always a good opportunity to reflect on the good work of this government. Yukoners have just wrapped up a fabulous summer with some of that good, old-fashioned hot weather we used to have, and many spent their time enjoying the over 60 campgrounds and day-use recreation sites across this territory.

The Yukon government is investing \$1 million to improve camping opportunities for Yukoners and visitors this year alone. This is part of a multi-year plan to expand and enhance campground and parks infrastructure. We are also adjusting policies to improve services in Yukon parks and campgrounds, with a focus on user experience and accessibility. Having had guests in from out of the territory camping this year, I certainly heard a lot of compliments on our campgrounds and their facilities.

We heard from Yukoners that they wanted increased campsite availability and opportunities for all Yukoners to enjoy the outdoors. This season saw a new rule around occupied campsites that are left unattended. Leaving campsites occupied but unattended for longer than 24 hours could result in a \$200 fine.

We have also improved wheelchair access to campsites, such as popular Pine Lake, Aishihik Lake, Twin Lakes, Nahanni Range and two sites each at Conrad, Marsh Lake and Wolf Creek. There are now wheelchair-accessible trails at Tombstone Territorial Park, Pine Lake and Wolf Creek campgrounds. These improvements, along with the new 24-hour rule, have helped improve the availability of campsites and provided more fair access to Yukon parks and campgrounds for residents and visitors.

We also engaged Yukoners to help us create a Yukon parks strategy that will improve strategic guidance on how to sustainably deliver the environmental, economic, social and health benefits of parks and campgrounds. We know Yukoners and visitors have a strong connection to parks and that people's demands and expectations of our parks are evolving. The strategy will set long-term direction for Yukon's territorial parks, which include wilderness parks, campgrounds, recreation sites and others. Engagement with users and Yukoners will ensure that their needs and interests are reflected in the strategy. I look forward to seeing the results of this summer's engagement as the development of the strategy moves forward.

Summer is also the prime season for tourism here in the territory and the tourism department with their new strategy has been working very hard to enhance that.

Last year saw record-breaking tourism numbers, in part thanks to the success of the Yukon Now tourism marketing program. Our government has increased the annual investment in the Yukon Now program from \$900,000 to \$1.8 million. We are proud to support this critical marketing program to help the industry grow sustainability at a time when our visitor statistics continue to increase.

One area of particular interest is the growth of air arrivals. Our government is working hard to improve air travel

infrastructure and support the airline industry. The summer construction began on a new maintenance facility at the Dawson airport. Construction costs are estimated at \$7.7 million and the facility is slated for completion in the summer of 2019. This new facility will allow airport staff to work in a dry, heated facility year-round and will ensure airport equipment is safely stored during cold and inclement weather.

Having a heated maintenance facility at the Dawson airport is also required to fulfill the heightened maintenance standards and needs of a paved runway. Our government has committed to paving the Dawson runway and, earlier this summer, we released the tender for this project. The contract includes the paving of a second apron to ease congestion and to ensure airport operations continue to be safe and efficient. Improving the Dawson airport will support tourism in the Klondike and beyond. The Dawson airport is the second busiest airport in the territory — the busiest, of course, is the Erik Nielsen International Airport.

This summer, our government invested \$5 million to resurface the main runway with asphalt. Upgrading this essential piece of infrastructure will ensure the airport continues to meet the needs of Yukoners and visitors alike. More than just tourism, enhancing our aviation industry is important to growing Yukon's economy as a whole. Improving Yukon's air travel infrastructure is just one of the ways we're working to grow our economy.

The supplementary estimates in this going forward, number one, are the second lowest in 10 years. The good news is they are a reflection of how well we are doing with our main estimates and how we look at the economic realities of the Yukon and how we project to meet them.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am very pleased this afternoon to rise and speak about the supplementary estimates for 2018-19. It is becoming clear to the public that this government is running a tight ship when it comes to fiscal matters. This supplementary budget tabled by my good colleague for Klondike, the Finance minister, is the second lowest supplementary budget tabled in the last 10 years — the second lowest. It bears noting that last year's supplementary budget was the lowest, just \$29,000. How significant is this? It is very significant.

Today we are talking about supplementary spending of about \$4.7 million compared with \$34 million in 2015-16, \$21 million in 2014-15 and a whopping \$93 million in supplementary spending logged in 2013-14. Today we are talking about accuracy and transparency in financial management, because we are working very hard to have our main estimates reflect our spending priorities. Being in government demands tough decisions. Those tough decisions are being made with an eye on the public purse. We have heard from the Financial Advisory Panel that previous governments were spending \$1.50 for every dollar they generated or received from Ottawa. That was never sustainable, Mr. Speaker. You cannot continue to operate

when you collect 50 percent less than you are spending. It is a recipe for disaster.

That is the reality we inherited. It wasn't a pleasant discovery — that day early in the year 2017 — but it was the hand we were dealt. We took a deep breath, calmed ourselves and started to address the problems we faced. Today, two years later, we are seeing the results — one of which is accuracy in financial reporting.

We are looking at rigour, at process and at efficiency. We determine the most pressing needs through an evidence-based process, checking to see what data tells us about an issue. You can pick any issue, Mr. Speaker, any one — and there are many — and then ask the relevant questions: How many people are affected? Are there health and safety risks involved? Is there a precedent for what we are being asked to do? How much will this cost the Government of Yukon? How much will it cost in the future? Could a private sector solution be more efficient and/or cost-effective? Evidence-based decision-making, Mr. Speaker, is something that we campaigned on and I am very proud to say that it is something that we apply on a daily basis.

We are bringing diligence to financial planning and execution, and our budgets, including the current supplementary discussed today, is clear evidence of that. They are accurate and they are small. My good colleague from Lake Laberge has referenced the Whistle Bend continuing care facility. As my bench mate from beautiful Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes noted, I would be remiss if I failed to mention that the construction was delivered on time and on budget. Now we are talking about the largest and possibly the most complex project in the territory's history on time and on budget. That comes through the hard work and diligence of the Department of Highways and Public Works and its partners in Health and Social Services.

The departments tackled this project methodically with diligence and the results speak for themselves, Mr. Speaker. It didn't begin that way; the project was launched with little consultation or long-term planning or consideration of operation and maintenance costs, but I'm happy to have played a part in landing this project responsibly, on time and on budget. The member for Lake Laberge has questioned what we are doing for the territory. I'm sorry to learn he is not aware of the profound changes we've made and are making to benefit the people of the territory. I'm sort of befuddled by that, but let me help him out. For example, instead of sitting on tens of millions of dollars of affordable housing money, we're building affordable housing for those who need it. This afternoon, my colleague, the minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation, laid bare all the work her crew is doing on this front and it was an impressive list. We are working with First Nations on housing and on a host of other issues. We've held a record number of Yukon forums with First Nations across the territory, involving them in decision-making in the territory to an extent never seen before. The work is ongoing, but the results are being seen in the certainty and confidence across the territory. We're seeing that in the resource markets; they're expected to spend more than

\$150 million in exploration this year largely because the territory is a good place to invest. Why, Mr. Speaker? It's about growing certainty and confidence in the future of the territory.

My colleague, the Minister of Tourism and Culture, has guided one of the first tourism strategies the territory has seen in 17 years. We're tackling aged legislation, one of the most comprehensive and progressive legislative agendas seen in this territory in the last 30 years. We're rewriting the *Societies Act*, the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, on forestry and the *Coroners Act*. This is work that is long overdue — work that extremely hard-working and dedicated civil servants are tackling on our behalf — and we're grateful.

We're doing foundation work at the Whitehorse International Airport to fix the baggage handling equipment, the bridges that link the aircraft to the building, patching the tarmac, replacing aged snowplows, even fixing the long-broken elevator. It's not sexy work, it's not the stuff of ribbon cutting, but it serves the needs of the Yukon public in very profound ways.

Highway safety? Well, I heard as late as Friday that the Klondike Highway has not been in better shape for years and years, and that's thanks to the diligent work of the highways department and its crews. Our bridges are being strengthened in Carcross and in Carmacks, allowing us to bring in larger loads to the territory safely and more efficiently. We bolstered our mental health care in the communities through the hubs my colleague, the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, has launched. We're building roads to resources in concert with our First Nation partner governments. We are building a redundant fiber optic cable line to provide long-needed protection to our business sector and tech industry. We tendered the medevac contract this year and awarded it to a local company through a competitive bid, ensuring good use of the public purse. We've also done much to improve procurement. We have a five-year capital plan — the first time in history we've done that. Whitehorse has a local knowledge clause added to value-driven contracts to ensure that local companies have a more level playing field when it comes to bidding. We are using the 10 \$1-million exceptions — we did so last year and we're going to do it again this year. We're the first jurisdiction in the country to use that tool.

We have contracts out earlier in the spring, helping contractors plan their construction season. We have worked hard to get more money into local contractors' hands and we're working closer with the private sector, communities and First Nations to plan our capital spending. The result is the lowest unemployment rate in the country and one of the busiest summer work seasons in recent memory.

Again, this is part of our rigour in budgeting. We have set a stable capital spend of \$280 million. People know what we are going to spend and where. As a result, our supplementary is lower than nine of the last 10 supplementary budgets — all of which is to say we are working hard on behalf of the people of the territory on a myriad of fronts.

I know my colleagues take this work seriously and it is my honour to work with such a dedicated, caring and compassionate crew.

In closing, I want to personally thank the Department of Finance, the finance crew from Highways and Public Works and those in the Public Service Commission for their superb job in preparing the 2018-19 supplementary estimates.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: While none of my departments are currently seeking increases under the *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19*, I would like to take the next few minutes to provide this House with a few highlights about the work being completed by the Department of Tourism and Culture, the Women's Directorate and the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board, which stem from the main estimates.

I would like to start though by thanking, of course, my constituents in my riding of Mountainview for choosing me to be their representative in this Legislative Assembly. It truly is, as I have heard expressed by everyone else in the House, an honour to be chosen to be a spokesperson for even one person — that is an honour — let alone a whole riding of people who look to us each and every day to represent them in the best possible way.

I would like to highlight a few areas within Tourism and Culture first. My colleagues will have heard, of course, and we have heard lots of folks talk about it today, that the Department of Tourism and Culture has released a draft tourism strategy for public comment. I certainly took note of the Member for Copperbelt South's comments about wanting to ask questions about this draft strategy and I certainly welcome any discussion about the draft Yukon tourism development strategy.

The development of this strategy has been led by a steering committee made up of First Nation representatives, the Association of Yukon Communities, the tourism industry and many cultural, arts and heritage organizations. We have a 15-member committee that has overseen this process. The steering committee engaged extensively on this plan over the past year, receiving 12,000 comments from Yukoners. The draft plan that is now out for public comment contains a number of proposals. Once final feedback is received on this draft, my colleagues and I will consider all the proposals that have been put forward. We all share an interest in growing and strengthening tourism in our territory and the proposals in the strategy will be viewed through this lens.

The extensive engagement on the strategy shows that Yukoners understand the huge potential that exists in the tourism sector here in Yukon and want to take advantage of that. The future is bright when it comes to tourism in our territory and I look forward to working with our partners to seize the opportunities ahead of us and grow tourism in the Yukon in a responsible and sustainable way.

On other exciting topics, the Yukon made national and international news this summer with the discovery of several important archaeological finds. The Yukon archaeology program works each year on the ice patch project with

partners from six Yukon First Nations, being Kwanlin Dün, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Teslin Tlingit Council, Ta'an Kwäch'an Council, Carcross/Tagish First Nation and the Kluane First Nation.

On August 25, 2018, an ancient hunting tool was discovered near Alligator Lake in an archaeological ice patch within the traditional territory of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation and the Kwanlin Dün First Nation. The intact and exceptionally preserved state of this find makes it very unique and unparalleled in the world. Just a few short weeks ago, after this remarkable discovery, I was lucky enough to be in Dawson City to help unveil two additional significant discoveries in partnership with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation. Both of these discoveries were made in the Klondike placer fields and are exceptional — a mummified wolf pup and a caribou calf. It was really a special day to be there and listen to Percy Henry talk about the balance between the wolf and the caribou and how they balance each other. So having these two significant finds found within two weeks of each other — everyone believes that it was not an accident and that it happened in that way. Both are extremely rare and provide invaluable contributions to scientific knowledge about the ice age. To our knowledge, it is the only mummified ice age wolf ever found in the world. The wolf pup is carbon dated at over 50,000 years and the caribou is carbon dated at 80,000 years. That is quite astonishing.

While I was in Dawson, people talked about these ancient beings and how this knowledge is coming back. So it was really a great event to be part of. All of these discoveries, once again, highlight just how special this land is that we all call home.

Finally, on the Tourism and Culture front, the department continues to work hand in hand with its First Nation partners on land management. In partnership with Carcross/Tagish First Nation, we managed the Conrad historic site as tenants in common. We are working with our partners to develop the Conrad historic site heritage management plan, which will ensure the protection, conservation and interpretation of the heritage values of the site and will also recognize and protect the traditional and current use of the area by the Carcross/Tagish First Nation citizens.

This plan is expected to be completed this fall and will be presented to the public for feedback. We also continue to conserve the Fort Selkirk historic site in partnership with the Selkirk First Nation.

An updated land management plan is currently being developed as the current management plan has not been updated since 2000. This updated plan will reflect current conditions of the site, set new priorities and ensure that the requirements of the Selkirk First Nation final agreement and *Historic Resources Act* are being met. Land management in partnership with First Nations is essential to creating a sustainable future for Yukon. I am also pleased that we are making such positive progress on this important front.

At the Women's Directorate, we're gearing up for a very busy fall. From October 16 to 19, Yukon will be co-hosting the federal, provincial and territorial meetings of ministers

responsible for the Status of Women. These meetings will cover important topics such as the gender wage gap, women's economic empowerment and gender-based violence.

Representing the Yukon at these meetings, I plan to emphasize the importance of addressing practical issues facing women in the north, particularly gender-based violence and the meaningful engagement with our indigenous partners, both locally and nationally.

During this week, the Women's Directorate is also organizing a meeting between the Status of Women ministers and the national indigenous leaders in advance of the FPT meetings. Ministers and indigenous leaders will have a full day of engagement, which is not something that is typically done at FPT meetings. Also, notably, a sacred fire will be lit and will burn throughout the FPT meeting. That's something that is very unique and something that the federal minister and I feel strongly about doing together.

As part of these meetings, we will be including an afternoon community visit to Carcross/Tagish First Nation, which will include a panel presentation by female indigenous Yukon leaders to highlight the impact of self-government on the well-being of women in the Yukon.

I'm very excited, of course, to host federal Minister Monsef and delegates from across the country. We are very proud of the planning that has gone on and the true partnership that we've created with our colleagues across the country.

I would also like to briefly update the House about the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. As the lead department responding to the national inquiry, the Women's Directorate is carrying out this government's mandate commitment to ensure that Yukon plays an effective and active role in supporting the inquiry. As such, I'm pleased to tell the House that Yukon will be hosting the final closing ceremony for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls inquiry in the spring of 2019. This is considered a full-circle event. It is special because Yukon also hosted the opening of this inquiry in May 2017. It really and truly feels like a full circle and so it will be a great opportunity for us to honour our families and pay respect to those who have been lost.

As Minister responsible for the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board, I would like to update this House about the progress being made under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, which was passed last fall. Regulations are now being crafted that focus on the prevention of psychological injuries in the workplace.

You will hear more about that in the new year. As we are all aware, this is a spectrum of risk that could affect the mental health of Yukon workers from exposure to traumatic incidents to the threat of violence. These new regulations are necessary to provide guidance to workplaces on how to establish measures to prevent psychological injury from occurring in the first place and, of course, how to respond if they happen during a person's regular work time.

On a personal note, of course it was an extremely busy summer — lots of highs and lows. I represented government

at many amazing events over the summer that took me across the Yukon Territory. Highlights are always the festivals that our department supports and that our government and Yukoners look forward to. Here in Whitehorse, we had the Adäka festival, and many of us attended Moosehide near Dawson City. I had the great honour of going to the Tlingit gathering in Juneau, where we promoted our festival that is coming next year — the Haa Kusteeyi Tlingit gathering. It is a great feeling to be close to our community and to connect with people during those times. I find that is one of the most valuable interactions that I have in my position as minister and as an MLA.

I did host a really successful constituency event for my Mountainview constituents on September 8. It was well-attended. We had over 200 people stop by to have conversation and share food with us, as well as some really great family fun. A lot of great discussions happened there. I am happy to keep reaching out to my constituents in that way and to provide opportunities for them to come together to share concerns. It was really interesting that, when I met with the constituents that day, a lot of them felt fairly content about what was happening in the territory. That felt really great to me as an MLA, that our government is making the right moves. People talked about having good work. They talked about being in training programs, in school and the excitement about the fall and the opportunity to come together.

Finally, when I left the Legislative Assembly after the last Sitting — life changes very fast. I know that tomorrow we are paying tribute to what happened in Telegraph Creek, but it is very personal to me. I feel like a different person standing here today. You never know what events are going to be life-changing, and this one was life-changing for me. I really wanted to share that with all of my colleagues in the House today. I look forward to honouring Yukoners tomorrow for what they have done for my nation and for people who are in need. It shows the generosity and huge hearts of Yukoners, and it truly makes me want to work even harder for the people we represent — every single citizen in this Yukon Territory.

I would like to thank you so much for the opportunity to give a few updates. I don't always get to give the updates on the good work that our departments are doing, so thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. White: Initially, I hadn't planned on speaking, because this morning at our House Leaders' meeting, I was under the impression that this was going to be a short start to the day and then we were going to get into actually asking questions in the Committee of the Whole.

I appreciate people's heartfelt comments — I do. When anyone is talking about their riding and the people they get to talk to, those are super important. I can't believe, you know, on the cusp of two years since the last election, that we have ministers from the Liberal government talking about what the Yukon Party did. I can't even believe it. I had to live through five years of that and I had enough — I did — I had enough.

To bring back how large the supplementary budgets were that were tabled — it just seems kind of crazy to me, actually,

because we should be moving on — and comparing yourselves to before, when I would say that that wasn't really like that — the bar wasn't set super high. That is my opinion. I would say that I told you initially that I wanted you all to do better. I wanted the Liberal government to do better than what had happened before. I didn't think we would still be talking about prior to the 2016 election, because really what I wanted to hear was what each government minister was going to do differently and where we would be going. I didn't think that we would be revisiting what had happened.

I really thank the minister responsible for the Women's Directorate and I can only imagine what it felt like when your community, when the Tahltan Nation, went through that trauma. I thank you for sharing that, and I thank the Member for Mayo-Tatchun for talking about his community, but some of what was said almost sounded like election speeches. I mean, unless one is going to be called right away, what I wanted to know was what was happening within the departments, because I am not going to get an opportunity to talk to the Minister responsible for housing about housing, so I am going to talk to the Premier about it when we get into it, because I have questions.

I have questions about the Department of Education that I won't be able to ask. That is fantastic that both of those departments didn't need supplementary budgets. I appreciate that, but what I wanted to hear was what was happening within those departments and what was going on, as opposed to talking about what hadn't happened before. I just want to — I mean right now, Education — there's a crisis. They don't have enough EAs and they don't have enough substitute teachers. Then you talk to communities and you find out that teachers don't have places to live. How is that being addressed within both of those departments — Housing and Education?

I thought that, as we came into the 2018 Fall Sitting — you know, with almost two years under our belts in this 34th Legislative Assembly — that it wouldn't be kind of similar to the comments that were made the first time we were here — and some of them were. Not all of them, Mr. Speaker, because I would hate to use the same brush against everybody, but there were a lot of similarities.

I thought we were going to rise up — I did. Everybody in the 2016 election talked about how things were going to be done differently and sometimes it feels a lot the same. I had no intention of speaking today, except for the fact that, when we were revisiting the supplementary budgets of the past government, I felt that we had closed that and we were moving on.

I am impressed that this is the second smallest one. I am. But if we're just going to talk about our accomplishments and how well we're doing in comparison to something that I would suggest wasn't so great — congratulations. You formed a government two years ago. That's an indication that things should be different and that they shouldn't be the same. This was the same conversation that happened last year. We're 12 months on and it felt really similar.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to Committee of the Whole where I'm going to ask my questions about the departments

that aren't going to come up. I look forward to having conversations with the ministers whose departments do come up because, although it sounded pretty great in the Mountainview riding, I can tell you that in Takhini-Kopper King things aren't so rosy. We had the wood smoke report come out. It targeted two of my areas — both the Kopper King and Range Road north. You know what the report can't cover because it's not part of the mandate? It doesn't talk about poverty. You want to know why wood smoke is so bad in the Kopper King area? It's poverty. When you see that people have wood screwed to the side of their trailers with plastic on it, it's not the appliance that's burning the wood that's the problem; it's poverty. When I hear that things are going well for other people, I'm relieved, but I can tell you that things aren't so rosy for everyone, and that's an issue. So when we revisit the past, we can go all the way back. I mean, why stop in the 33rd? We could go to the 32nd or the 31st. But what I want to know is what's different in the 34th? I want to know what actions are being taken. I want to know how things are being addressed, including lead in drinking fountains. It might not be a concern for a student who has only been there for two years, but what about an educator who has been there for 25 years? That is a longer time to be around that.

What I was hopeful for was to hear some innovation within the departments. What I got — and I'm going to reread it, to be clear. I will congratulate each of the ministers and each of the speakers for the innovation when I get to hear it. I'll give one right now to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. We had a farm tour. We had a multi-partisan farm tour and it was fantastic. We had the ability then to hear from farmers about some of the hindrances. That was really great. I thank the minister for that. That was a fantastic opportunity.

I look forward to when my colleague and I are able to schedule our tour of the Whistle Bend facility because we missed out on that one. We will see it before it opens.

What I wanted to hear about was innovation and accomplishments. I wanted to hear about things that were different and not things that were the same. Talking about previous supplementary budgets as the difference — well, that's a bit disappointing. That's a pretty low bar at that point.

I look forward to being able to ask questions about departments that won't be up. I look forward to engaging with the ministers who will be up because I know that there has been hard work done over the summer. I look forward to hearing about it.

Mr. Speaker, in 2019, if there are similar speeches by the time we get to the Fall Sitting, I tell you — I'm not even sure which words or how many hand actions I am going to have at that point. For those who only get to read this in Hansard, my hands are moving because they have a very hard time staying still right now.

I look forward to Committee of the Whole debate.

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

Does any other member wish to be heard on this debate?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I guess I will start with a response to the Member for Takhini-Kopper King's statements. I am a little perplexed. In her address, she talks about how the minister has been engaging with the opposition with a farm tour, but nothing has changed. I would say that's an example of something that has changed. I believe that this government is trying its best to reach out and embrace the opposition. When I go to events and I see members of the opposition in these events, I always acknowledge that they're there. I ask them if they want to come up and speak. I think there have been a lot of subtle differences and a lot of major differences. Performance plans, I say, would be a huge difference, and every year we're getting better and better at that. A five-year capital plan — huge differences.

If the member opposite doesn't want to see these differences, that's one thing. But it's rich to say that she's disappointed with the dialogue here in the second reading, but it gave her an opportunity to get up and talk about her community and about how important it is to her to discuss the socio-economic situation of those who are burning wood. I don't know how that is any more important or less important than anybody else on this side of the Legislative Assembly having their say and able to talk about what they say.

I will agree that I think we as a team — and I mean a collective team with the opposition and the government — need to do a better job of how we use our time inside this Legislative Assembly. For example, supplementary budgets should be debated — the numbers in the budget. We have used — and I have done it too when in opposition.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Silver: With all due respect to the Leader of the Third Party, it's my turn to speak. So if she could listen as opposed to talk over me, she might actually learn something.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Member for Takhini-Kopper King, on a point of order.

Ms. White: I'm going to struggle to find the right one, but when the minister is able to have that dialogue without us being able to defend ourselves, it seems unfair.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: I don't quite understand your concern.

If the member wishes to be heard, she will stand up. Do you wish to be heard?

Hon. Mr. Silver: It's interesting because it did seem like we were getting a bit of a lecture from the opposition. Now they don't want to hear a lecture back. That's interesting.

This isn't a lecture. It's a conversation about how we can do better with our time in the Legislative Assembly. When I was in the opposition, I too spent a lot of time in general debate and in departmental conversations talking about everything under the sun, and I believe we need to do a better job of our time in the Legislative Assembly by talking about

the budgetary items as we go through line by line as we go through these committees. Because in the end, if we can actually succinct our time in the Legislative Assembly better and address the budget numbers as opposed to having just general debate about everything in those departments, I believe we can get at more time legislating — more bills. I think we've done a good job this session of having a very progressive number of bills on the docket for the Legislative Assembly. I want to debate those bills. I want to spend time on the supplementary budgets where there are increases, because that's what we're supposed to be debating here in the Legislative Assembly — is when there is new cost pressures and new expenses in the departments. That's the job of the supplementary. That's the job of the members in this House.

We will entertain general debate on a flurry of conversations if you want — not a problem — but, at the same time, it's a conversation about how we can use our time effectively to legislate as well as debate the bill and the supplementary budget.

As the Member for Watson Lake mocks me across the way, I will continue to try my best to make sure we have an effective way of using our time in the Legislative Assembly — and maybe a maturity brought to this Legislative Assembly as well.

I'm going to answer some of the questions that were asked throughout the process. I appreciate some of the questions from the members opposite, so I'm going to get an opportunity to correct the record or to comment on some of the comments from the opposition.

I'll start with the Member for Lake Laberge talking about a change of heart — somehow a change of heart when it comes to the Whistle Bend continuing care facility. There is no change of heart. From the minute that I started my conversation about the process, about a 300-bed facility, I was completely against a 300-bed facility. I have always said that a 150-bed facility facilitates the needs of Whitehorse and the region around Whitehorse, so I'm extremely happy to see that particular facility come online.

The members opposite, with documents that they get — a piece of paper that they get — now are saying that we are somehow talking about cuts. I need the member opposite to realize that there's more than one way to get back onto a financially stable path — not just with cuts. We are not talking about cuts. We are talking about efficiencies, and when we talk about efficiencies, it brings up the concept of the new identity, for example, and our new website.

The members opposite would have you believe that this is a huge cost to the government when, really, in the end, it's a cost-savings, Mr. Speaker. The new website is going to increase access to government information and services for Yukoners throughout the territory. The new mobile-enabled website is going to focus in on the needs of the public and the means in which we can continue to expand services online — expansion of services, and not cuts of services, as the opposition would have you believe. By creating a single website, we're providing a better experience for the public to engage with. Since we launched yukon.ca in February with

180 pages, we've added another 1,700 pages, including emergency and safety information, campground, recreation facilities, government events, listings and a directory of government buildings. Since we launched yukon.ca, we've gathered more than 450 feedback forms and are continuing to adjust content to meet the public's needs. When we meet the public's needs, we're reducing their costs as well, Mr. Speaker. You had a website that was organized for government; now we have a website that's organized for the people.

When we take a look at the visual identity, this is where the real cost-savings come in. The visual identity for a whole-of-government approach helps people find and recognize the government services more readily. Our new identity is consistent with the look and feel, and it is about more than just logo or branding; it's about improving delivery of services and communications more effectively to the public. The visual identity helps us to make better use of financial and staff resources; therefore, we are anticipating a return on that investment.

Mr. Speaker, when you have every single department working on identity, when you have every single department on logos and when you have every single department working individually on these things, those are a huge expense to the taxpayer. What we've done is a one-government approach with a brand label that is tried, tested and true, working in partnership with Tourism and Culture, and we believe that there will be a cost-savings in the end.

When we are asked about what kind of efficiencies we are working on, there is another example of efficiency that we are working on. The Yukon Party keeps on talking about cuts. We keep on talking about efficiencies. We do not want to affect the programs and services that Yukoners have come to enjoy, so we are looking at how best to spend the Yukon taxpayers' money, and I believe that we are finding significant advances in that, and that is just merely one example.

We also had the member opposite talking about the growing of government and the FTEs. The Government of Yukon is here to provide necessary services to Yukoners. The fact is that the demand for many of these services is increasing, especially as our population continues to grow. There were 243 FTEs added in the 2018-19 main estimates; 186 of these were in Health and Social Services specifically to support our continuing care facilities and increases in home care. Imagine if it was a 300-bed facility, Mr. Speaker.

There were 29 in Education to provide teachers and educational assistants and support staff in response to enrolment-based growth — to address the questions from the Member for Takhini-Kopper King. Here is an investment in the increase of educational assistants. Of the 242 additional FTEs, 27 were distributed across other departments to support programs, like the new sexualized assault response team, the family liaison information units, the Yukon family mediation programs and also the cannabis legalization and sales.

While this government is making the necessary and significant progress on cost savings and efficiency measures elsewhere, we have been clear that we will not make cuts to

services that Yukoners depend on. The member opposite talks about us growing the government — well, I will ask him back: Is it the home care that he would want us to cut? It is the continuing care facility that he would want us to cut? Or is it the teachers and educational staff? That is the majority of the numbers that we are talking about with the FTEs.

We keep hearing about cuts from the Yukon Party. It seems like that is what they are heading toward, especially when they keep asking about the increases to the FTEs, and we keep telling them what the information is and why it is necessary to make sure that the programs and services that Yukoners have come to rely on in the collaborative care model that we are moving forward in — which again, in my opinion, when you are talking about mental health and upfront health care, as opposed to acute services once you are ill, we will see cost savings in the end because of this government's approach when it comes to health care and when it comes to the services that Yukoners are happy to see continue.

The minister talked about a tourism strategy — the first one in 18 years. We have talked about the Yukon Forum — 16 working groups and countless subcommittees there. These working groups are so important to the supplementary budget. These working groups are making sure that we have a pathway forward, looking at the MOU that was established by the minister when it comes to mining. These working groups are helping us to draw down on chapters of the final agreements. These working groups are making sure that we have more legislation and less litigation, and we are very proud of that. We are very proud of our relationship with the mining sector — from new agreements for road maintenance to carbon pricing rebates for placer miners to tax reductions across the board for small businesses in Yukon where we are supporting the industries.

I have to be honest: I don't have a lot of requests — I don't hear a lot of requests from the industry — for returning to the old days of lawsuits and declining investments. We are bridging gaps. We're having more conversation and engagement. We're trying to be more effective with how we spend taxpayers' money and we are seeing the results of these endeavours.

Again, negotiating a signing of the chapter 23 implementation agreement, increasing First Nations' share of the resource royalties — again, this is good for the economy and it's good for the First Nations whose traditional territories are being affected, and that's where the real money is.

I'm most proud of our whole-of-government approach, our increased accessibility the government has — more consultation, progressive legislation for the LGBTQ2S+ community, the lowest unemployment rate in Canada and a red-hot economy as well.

As we are entering into the supplementary budget and leaving the general debate, I'm very appreciative of the team and all the work that they have done. It's always great to have an opportunity to get up and to tell our side of the story when we hear certain concerns from the opposition. There is still a lot more work to do, that's for sure, Mr. Speaker, but I think in the last two years this government has done an effective job

of new fiscal considerations, new fiscal scrutiny, evidence-based decision-making, relations with all levels of government and I think the proof is there. If the members opposite choose not to see it, that's on them, not on us.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for my chance to speak to the second reading, and I look forward to more debate in Committee of the Whole.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Agree.

Mr. Gallina: Agree.

Mr. Adel: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Mr. Hutton: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Disagree.

Mr. Kent: Disagree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Disagree.

Mr. Cathers: Disagree.

Ms. McLeod: Disagree.

Mr. Istchenko: Disagree.

Ms. Hanson: Disagree.

Ms. White: Disagree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 10 yea, eight nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.
Motion for second reading of Bill No. 207 agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned 5:20 p.m.

The following sessional papers were tabled October 1, 2018:

34-2-63

Yukon Conflict of Interest Commission Annual Report to the Legislative Assembly for the Period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 (Speaker Clarke)

34-2-64

Report from the Clerk of the Yukon Legislative Assembly on the Absence of Members from Sitzings of the Legislative Assembly and its Committees (October 1, 2018) (Speaker Clarke)

34-2-65

Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board 2017 Annual Report (Dendys)

34-2-66

Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees Eighth Report (September 14, 2018) (Adel)

34-2-67

Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees Ninth Report (September 20, 2018) (Adel)

The following legislative returns were tabled October 1, 2018:

34-2-138

Response to Written Question No. 27 re: Alaska Highway West local area planning process (Pillai)

34-2-139

Response to Written Question No. 25 re: Fox Lake local area planning process (Pillai)

34-2-140

Response to oral question from Ms. Van Bibber re: Yukon Housing Corporation wait-lists and vacancies (Frost)

34-2-141

Response to Written Question No. 26 re: residential housing in Whitehorse (Frost)

34-2-142

Response to oral question from Ms. Van Bibber re: Yukon Housing Corporation loans and grants (Frost)

The following document was filed October 1, 2018:

34-2-57

Yukon 2018-19 Interim Fiscal and Economic Update (Silver)