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HANSARD

Thursday, November 7, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
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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
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**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, November 7, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

Speaker's statement in recognition of Remembrance Day

Speaker: Before the House proceeds with the Order Paper, the Chair will make a few remarks.

This coming Monday is Remembrance Day. It is a day when Canadians from coast to coast honour those who have served and continue to serve in the Canadian Forces, the RCMP, and other related agencies and remember those who were lost in the line of duty.

November 11 was declared a day of remembrance after the end of World War I. Every Canadian child learns in school that the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918 marked the armistice that led to the end of the First World War. Across Canada, we continue to hold ceremonies to remember the men and women who defended Canada during times of war and continue to try to bring peace to many troubled parts of the world.

The first Remembrance Day was held in Canada on November 11, 1919 — 100 years ago this coming Monday. Given the passage of time since the end of World War I, the last Canadian veteran of that war passed away a number of years ago, and our remaining Canadian World War II veterans are largely in their 90s.

What is remarkable is that Canadians still mark Remembrance Day in the millions, and in the Yukon, once again, thousands will mark this solemn occasion in ceremonies across the territory.

In 2018, we commemorated the 100th anniversary of Canada's 100 Days — a three-month series of Allied military victories in the closing months of the First World War. We also commemorated the centenary of the armistice that finally ended the battles of the Great War, tragically mis-named "the war to end all wars".

While Remembrance Day has always been a day to remember those who have died in the service of Canada, we are also more aware that the price paid by our servicemen and servicewomen sometimes extends beyond their time in uniform. We must remember this and continue to support these fellow Canadians.

I, along with my MLA colleagues, have once again had the honour of marking Remembrance Day in our territorial public schools. I know that I speak for all Yukoners: It is our fervent hope that our children never have to suffer the terrible costs of war and make the ultimate sacrifice that we have and continue to ask some of our citizens to make during times of global conflict. However, it is important that they remember, appreciate, and are aware so that, when they become decision-

makers themselves, they are cognizant of the terrible cost of war.

In World War I, it is estimated that 61,000 Canadians were killed in action and another 172,000 were wounded. Canada's population in 1914 when the war began was just eight million citizens. In World War II, it is estimated that 42,000 Canadians were killed in action and another 55,000 wounded. Canada's population in 1939 when World War II began was 11 million. By comparison, today our population is just over 37 million citizens. It is estimated that in both World Wars, well over one million citizens were involved directly or indirectly in the war effort. The stunning enormity and brutality of these losses and the concept of a desperate, all-encompassing national war effort is almost unfathomable today.

While it is true that our casualties have been less than in subsequent battles, the danger to our citizens and to our towns and cities in a nuclear age is actually far more dire than it was in either of the World Wars.

In discussing remembrance and the importance of remembrance with Yukon students, I try to stress the important messages that war tells us. We need young people to avoid war and seek alternative resolutions when there is conflict. War should never be a first or second choice; it should be the last resort to settle disputes.

Recently, the Department of Education has worked with the legion to help to increase the understanding of the cost of war. The six-part documentary series that was recently delivered to Yukon schools covers both Canadian men and women in the Canadian Army, Royal Canadian Air Force, and the Royal Canadian Navy during the Second World War, the Korean conflict, Afghanistan, and worldwide NATO missions. This important resource was started in 2016 in Saskatchewan with the endorsement of the Royal Canadian Legion and has spread across Canada from there. Educators across Yukon will be able to engage students in meaningful discussions as to why it is so important that we continue to honour the sacrifices of Canadians.

Before I conclude my comments, I want to remind members and our guests in the gallery today that tomorrow is National Aboriginal Veterans Day. In Yukon, we talk of reconciliation with indigenous citizens as a priority; however, we have a history of not recognizing the sacrifices of our indigenous servicemen and servicewomen who served in the military in the same way as we have recognized non-indigenous citizens.

It must be remembered that status Indians in Canada did not have the right to vote or to be candidates for the House of Commons or the Yukon Territorial Council until 1961. In other words, Canada's aboriginal soldiers, sailors, and Air Force personnel who fought in World War I, World War II, and in the Korean conflict fought for rights that they themselves did not yet have. Reconciliation must occur in many ways and in many areas, but the most urgent in the coming days should be those indigenous veterans who served and, in many cases, are now entering the latter years of their lives.

We also must continue to do better in recognizing the sacrifice of all of our citizens, regardless of their identifying gender or ethnic background.

As Members of the Legislative Assembly, we, like all Canadians, are the beneficiaries of freedoms that have been provided to us by the sacrifices of others. These include the rights of peaceful assembly, freedom of speech, and long-standing parliamentary privileges, all of which have been hard fought for. It is easy to take all of these for granted.

Lest we forget.

DAILY ROUTINE

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

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Speaker: Under Introduction of Visitors, I have some guests in the Speaker's gallery. Allow me to introduce World War II veteran and retired Corporal Louise Miller. I believe Corporal Miller was also the recipient of a Quilt of Valour within the last six months. As well, we have legion second vice-president Terry Grabowski, and Stan Borud is also in the gallery supporting Ms. Miller — if we could recognize them.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Silver: I want to also recognize Louise Miller for her service, but also, other members of her family are here as well. We have Susan, Stan, and David Borud — I hope I am pronouncing that last name properly — and Tammy McKay and Jack Thompson, all members of Louise's extended family.

Also in the gallery, we have David Laxton, former Speaker of the House. We also have, as mentioned, Red Grossinger, Serge Harvey-Gautier, Paul Scholz, Morris Cratty, Helmer Hermanson, Arthur Briss, Lorne Whittaker, Alex Truesdale, Chris Green, and Max Fraser. Mr. Speaker, combined with the Member for Kluane, what we have here in the Legislative Assembly and in Yukon — Yukon veterans who have given a combined total of over 200 years of service. Thank you very much to all of you for your service.

Applause

Ms. White: Just in line with what the Premier said, I would also like to recognize Maxwell Harvey for the service that he contributed as a member of the Armed Forces.

Applause

Speaker: I have the pleasure of welcoming Sylvie Hamel's sciences humaines grade 10 class from Vanier Catholic Secondary School. I think we have a few former pages among them, so the members will recognize some of these students. I apologize in advance if I mispronounce any names.

I have Christopher Blakesley, Brooklyn Comeau, Marko Cooper, Carla Janine Dumadag, Kelsey Forbang, Adele Harries, Jayden Iskra, Kristin Jackson, Joshua Andrew Manalad, Alyssa McCulloch, Cooper Muir, Ian Paton, Mettias Schmidt, Amelia Wallace — I know she is a former

page — Josh Wanless, and also a former page, Heather Mislant.

If the members could welcome this class. Thank you.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I wonder if we could please welcome past city councillor Mr. Dave Austin to the Legislature today.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors? Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Remembrance Day

Hon. Mr. Silver: I rise today in honour of Remembrance Day to pay tribute to our courageous Canadian soldiers, sailors, airmen, and airwomen.

Every year on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, Canadians join together in honour of our veterans. On Monday, we will once again be gathered at memorial halls, schools, community centres, and cenotaphs across Yukon. We will bow our heads and reflect upon the more than 100,000 Canadians killed in conflict since the beginning of World War I. We will remember the young men and women who answered the call and paid the ultimate price on our behalf.

Every November 11, we witness and endure grief felt from their loss. We see it in the eyes of veterans who live with memories of friends who have never come back and in the sadness of grieving spouses and the children of parents lost, but not forgotten. By pausing to remember their sacrifices, we also remember why they fought on our behalf. They fought for our values, for our human rights, for our democracy and our rule of law.

Many were young Canadians who went to war simply because they answered the call to serve, because they felt they could make a difference and help contribute toward a better tomorrow. Yukoners have always been counted among those who answered the call — from World Wars to Afghanistan. Yukoners have left our quiet, northern homes to stand together with Canadians in keeping the peace, protecting the vulnerable, and pushing back oppression.

We are very proud of our Yukon veterans, and I encourage everyone to take time this Remembrance Day, if only for two minutes of silence, to reflect on their sacrifices. There are opportunities to join with other Yukoners in thanking our veterans at ceremonies happening around the territory, including at the Canada Games Centre here in Whitehorse on Monday, November 11. By attending these services, we honour our uniformed men and women, both past and present, and we show our deep gratitude for everything that they have done for us and for future generations.

Lest we forget.

Mr. Istchenko: I am pleased to rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to

Remembrance Day. I do want to welcome all the veterans and serving members who are here today. Thank you for coming.

The peaceful and democratic society we enjoy was created by the efforts and sacrifices of generations of Canadians who have put their lives on the line in the cause of peace and freedom around the world. Remembering and learning about all that they have done helps us to better understand our nation's history and its future.

But why do we remember? We must remember. If we do not, the sacrifices of those 100,000 Canadian lives will be meaningless. They died for Canada, for their families and friends and everything they believed in. Their sacrifices rest with our remembrance, and our path forward is a tribute to each and every veteran who fought for that path.

The wars touched the lives of Canadians without discrimination. Fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters were lost, killed in action, or wounded physically and mentally and forced to live with those scars. Those who never saw war directly served at home on Canadian soil in other ways, some in factories, in voluntary service organizations, or wherever they were needed.

For many of us, war as those soldiers saw it is an abstract concept. Most Canadians have not seen war aside from through photographs and videos, from journalists' accounts, or from re-enactments on the cinema screen. Many of us have ties to wars through photographs, uniforms, badges and medals, and letters from family members who have served. Fewer of us have heard the direct accounts of what took place from those family members. For those of us born during peacetime, all wars seem far removed from our daily lives, but remembrance is important, and we will continue to ensure that our children know the value of their freedom, year after year.

We must continue to teach our next generation of Canadians not to take for granted our values and institutions, not to take for granted our freedom to participate in events of a cultural or political nature and our rights to democracy. We need to continue to teach them and remember the service and sacrifice of those men and women who fought for our freedom, who believed that their actions would make a significant difference for the future of Canadians and our country, Canada. It is up to us to ensure that their dream of peace is realized. So, on Remembrance Day, we acknowledge the courage and sacrifice of those who served their country and acknowledge our responsibility to work for the peace that they fought so hard to achieve.

I do, Mr. Speaker, want to thank the Royal Canadian Legion and the members who are here today. Your guidance and wisdom through the poppy and wreath campaigns and leading up to Remembrance Day are definitely appreciated by all of the Yukon. I want to highlight my fellow Rangers and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in our Yukon communities who are participating in or are organizing ceremonies. Your service to our country is not unnoticed.

Let's remember all those Yukoners and all Canadians, past and present, for their role in our freedom.

They were young, as we were young,

They served, giving freely of themselves.

To them, we pledge, amid the winds of time,
To carry their torch and never forget.
We will remember them.

Vigilance, lest we forget.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, I had prepared a tribute in advance of today, and then this morning, along with a number of other members of this House, I had the privilege of attending again the Porter Creek Secondary School Remembrance Day ceremony.

This annual event gets more effective and more powerful each year. This year, one of the teachers, Robin Carrey, shared a poem that she had written in response to questions that she heard from friends and students about "Why Remembrance Day? Why not peace day?" I asked her if she would allow me to share this poem with the Legislature today. I am humbled, on behalf of the NDP, to share Robin Carrey's poem:

365 days a year, we know that peace is better than war.

But for today — let us remember

364 days a year, let us celebrate that for the most part, we live safely away from armed conflict, from abject poverty and in a country with a safety net of services for when disaster strikes us.

But for just one day, let us remember and celebrate our military, who go into dangerous places to provide disaster relief, medical aid, peace keeping and to facilitate humanitarian missions in places most of us would fear to go to help people who have lost more than most of us could ever imagine.

364 days a year, let us teach our children that there are better ways to solve conflicts than fighting, let us teach them about forgiveness and gratitude.

But for just one day, let us remind our children that not everyone is so fortunate, and that people have died to ensure that they live free.

364 days a year, let us celebrate that Canadians are known the world 'round as peaceful, friendly, welcoming and open-minded.

But for just one day, let us remember the brave and determined men and women who have fought courageously, through horrors and deprivations, representing our strength to the World.

364 days a year, let us be thankful that we live in a country where we have the chance to be educated, to be healthy, and to live long and prosperous lives.

But for just one day, let us remember the men and women who have died, or sustained wounds to their bodies, to their

hearts and to their minds on our behalf and on the behalf of others who are not so privileged.

364 days a year, let us think critically about believing what we hear and see in the media, let us demand accountability from our leaders, and hold everyone who represents us to the World to a high standard of ethical and moral behaviour.

But for just one day, let us remember those who have fought for our country because they believed in their hearts that it was important, that it was right, and that it was their duty.

364 days a year, let us engage in civil action, in lively debate, in orderly dissent and participate in the political processes of our country.

But for just one day, let us remember those men and women who fought to protect our right to do so.

364 days a year, let us try to forge peace with words, wisdom, patience and care.

But for just one day, let us remember that there may be times when someone must fight to protect the peace we enjoy, and that thousands have done so.

364 days a year, let us open our minds and hearts, and hold put our hands to each other, in friendship, in welcome, in the belief of the best in humanity and in each other.

But for just one day, let us remember that sometimes those with power and authority will turn their backs on open hands, that offers of peace will be rejected, we may need to stand against violence and we will need people who are prepared to do battle to protect us.

364 days a year, let us be thankful for our friends and families. But for just one day, let us remember those who have lost friends, husbands and wives, parents, siblings, and children in armed conflict.

364 days a year, let us remember, as a wise man once advised us, that “love is better than anger. Hope is better than fear” and “Optimism is better than despair.” Let us remember to “be loving, hopeful and optimistic”.

But for just this one day, this day, today,
Let us remember those who have gone into the fray for our grandparents and parents, for us, and those who may one day do so for our children or our grandchildren, at times, when despair, anger and fear guide the actions of our fellow man.

Every day, all days, peace is better than war.

Let us honour peace 365 days a year, but today, let us also honour those who have fought so that we might have the luxuries of hope and optimism.

They have given us so much but asked so little in return, let us give them, wholeheartedly, at least this one day our grateful regard, our unstinting respect and our thoughtful remembrance.

In recognition of National Aboriginal Veterans Day

Hon. Ms. Frost: I rise today in honour of National Aboriginal Veterans Day.

National Aboriginal Veterans Day takes place tomorrow on November 8. As many as 12,000 First Nation, Inuit, Métis, and other indigenous peoples served in the First World War, the Second World War, and the Korean War. Today we pay tribute to all the courageous indigenous veterans who fought to uphold the values of this country, and today we recognize and remember the indigenous people who came home wounded and traumatized and those who did not come back at all.

I want to acknowledge and thank the indigenous men and women who are in active service today. Bravery, patience, stealth, and marksmanship are a few of the valuable attributes and skills that indigenous people brought with them to the battlefield. They were often seen as some of the most valuable soldiers among their peers. Many served as snipers and scouts. Since then, many have been recognized for their service and decorated for their bravery.

Here in Yukon, indigenous people contributed to the war effort through their vital role in the construction of the Alaska Highway, working as guides and suppliers. Despite the unequal treatment of indigenous people in Canada, during this time in history, thousands answered the call to join the Armed Forces.

The transition to military life was challenging, as indigenous people were often being exposed to different cultures, traditions, and languages for the first time, although from many accounts, indigenous soldiers quickly adjusted to the new lifestyle. Indigenous soldiers fought side by side with non-indigenous soldiers as they worked, fought, and suffered together. These shared experiences broke down barriers, which created a sense of camaraderie and unity. Through their experience, non-indigenous Canadians learned to better understand indigenous soldiers and treated them as equals.

It is important, Mr. Speaker, to note that those non-indigenous people who fought beside our indigenous members affected our very society today — and I want to just take a moment to acknowledge all of us here who have been impacted very significantly by the various wars. My son had two great-uncles who died in the Second World War. His grandfather served in the Korean War. I have other family members who have also lost lives. But that affected and impacted us today. They fought bravely to make our society a better place. They faced a reality back then that we can't even fathom now.

Indigenous people were still subject to prejudice and inequality — including not receiving the same benefits as other veterans upon their return home. This was the case for Elijah Smith, a Yukon indigenous soldier who fought in the Second

World War. As many of us know, Elijah Smith of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations was a leader in the Yukon's land claims process. His experiences as a soldier brought new perspectives on the inequalities and the unequal political and social landscape of Yukon. He was motivated to fight for equality as he represented indigenous people.

Today, I would like to thank all indigenous veterans who served in the war for their services and sacrifice. I would also like to thank those who supported at home. I would like to give a special thank you to Yukon indigenous veterans who served and who fought for a better Yukon for all individuals and communities. We continue to strive to do better to honour the sacrifices made by these brave men and women.

Mr. Istchenko: I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to National Aboriginal Veterans Day. It is observed in Canada annually on November 8 to remember and recognize the significant contributions of indigenous veterans over a number of wars and conflicts and also to recognize those who serve today.

Thousands of aboriginal people voluntarily enlisted in the Canadian military to help Canada's war efforts. Indigenous people from every region of Canada served in the Armed Forces, fighting in every major battle and campaign of the conflict. To serve their country, indigenous people had to overcome unique cultural challenges. Their courage, sacrifices, and accomplishments are a continuing source of pride to their families, to their communities, and of course to all Canadians.

In the early 1940s, Yukon First Nations were aware of the war. They heard the reports on the radio and read about it in magazines. They truly had no idea of how great an impact World War II would have on their lives after this great world event. In 1942, the Americans built the Alaska Highway, connecting Alaska to the rest of the continental United States. First Nations were hired as guides to show the soldiers the best routes. Much of the highway of course existed on the old trails used by the First Nation people to travel by foot and by dog team. The highway brought a road link to Alaska to help with the threat of the west coast invasion by the Japanese. The overwhelming support for Canada's war effort shown through enlistment, contributions to war charities, and labour in war-time industries was a measure of aboriginal people's willingness to assume their responsibility in the crisis facing Canada.

Their contribution was well-received, and most aboriginal people found acceptance as partners in the country's war effort. The casualties of war included many officers and of course decorated soldiers. Indigenous communities felt compelled to contribute to various war funds. Money was raised and donated toward the war effort. The communities raised money by holding fundraising events and collecting iron and scrap tires.

One of the most notable efforts came from Old Crow, where Chief Moses walked from his home in Old Crow to Alaska, carrying furs for sale. He then proceeded to the nearest Royal Canadian Mounted Police post and donated about \$400 to go to the orphaned children of London, England. During subsequent fundraising efforts, the same First Nation donated

money to the Russian relief fund and then to the relief of Chinese victims of war.

Mr. Speaker, I have served proudly alongside many First Nation people over the past 30 years. I would like to highlight one individual who is in Italy right now for a ceremony, and he will be back for the national ceremony in Ottawa on November 11. He will be laying a wreath on behalf of the Assembly of First Nations and for all First Nation veterans. He is my fellow Canadian Ranger — we call him "Uncle Chuck." He is Chuck Hume from Dakwakada — so *günischish* to him. I want to thank him.

The brave indigenous men and women who left their homes during the war to contribute to the struggle for peace were true heroes. The extra challenges they had to face and overcome makes their achievements all the more notable. We thank them and those who serve today.

I want to end on a note — many years ago while working with the Junior Rangers, one of the Junior Rangers came up to me and said, "Why did you serve?" I looked right at him, and I said, "I served for you."

Vigilance, lest we forget.

Ms. White: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon NDP to pay tribute to National Aboriginal Veterans Day and to honour all indigenous Canadians who have served and continue to serve Canada both in times of war and in peacekeeping.

Indigenous Canadians have stood tall for their values in their country long before World War I. They played a significant role for Canada during the War of 1812. The conflict forced various indigenous peoples to overcome long-standing differences and unite against a common enemy, standing with Great Britain against the Americans.

It is staggering to know that this dedication to country continued when over 12,000 indigenous people volunteered for the First and Second World Wars and the Korean War — "volunteered" because they weren't eligible for conscription, because at that point in time, they were not yet considered citizens of Canada. Indigenous people were not allowed to join the Canadian Air Force until 1942 and the Canadian Navy until 1943. Both men and women enlisted, serving as soldiers and nurses and in other roles. Many served with distinction, winning medals for bravery in action.

But that was all forgotten when they returned home. Having enlisted to serve the country overseas, many returned to Canada to find that they were not welcomed on their home reserves because, as enlisted people, they had become enfranchised and were no longer considered eligible for any of the programs or services that the federal government provided to Indians. At the same time that they were unable to access services on reserves, indigenous veterans were not able to access the same services provided to returning veterans through Veterans Affairs, because they were Indians — a horrific and shameful catch-22 carried out by the Canadian government.

It is no wonder that so many Second World War veterans, including some of our most decorated aboriginal war veterans, re-enlisted for the Korean War simply because they were unable to return to their communities and to their pre-war lives

or that the lives of numerous aboriginal veterans ended in despair and poverty.

Let's remember that, in spite of so many decades of hardship brought about by restrictive government policies, many indigenous communities and people still demonstrated a profound generosity of spirit through their contributions to various efforts.

Mr. Speaker, returning indigenous veterans who had fought in overseas wars on behalf of democracy were denied the most fundamental exercise of democracy on Canadian soil until 1960, when they were finally given the right to vote.

As we celebrate National Aboriginal Veterans Day, let's remember that it wasn't until 1995 — the year that I graduated from high school, 50 years after the end of the Second World War — that indigenous peoples were allowed to lay remembrance wreaths at the National War Memorial to remember and honour their lost comrades.

Today, we remember all of the indigenous people and their families who have given their lives and express gratitude to those indigenous members of the Canadian Armed Forces who continue to serve on behalf of all Canadians.

Speaker: I would at this time ask all present to stand as we observe a moment of silence in honour of Remembrance Day.

Moment of silence observed

Speaker: They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

Thank you. Please be seated.

Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I have for tabling the *Yukon Heritage Resources Board Annual Report — April 1, 2018 — March 31, 2019*, under the legal authority of subsection 7(7) of the *Historic Resources Act*.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I have for tabling a legislative return in response to a question posed here in this House on October 17.

Mr. Kent: I have for tabling the *Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan* and the 2019 Energy and Mines Conference communique. This meeting was hosted on July 17, 2019, in Cranbrook, British Columbia.

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, I have for tabling a letter from the Porter Creek Secondary School Gender and Sexuality Alliance written to the Minister of Education, the Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate, and both leaders of the opposition parties.

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

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

YuDriv

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Our Liberal government is committed to modernizing government legislation, programs, and services to meet the needs of Yukoners in the 21st century. As Yukoners know, we have updated many pieces of legislation to reflect contemporary standards and to make them inclusive of all Yukoners. We also continue to improve our program and service delivery to improve the lives of Yukoners.

We are digitizing our land titles system to overcome the slow and cumbersome paper system used here for decades. Earlier this year, we launched our open data portal, an online repository of information that puts more government information in the hands of citizens to support openness, transparency, and economic diversification in the innovation, knowledge, and IT sectors.

These are just some examples, Mr. Speaker, and this week, we announced another initiative to modernize our operations.

Our government has launched a new integrated system that will streamline vehicle and licence-related transactions and better protect the personal information of Yukoners. The current vehicle registration mainframe was developed in the 1980s, and the driver's licensing system was developed in 2011. Despite having similar data collection needs, the current system, known as IDrive, is not fully integrated, causing a duplication of effort in data entry, inefficiency, and red tape. YuDriv is a client-centred platform that includes a new driver's licensing and registration system. YuDriv will provide a more stable system and better privacy protection, and it lays the groundwork for future online services.

A number of vehicle-related services are already available online, such as vehicle registration renewal. Once it is fully implemented, Yukoners will have secure access to a wider range of vehicle driver's licensing and permitting transactions online. In order to be consistent with the new *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, another example of our modernization efforts, YuDriv offers enhanced safeguards to ensure that Yukoners' personal information is protected and is not improperly stored, accessed, or shared.

YuDriv allows the government to consolidate multiple current systems into one streamlined system. This will allow for increased system stability and superior data collection and will reduce duplication of information. Full implementation is expected by April 2021.

The Department of Highways and Public Works has been in contact with the City of Whitehorse for several years about the new system and upcoming changes. While it is true that this system will represent a change for the city in terms of their

process to collect unpaid parking tickets from drivers, in real-world terms, this new system will require 60 seconds per vehicle check, rather than the previous 30-second time frame. Because of our government's commitment to collaboration, the City of Whitehorse can collect their unpaid parking tickets using our system, and we are pleased to support this continued access while better protecting the privacy of Yukoners.

This new system will lead to more accurate data collection and lay the groundwork for increased self-service e-service tools for Yukoners in the future.

Mr. Hassard: I appreciate the opportunity to respond to the ministerial statement today.

First off, I will just point out that a large part of this ministerial statement is a re-announcement of Monday's press release. However, in the statement, the minister said that the government is now in the process of digitizing the land titles system.

As you know, the land titles system is an integral part of our economy, as it is the registry that determines who owns what.

Now, digitizing that so that it will be more efficient is laudable; however, as we've seen this week in Nunavut, the electronic systems of governments are not immune to cyber attacks. The Government of Nunavut saw their entire network sabotaged by ransomware, causing key government records to essentially be held hostage by hackers. This forced the government to have to switch to paper records and essentially move away from computers and digital files in the short term. We have questions for the minister as to what the government is doing to ensure that our land titles system would be protected from such an attack, as any such attack could have serious repercussions on the Yukon Territory's economy.

With respect to the vehicle registration change that the minister referenced, I certainly have questions about things that he didn't reference in his remarks. We understand that there are a number of changes to the vehicle registration process, and a couple of examples — it's our understanding that the proposed changes mean that all commercial vehicles will now have to be licensed according to the manufacturer's label of the gross vehicle weight or GVW. This could have major impacts on not only commercial vehicle owners, but also on the Yukon weigh scale stations here in Yukon. We're curious: Will all commercial vehicles with a manufacturer GVW greater than 4,500 kilograms now be required to report to the weigh scales every time they're within 20 kilometres of one? Will these vehicles be required to obtain safety certification every six months, the same as larger commercial vehicles? Hopefully the minister can confirm whether or not this is in fact the case. There are obviously many considerations for government to make if such change is happening.

Near the end of the ministerial statement, the minister highlighted how this new process will be off-loading more work to the City of Whitehorse and he stated that the new process will double the amount of time that it takes the city to do a vehicle check, and apparently he doesn't think that this is a big deal. Maybe one is "not such a big deal", but if the city is

doing thousands of vehicle checks a year, I'm sure it adds up to plenty of time. We've seen this minister in particular pick a fight with the city previously over the topic of the airports act, so I certainly hope he's not headed down that path again.

I would also be interested to hear from the minister on how his discussions with Mayor and Council of the City of Whitehorse have gone with respect to these changes which, as I said, appear to be doubling the amount of work required by the city when it comes to vehicle checks. We're curious: When did he meet with mayor and council? What was the feedback he received? I guess, if he didn't meet with them, why?

Ms. Hanson: On behalf of the Yukon New Democratic Party, I want to thank the minister for the statement and thank the many staff who have worked on this project to ensure its rollout. We already have the option of renewing our vehicle registration online and we appreciate that. Having the opportunity to do more is positive, though it is not clear in the minister's statement what those opportunities might be.

Will we be able to renew our licences online? Can we submit our own photo? The minister also mentioned "permitting". We are unsure as to what types of permitting are now done at Motor Vehicles, but we would be interested in knowing more about that.

The minister mentioned the City of Whitehorse and how this new service would result in city staff spending more time to process unpaid parking tickets. The minister played down the impact of this additional time by stating — and I quote: "In real-world terms, this new system will require 60 seconds per vehicle check, rather than the previous 30-second time frame."

Thirty seconds doesn't sound like much, Mr. Speaker, but look at it another way: The new system will require city staff to spend twice the time they used to take — certainly not an efficiency or streamlining for them. We too would like to know if this was discussed with the city beforehand.

Does the minister know the real-time impacts these changes will have? What other options were considered that wouldn't require additional city staff time? The minister talks about collaboration and how the city may continue to use the government system, yet as I understand it, the city doesn't have an option. It is the Yukon government that manages the information related to licence plates.

So, Mr. Speaker, this sounds good for staff at Motor Vehicles and for people renewing vehicle registration, but not so great for the City of Whitehorse.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I am going to start my response by just highlighting that today in our Motor Vehicles system I am "Richard Piers Mostyn". Yesterday, I was "R.P. Mostyn". I was "R. Mostyn". I was "Richard Mostyn". I was "Mostyne". I owned a Mazda GLC, a Toyota Tercel, and a Honda Civic — and nobody knew who owned what. It was messy, chaotic, and unmanageable.

Today, there is one "Richard Mostyn" — "Richard Piers Mostyn" — and they know what vehicles I own and what vehicles I have registered. That is one of the things that the hard-working staff at Highways and Public Works have

wrangled through the introduction of the new software — actually creating a single database tied to one individual so that now they can know who I am, where I live, what my phone number is, what vehicles I own, and what vehicles I have registered. That didn't exist before because this whole system had been woefully neglected for almost 15 years. It was on a server that was more than 30 years old and it was on the verge of collapse, which would have put us in a very dire situation, with no data relating to our *Motor Vehicles Act*. This government heard this, we recognized this, and we took decisive action to change the system and make a new approach to the way we collect and manage data in Motor Vehicles.

As a result, today we have a much better database, more efficiency, less red tape, more efficiency within the civil service, and things are on a better mainframe that isn't going to collapse at the drop of the hat and which was made in the era of Pong, Mr. Speaker. YuDriv will be implemented in phases, including a driver and vehicle module, a national collision database module, an impoundment module, a weigh scales module, a carrier profile system module, a public website, and online services. The full implementation of this system, Mr. Speaker, is expected by April of 2021, as I said earlier.

The new system will lead to more accurate data collection and lay the groundwork for increased self-service and e-service tools for Yukoners into the future. YuDriv reflects our government's commitment to improving service delivery through modernization and innovation. Yukoners can expect a range of benefits as YuDriv is fully implemented, including stability. A primary driver behind YuDriv was to address multiple systems well beyond their end of life. YuDriv will be a much more stable system, meaning it will be much less prone to disruptions in service and will therefore allow us to continue to provide consistent service to Yukoners.

Privacy protection, Mr. Speaker — YuDriv has enhanced privacy controls to ensure that private citizen data is protected. The Member for Whitehorse Centre and I had a great discussion over the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, which we also modernized. I know how important privacy is to her, Mr. Speaker — not so much for the Leader of the Official Opposition and the Yukon Party who sort of just ignored those things, as well as data provision, but that's another story.

Online services, Mr. Speaker — while phase 1 of YuDriv was focused on drivers and vehicles, a future phase of YuDriv development will be to further enhance our online services. This will make services more accessible and convenient for Yukoners.

Mr. Speaker, these efforts to modernize and improve the delivery of driver's licensing and registration services complements our efforts to modernize and improve the legislation that governs our land transportation network. As Yukoners know, we are in the process of rewriting Yukon's *Motor Vehicles Act*, which dates back to 1977 — just before the database was created — and which has not been significantly updated since. Rewriting the act is necessary for the continued safety of Yukoners.

Speaker: Order, please.

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Kluane Lake School relocation

Mr. Istchenko: The 2018-19 budget allocated \$50,000 to plan for the relocation of the Kluane Lake School from its current location in Destruction Bay to Burwash Landing. On March 20, 2018, I asked the Minister of Education how much money would be earmarked for the project in the 2019-20 budget. In her response, the minister said — and I quote: “My recollection — although I am sure friends will correct me if I am wrong — is that there is \$500,000 in next year's budget for the continuation and construction of that project.” As we discussed in this House already, the Liberals cut this from \$500,000 to just \$50,000. That's a \$450,000 cut from what the minister said that there would be.

Of the remaining \$50,000 that was left over, can the Liberals tell us how much has been spent so far?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you for the question. I will do my best to give a thorough answer. As part of our commitment to reconciliation and long-term capital planning for all Yukon schools, we are pleased to be working in partnership with the Kluane First Nation to relocate Kluane Lake School from Destruction Bay to Burwash Landing. This move comes at the request of the Kluane First Nation. We know that this has been a long-standing desire of the community. Several students at the school live in Burwash Landing. Yes, \$50,000 was allocated in 2018-19 — and an additional \$50,000 in 2019-20 to continue planning work on this project with the Kluane First Nation.

We will provide, of course, more details on the plan for the school's relocation as the discussions proceed. This will be in complete collaboration. This is our commitment to Yukon First Nations: that we will work in partnership with them. This is a very, very important matter that has been discussed at the Yukon Forum and one of our most enduring and high priorities as a government.

I know that there are planned trips in the very near future to this community with a number of ministers.

Mr. Istchenko: I don't think that I got an answer. I asked how much was spent of that money.

As I said, the Liberals originally told us that this year's budget for Kluane Lake School would be \$500,000, and it turns out that they were off by a zero, because it has now been cut to \$50,000, which really makes me wonder if you can trust any numbers that this government gives you. Regardless, the \$50,000 doesn't really seem like it's going to buy you very many building materials. It really doesn't seem that this project is a priority for the Liberals.

We are left wondering: How much, if any, money will future budgets commit to this project? Further, we don't even know how much of that money has been spent, like I said earlier. Can the minister tell us when the construction will actually begin on the new Kluane Lake School?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Our government is committed to reconciliation with Yukon First Nations. We're working very hard on that file and are working with our First Nation partners throughout the territory.

As part of our long-term capital planning for the territory's schools, we are working with the Kluane First Nation to determine the best approach for a new school in Burwash Landing. We're committed to working together — government to government — to help meet the needs of residents of Burwash Landing and the surrounding area.

We are going to work very closely with our partners. We are going to find out what their needs are and how they want to proceed with this very, very important piece of community infrastructure. We have to do that, Mr. Speaker. We know that this hasn't happened in the past, and we are committed to actually making those partnerships, working with the community very closely to get a facility that will serve their needs.

Mr. Istchenko: It's disappointing. We see a very small amount in a line item every year, and it actually doesn't really seem — to contradict the minister's statements — that they're working very hard at all.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the current school is in the community of Destruction Bay, and the proposal is to move the school from Destruction Bay to Burwash Landing. If the school moves to Burwash Landing, there will be a building left behind that could be repurposed for the use of the community.

I hope I can get an answer on this question; I'm going to have my doubts here.

Is the government working with the community of Destruction Bay? That means that you have to go to Destruction Bay and actually talk to the people to discuss plans for the old school building and what will happen to it.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you for the follow-up questions.

I clearly stated our commitment to working with all of our stakeholders on this matter. Our Minister of Education has worked very diligently. I want to just point out to the members opposite that we see our relationships with Yukon First Nations as one of our highest priorities. We are working toward reconciliation in our territory. We are building a new foundation for these relationships to take place. We will continue working with all of our partners.

I hear the question. Again, we are working in collaboration with the Kluane First Nation. We will continue to do that, and we will look at all of the other decisions that need to be made as a follow-up to the decision that is made.

I thank the member opposite. We are absolutely committed to our relationship with our Yukon First Nation partners and to all other stakeholders.

Question re: Condor Airlines

Ms. Van Bibber: Earlier this year, international tour operator Thomas Cook collapsed. Thomas Cook is the parent company of Condor Airlines, which is a vital air link between Yukon and Europe. According to Thomas Cook, 3,500 people took the direct flight to Whitehorse from Europe this summer.

The minister is quoted in the CBC article from September 27 stating that Tourism Yukon was to send officials to Germany during October to discuss the future of the airline.

Can the minister tell us if these meetings occurred and what the results of those meetings were?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you for the question regarding tourism. I am happy to stand and talk about tourism. It is very important to our territory. It is our second largest industry and one that we have worked very hard to build out — and to continue seeing it grow.

Hopefully I will be able to talk about some of our work on the tourism strategy, but I will specifically speak about the matter that has been asked. Our officials absolutely did go to Germany and meet with officials. We have certainly also supported the Condor flights continuing. It is important. This is our largest overseas market, and we have worked on this market for over 25 years. We see this as vital access to tourism in our territory. My deputy minister went to Germany in October and had a very successful trip. I am happy to talk more about that, but again, I just want to say how proud I am of the work that our department has done, along with all of our stakeholders, to build a new tourism strategy for Yukon.

Ms. Van Bibber: We now know that the meetings occurred, but now we need to know the results.

According to the September 27 CBC article on this topic, Condor believed that the German government and the state of Hesse was asked to meet its cash needs for six months.

Does the minister have an update on that? What assurances does the minister have that there will be no disruption or reduction of Condor's air service to Yukon next summer?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Again, I want to just restate how important the German-speaking market is to Yukon. It is a market that we have worked to develop over the last 25 years and beyond, I believe. Based on our recent visitor exit survey, it remains one of our top markets — certainly for our overseas market.

We know that the Condor flights are going ahead as scheduled for the next season. This, again, is something that we support as a government. We will continue to work with our partners in Germany and continue to foster the relationship, as it is a very strong relationship. I will, as I have the chance to be on my feet, talk again about tourism and how important this industry is to the Yukon. It is the second largest industry in our territory. It represents 3,500 good jobs. That is the highest in Canada. Tourism attributes to 4.4 percent of our GDP and we want to see that grow.

Ms. Van Bibber: I didn't hear an answer.

In the event that Condor ends or reduces direct flights between Yukon and Europe, which does represent a large portion of our European visitors, has the minister begun to explore options to encourage other air carriers to fill these gaps?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I know that I have answered the question. I did state that the flights are scheduled for the next season. Just this last year, we actually saw an increase in flights with Condor, so they see it as a priority as well.

Again, access was identified in our *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* that we released in 2018 as a high priority. We will continue to work with all of our partners to look at other opportunities.

In terms of access to our territory, we know that — in terms of our *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy*, we are looking to double revenue attributable to tourism over the next 10 years. We know that access is a very important aspect of that and we'll continue to work with all of our partners.

Again, I want to thank all of the stakeholders who worked on the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* over the last couple of years. We look forward to the growth in tourism. We will continue to work with our partners with Condor and to see this great service continue for Yukoners and for visitors.

Question re: Department of Education sexual orientation and gender identity policy

Ms. White: Yesterday, the Porter Creek Secondary School's Gender Sexuality Alliance circulated a letter to all political parties regarding the Department of Education's sexual orientation and gender identity policy — also known as the SOGI policy. This policy is supposed to protect LGBTQ2S+ staff and school community members from discrimination and provide support to individuals facing discrimination.

The Porter Creek GSA highlights a number of concerns of the implementation and effectiveness of the SOGI policy across all Yukon schools. They describe a school system in which discrimination, including transphobia and homophobia, not only persists, but often goes unaddressed by both staff and students alike. A policy that is intended to protect rainbow students and staff from bullying, harassment, and discrimination does anything but.

Mr. Speaker, it's apparent that the SOGI policy is not accomplishing what it was set out to do, so what is being done to ensure that staff and students across all Yukon schools practice appropriate behaviour and actions to prevent homophobic discrimination and harassment?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I thank you for the question. All matters relating to LGBTQ2S+ have been an important priority for our government and one that I've been proud to work on. I know that our Minister of Education has worked closely in partnership on these matters. The most important consideration for this government is that young people feel safe, welcome, and successful in school. That is our priority. We are really proud of the work that the department has been doing to ensure this and to support students who identify as LGBTQ2S+.

The Government of Yukon implemented a sexual orientation and gender identity policy in 2012. The policy recognizes that homophobic and gender-based comments, discrimination, and bullying are demeaning and they are not permitted in Yukon schools. The Department of Education has also reviewed and updated its curriculum and resources to ensure that they are inclusive of transgender students.

Again, this is one of our priorities, Mr. Speaker. You have heard me speak about this a lot in the Legislative Assembly. I will add further on what we are doing as a government overall in the supplementary.

Ms. White: Not all young people feel safe in schools, and that is why we are bringing this issue forward. The letter that we all received highlighted that, while the SOGI policy

sounds nice, it lacks teeth and resources. Consequences for discrimination are unclear. Specific policies and practices are not publicly available. Supports for rainbow students are piecemeal. Systemic inequalities and barriers are still in place, and rainbow students are not receiving the clinical counselling support that they need.

The letter is also heartbreaking. The students describe environments where discrimination is commonplace and where homophobic and transphobic slurs often go unaddressed by teachers. It is reminiscent of a time that has gone by, and it's unacceptable. The system is failing these kids, Mr. Speaker.

Will this government admit that homophobia and transphobia are still present in Yukon schools, and will they agree that this is unacceptable?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you for the question. Thank you for bringing this to the floor of the Legislative Assembly. I think that anytime we can talk about inclusion and safety for our young people is a good day — and one that our government is absolutely committed to.

I will get specifically to an offer to the member from across the way in a moment, but I want to say that we have done the most extensive consultation around the needs of LGBTQ2S+ just this past year. We have a number of recommendations, and we are working on an action plan that includes a whole-government approach.

We are working to change this culture, because you are right: People who identify as LGBTQ2S+ are absolutely discriminated against in our entire society, and it is not acceptable. That is why we are so committed and so dedicated to working toward changing that reality — because every young person certainly has a right to feel safe in their school. I have stated that, and I know that our minister is committed to that as well.

I would really like to offer to meet, along with my colleagues, to further address this matter that has been brought to the floor of the Legislative Assembly.

Ms. White: I thank the Minister of the Women's Directorate for that answer.

The SOGI policy has been in place for seven years. That is part of the problem: It has been there for seven years. Every day that goes by is another day that we are asking marginalized kids to grit and endure while we get our act together. Meanwhile, discrimination goes unaddressed, and students and educators aren't being given the resources and the support that they deserve.

We know that rainbow youth are already at a higher risk of mental illness, substance abuse, addiction, and suicide, so these actions to address the lack of SOGI policy should be a priority. Mr. Speaker, we win when we don't tolerate this behaviour in our workplace, yet every day we are asking rainbow youth and educators to show up and participate in an unsafe space.

What policies and procedures will the Department of Education, the Women's Directorate, or the government as a whole enact to address the concerns raised by the rainbow students about homophobia and transphobia in Yukon schools? When can the students expect a response to their letter?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I thank the member opposite again for the question. Again, we will reach out and meet with the students themselves. I like to hear things directly. I want to again thank the member for bringing forward this matter. It is something we are absolutely aware of. We know that folks who identify as LGBTQ2S+ face discrimination every day. We are absolutely committed to ensuring the safety of young people in particular. They are one of the vulnerable groups of people in our communities.

We are working collaboratively as part of the government's commitment to LGBTQ2S+ inclusion. We invited the World Professional Association for Transgender Health — WPATH — to provide training to medical and mental health professionals. We have extended new counselling services as well within the LGBTQ2S+ community for better access. We have a number of recommendations that have come out of the LGBTQ2S+ engagement that we are following up on. We have a deputy minister's committee that is working on this collaboratively.

Thank you for bringing the question forward.

Question re: Waterside boundaries

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, last week, I raised a question about potentially serious implications for the validity of a number of Yukon citizens' legal title to their land.

The concerns relate to a section of the *Territorial Lands (Yukon) Act* that says that where property abuts a body of water, a lake, or a river, a 100-foot strip of land perpendicular to the ordinary high-water mark is reserved to the Crown, now Yukon. For many waterfront properties, the necessary waiver may not exist, which means that the 100 feet closest to the water may still be government property.

When I raised this with the minister, he could not confirm the validity of these concerns. However, yesterday, in statements made to the CBC, the Yukon's director of land management appeared to confirm the validity of these claims.

Will the minister now confirm that the concerns raised about the potential title defects in waterfront lots have merit?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I don't want Yukoners to be misled, so just let me clarify what we're talking about here. First of all, this has been a dialogue that we have had in the Legislative Assembly, and it really focused on a particular geographic area in Yukon. I want to thank the team at Energy, Mines and Resources for their quick response, research, and due diligence which has led us to bring clarity to the particular situation around South M'Clintock-Army Beach.

What I will say — as I have before in the Legislative Assembly — is that the scenario around some of these discrepancies on waterfront leases and lots is something that has been well-known in the department. The previous government worked on this. This is complex work. I think it will take awhile, in many cases, to move through some of the clarity on leases, but I believe that the department is on the right track and that they are doing good work on this.

But, once again, on that particular area that was brought forward, I believe we have identified a federal OIC that remedies that particular issue.

Ms. Hanson: The scope of this problem remains unclear and it is difficult for Yukoners to know whether their properties have been granted a waiver from the 100-foot exclusion. In the CBC interview, Yukon's director of lands management said that waterfront property owners need to be aware of whether their property has been given that waiver or not. He said that there is no way the government can say just how many lots are affected without digging through all the waterfront land titles issued in Yukon since the 1940s and that, if property owners had concerns, they "should come in and have a chat with us."

This seems to be a pretty casual response to what the government agreed was a potentially "gnarly problem".

Mr. Speaker, is the wait-and-see approach described by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources the official plan for dealing with this issue?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I want to thank the member opposite for this question and for bringing this important conversation here today. The conversation had happened both on the CBC and in the *Whitehorse Star*. A very capable director stated that if anybody has concerns or would like to further discuss this particular issue, they should reach out to the department. I think that's a very valid approach at this particular time — for people to come in. Some people have great clarity on their particular situation, so I think they're doing good work. If people are concerned, they should reach out to the Yukon government and the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources if they are seeking clarity.

Ms. Hanson: You have to give this government credit. They have nailed the public relations aspect of governing. Sending out public servants to fall on their sword while the minister bravely hides behind some meaningless platitudes about taking things seriously is now the norm.

Considering the fact that we get a ministerial statement every day on issues ranging from new DMV software to quadruple re-announcements of road funding, you would think they could at least squeak one in on an issue that could impact whether a Yukoner owns their home or not.

The question remains as to whether the 1985 waiver granted for parts of the Southern Lakes applies more broadly across Yukon. What assurances can the minister give to citizens that the 1985 waiver applies more broadly to waterfront properties across Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I'm sure that the member wasn't deliberately misleading Yukoners with that question. Let me just clarify: Once again, I think there's a great opportunity for the members of our technical team to clarify if people have any questions. I think that's a proper course of action.

In the case of the director speaking on this particular case, it's extremely strong technically. As this case arose, there were some people who were concerned — some professionals had reached out to me and commended the team that's in place. I understood that they had full confidence in that particular team at Energy, Mines and Resources providing a remedy.

My concern all along was that I had hoped we would do the proper due diligence and find out the answers before inappropriate alarm bells were rung. We didn't want to have any unnecessary anxiety put upon individuals. In some cases, I

think that may have happened, but we will continue to answer the questions that people have and work to remedy this particular situation.

Question re: Macaulay Lodge closure

Ms. McLeod: Yesterday, I asked the Minister of Health and Social Services about the future of Macaulay Lodge. As I referenced, two years ago, the government was planning on demolishing this building. Yesterday, the minister suggested that this is no longer the case and that there are currently discussions happening about the future of that building.

I asked the minister if any groups had approached the government to discuss the future of this building, and she was evasive. This leaves us with the impression that some groups have. Can the minister tell us: What groups have reached out to the government to discuss the future of Macaulay Lodge, and what proposals are currently on the table?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I said earlier this week that we are working on Macaulay Lodge. I'll just follow up with an answer today — another answer.

Highways and Public Works is working with Health and Social Services to complete a future use analysis for Macaulay Lodge. Until very recently, Health and Social Services required that Macaulay Lodge be retained for programming needs. It is currently empty. Macaulay Lodge is about 2,785 square metres in size, and the building requires significant upgrades to systems and to code deficiencies. That includes elevator replacements, fire alarm upgrades, building envelope upgrades, window replacements, security systems, air handling upgrades, plumbing upgrades, and aesthetic renovations.

Members opposite ask about lead in buildings. This is a very old building. We would have to look at that, of course, and various other things. Upgrades would likely trigger a larger code upgrade to the entire building, and assessment work is currently underway. Once complete, Highways and Public Works will consider the next steps for the building.

Ms. McLeod: To quote the minister from yesterday — and I quote: “At some point in the near future, we will have a decision made, but that will certainly take into consideration the viability of that facility. For one thing, it’s at the end of its life cycle. Is there a future use for it? Well, that will be determined once an assessment and a comprehensive review has been done.”

With respect to the comprehensive review of Macaulay Lodge that the minister referenced, I’m looking for a little bit of clarity. Who is conducting the review? Has it already started? When is it scheduled to be completed?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I think I just answered that question, Mr. Speaker. I guess the member opposite can’t think on the fly.

But I will say that Highways and Public Works is working with Health and Social Services to complete a future use analysis for Macaulay Lodge. I have gone through some of the issues — elevator replacements, fire alarm upgrades, building envelope. It’s an old building and requires an awful lot of work. There’s no two ways about it.

Highways and Public Works has a variety of ways to identify if a building should be repurposed, sold, or demolished. Three common ways include assessing the building portfolio every five years to determine the condition and safety risk. This data is tracked in a database — again, this is a new initiative that wasn’t in place before. A client department may have a concern with the building, in which case the building is assessed to confirm the issue, and a client department may identify that a building no longer meets their program needs, or Highways and Public Works identifies a technical concern, and the program is moved to another building.

In this case, we have a very old building that is currently vacant. My colleague, the Minister of Community Services, and I recently toured that building. We found that the showers didn’t work and there were other — it needs some real tender loving care, and we’re not sure if it is really worth that. It’s an old building.

We’ll look at it and make an assessment.

Ms. McLeod: It’s kind of frightening if that’s what is called an answer.

As hinted at by the minister yesterday and as we discussed, there appear to be some sort of discussions occurring between government and outside groups about the future of Macaulay Lodge. However, we have not seen any publicly posted RFPs asking groups to submit proposals for the future of the facility.

Can the minister explain why the Liberals are conducting this in secret and why there has been no public posting to allow groups to submit proposals for this facility?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: There is no secrecy. Highways and Public Works has a variety of ways to identify if a building should be repurposed, sold, or demolished. I have just gone through the three ways that we do that, Mr. Speaker.

We will assess this building and see whether it still has value as a building or needs to be demolished or can be repurposed — or maybe there’s another need within the Yukon government or maybe in the private sector.

We are making those assessments, Mr. Speaker. Once we are done, we will announce what we’re doing — maybe in a ministerial statement.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed. We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

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

The matter now before the Committee is general debate in Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 200: Second Appropriation Act 2019-20 — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Silver has 11 minutes and 35 seconds remaining.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Chair, I believe I spent enough time answering the previous questions, so I will cede the floor to the member opposite.

Mr. Kent: Yesterday, the Premier was answering questions about the commitment for the \$30-million allocation annually for the energy retrofit program for residential, commercial and government buildings. I did jot down some numbers that he quoted. I haven't checked the Blues from yesterday, but I believe he said that there was \$23.7 million for residential, commercial, and institutional and \$10.36 million for First Nation housing, buildings, and other opportunities for them for retrofits.

The four-year commitment, I think, that the Premier mentioned — \$120 million — I am assuming that starts in the 2020-21 fiscal year. If he can confirm that for me, that would be great.

The other thing, though — I'm just curious, because we had expected that this would have started — again, as I mentioned yesterday — in the 2017-18 budget, not only because it was in the mandate letter that the Premier gave to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. I will repeat that one of those bullets was: "allocating \$30 million annually for an energy retrofit program for residential, commercial and government buildings".

I know we have tabled it a couple of times in this House, but the Premier was having a Facebook chat prior to the election in 2016 with a constituent, I believe, of the Member for Kluane. In that document that we tabled, the Premier himself said on October 29, 2016 — this is a quote from there: "We have worked with Ottawa, and they are willing to provide 30 million a year for green energy and retrofits..." — he goes on to say — "so a placer camp can get a grant for solar for their camp." I think that the most important part of that is the fact that this would lead you to believe that work had already taken place with Ottawa and that the \$30 million a year was secured, but obviously that wasn't the case. I am just curious as to why the

Premier would say that during the election campaign and put this specific direction in the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources' mandate letter — I know that we have some video of a press conference where the Minister of Community Services is committing something similar to this — and then three budgets have gone through without \$30 million in annual investment for this program. I am just hoping that the Premier can provide some clarity around this for us.

Hon. Mr. Silver: We have worked with Ottawa, and yes, in the first few years, we didn't get there. We announced from last year's budget — I believe it was \$14 million specific to the retrofit fund. But now we are there. Moving forward from 2019 to 2023, we have announced the \$120 million of total combined funding from the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon, and that's where we are.

Now, this is an unprecedented amount of dollars in partnership with Ottawa, and it did take us time to get to that commitment. But again, we are there now. If you add into that the green economy fund — the Arctic energy fund into that as well, then it actually exceeds those numbers.

We were a little slow to get to there — admittedly — but we are there now — not only there, but actually, if you take a look at whole-of-government — all the different pockets in which you can find these different dollars — it actually is even over that.

We're very happy to be able to work in partnership with the federal government to get ourselves to \$30 million a year. We did make that commitment. Moving forward, that is exactly where we are.

Mr. Kent: If the Premier can just explain then that statement that he made to my colleague's constituent during — prior to the 2016 election — again, I will read it in: "We have worked with Ottawa, and they are willing to provide 30 million a year for green energy and retrofits."

I think any reasonable person would assume that the money had already been secured — that somehow the Liberal Party had worked with Ottawa and secured this funding. It took three fiscal years. We're pleased obviously that, going forward, this money is secured, but during an election campaign — I'm just curious as to why the Premier would have said that to a Yukon resident if indeed — I guess maybe he can confirm for us: Had that \$30 million a year not been secured yet, which would appear to be contrary to what he was telling my colleague's constituent?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, Mr. Chair, we have gotten to the place where we now have this investment. I won't let the member opposite diminish the fact that this is a significant investment and that we've had significant investments from 2017 into 2018.

It is interesting to say that — based upon some texts that were attempted to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly but then weren't allowed to be tabled — some kind of commitment — but at the same time, this is coming from the team across the way who, in the community of Dawson City, had photo op after photo op about a rec centre in two different elections — committing to my whole community — not just one constituent

but a whole community — that they would build a rec centre in Dawson City.

I can understand the member opposite asking why we didn't start directly in the first year with the \$30-million commitment. Lots of conversations with Ottawa — and we are here now. We have had substantial commitment — investment in 2018 and 2019 and the four-year expenditure that is starting in 2019 with the help of federal dollars. We have moved very fast to get this into place, and now the Government of Yukon has allocated that \$120 million over four years, starting this year, in the territorial government and federally secured funding to help to implement energy-efficiency initiatives throughout the Yukon.

We are extremely pleased about this. We know that Yukon private businesses are extremely pleased about this as well. We have a great economy right now. People are working. Local businesses are putting these dollars to work and retrofitting. In doing so, they are not only providing excellent jobs for the private sector, for local business people, for local carpenters, and for local construction companies, but also doing their part to help to make sure that we reduce our emissions and turn to a greener economy.

Mr. Speaker, building more energy efficiency into our assets is the first line of action in addressing increased demands for energy. We know that, with more industries coming on line and more mines coming on line, we really have to make sure that our energy needs are being used as effectively and as efficiently as possible. We believe that, through these types of investments — whether it be through working with the First Nation governments that benefit from the \$10.36 million designated for their housing or community building retrofits, including installing of biomass-based heating systems — that work is being led by the Yukon Housing Corporation and the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources — or whether it is all Yukon communities that are benefitting from the \$31.6 million that is available for energy audits and institutional building retrofits — we believe that this is a sound investment.

I hope the members opposite can at least give a little credit that we did get to that number and can maybe let us know whether or not they are happy that we are spending money on retrofits and if they are happy with our plan to be able to reduce emissions and to help Yukon Energy when it comes to providing power for mines like Victoria Gold that just came on line or some of the other projects that could be in the queue — but at the same time, understanding that we need to be more effective with our energy production.

I have to give credit to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and his team for the availability of battery storage — what an amazing opportunity. The member opposite should know that this community — and the hydro facility in this community — dumps a lot of energy through dumping water on a regular basis in those times when we don't have that peak need. So, again, anything we can do to work in partnership with the federal government to make sure that we increase our energy efficiencies, but also look at how we can maximize our hydro facilities — this is good work, Mr. Chair.

I am proud of the work that the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and the Department of Community Services are doing — the Yukon Housing Corporation as well — to spend these dollars. I could go on and on about this, Mr. Chair, but I do see that we are at 2:55 p.m., and we have some important folks coming in, so I do move that you report progress.

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

Motion agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Hutton: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

Pursuant to the Order adopted by the House on November 5, 2019, the House will now pay tribute to Dennis Fentie, former Premier of Yukon. We may allow a minute or two for the guests to arrive in the gallery.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

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

Mr. Kent: I think that my colleagues were expecting a brief recess, so if you can give us a couple of minutes, I will go and make sure that they are on their way in from the offices.

Speaker: We will resume at 3:00 p.m.

Recess

Speaker: Pursuant to the Order adopted by the House on November 5, 2019, the House will now pay tribute to Dennis Fentie, former Premier of Yukon.

Introduction of visitors outside of the Daily Routine.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. McLeod: It's my pleasure to rise today. I would like to introduce a number of folks here with us in the gallery, some old-time Watson Lakers, esteemed past colleagues of Dennis. I

would like to start by introducing the family. Welcome to Lorraine Nixon, Fiona Simpson — I just ask that you would hold your applause until we're done, because there are quite a number of folks here — Perry Tascona, Christa Tascona, Nicholas Tascona, Jason Nixon, Andrea Nixon, Abigail Nixon, Austin Nixon, Ava Nixon, Ken Tallass, and Donna Publicover.

I would also like to welcome Archie and Karen Lang, Carmen Komish and Mark Robinson, Doug Phillips, Danny Macdonald, Wayne and Roxanne Vallevand, Craig and Geri Tuton, Patrick Rouble, Elaine Taylor, and an old Watson Laker who I haven't seen for a number of years, Yolanda Vandemeer, Darrell Peters, John Schussler, Leanna Hougen, Debbie Gledhill, Skyler Hougen, and Jonas Smith.

Welcome, everyone, and thank you for joining us.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would also like to acknowledge that in the gallery today we have our Senator of Yukon, Pat Duncan. We also have with her some deputy ministers and some officials. We have Paul Moore, Pam Muir, and John Bailey. We also have Chris Mahar, and I believe I saw Pamela Hine up there as well. Stephen Mills is also there, and I believe Ted Staffen is also here.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would like to recognize a couple of colleagues from my office, Mr. Brandon Kassbaum and Monica Nordling, and also a constituent and past Commissioner of the Legislature, Mr. Doug Phillips.

Applause

Mr. Hassard: I would like all members to join me in welcoming a couple of other people who I believe were missed today: Mr. Kells Boland, Mr. Charlie Brown, and Mr. Gordon Steele — thank you for being here today.

Applause

Mr. Hassard: I'm not quick enough to look up there. Ms. Judy Shannon is also with us here today — thank you, Judy.

Applause

In remembrance of Dennis Fentie

Ms. McLeod: It's my honour to rise today to pay tribute to Dennis Fentie. Most of us know Dennis as the MLA for Watson Lake, the Leader of the Yukon Party, and the Premier of the Yukon, but I want to give a sense of Dennis the person — the person from Watson Lake.

Dennis originally arrived in Watson Lake in 1962 as a young lad, with his mom, Mary. As life moved on, Dennis went Outside to school and returned to Watson Lake in 1977. Those were great days in Watson Lake. Things were lively. Cassiar and Tungsten were thriving communities right along with us.

Dennis established his own business, Frances River Construction, along with his long-time friend, Doug Brown. Dennis became a spokesperson for Watson Lake on many fronts and was well-regarded for his integrity. Dennis was a

direct, focused person who was respected for his tenacity, honesty, and no-nonsense approach to private and public sector business.

He had the gift to foresee problems and assess people for their sincerity, and something that always impressed me was his recollection of people — their name and their life situation.

I spoke to some Watson Lake folks about their recollections, and Jenny Skelton had this to say: "He was a great supporter of the Watson Lake Ski Club and all of Watson Lake. He was approachable and willing to talk to anyone. He believed in Watson Lake and the Yukon." Others said that, as a Watson Lake business leader, he was respected and he paid his bills. He represented the issues for Watson Lake in any of his dealings.

Mr. Speaker, we were proud that he rose from Watson Lake to the position of Premier of Yukon.

I watched an interview on a program called *Beyond Politics*, and I believe that this interview took place in 2010. Dennis reflected on how, when entering politics, his mom was so glad that he had finally found a use for his big mouth. He also said how thankful he was for the support of those who were close to him — especially Lorraine — and that helped him in his political successes.

Mr. Speaker, I asked around for some amusing stories about Dennis. As it turns out, he was far better behaved than some of us. Those who knew Dennis can appreciate it when I say that he had a sense of humour that could either have you rolling with laughter or questioning his sanity. If you were fortunate enough to have shared one of these moments with Dennis, chances are that you will remember it always and know that not everything can or should be shared.

In the public sphere and political arena, Dennis was widely known as a serious, good-natured, calculating, and fair person. He was quick-witted, but maintained a professionalism in his attitude and his actions. That would remain to be one of his most noteworthy characteristics.

Dennis had the nickname "Mittens". There must be a good story there, I thought — but it seems that it was a family nickname. It was handed around in the Brown family that Dennis was a part of — and a large family of boys, it was — and it seems that a few other nicknames were handed out, such as "Buttons" and "Bows". So, "Mittens" seems like it was a good fit.

In the days and weeks that followed his passing, friends and former colleagues of Dennis — and Yukoners across the territory — took to social media and other outlets to share stories and condolences. It was amazing to see the outpouring of support and just how many lives were touched by this great man. As I sifted through messages, comments, and stories, I realized how much respect so many people had for Dennis. He was a good man and a great Premier.

When I think about Dennis and I reflect on who he was and the impact he had on so many lives, I remember those who have gone ahead of him. People like John Boy McCammon, Brian Shanahan, and the great Buddy Taylor. Brad "The Animal" Labonte and Grant McBratney. I think about how all

those boys are together again and maybe raising a little hell, wherever they are.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Silver: I rise today to pay tribute to a great Yukoner and former Premier of our territory, Dennis Fentie.

It is with deep sadness that we learned of Mr. Fentie's passing in late August of this year. On behalf of all Yukoners, I offer my deepest condolences to his family, his friends, and his former colleagues as well.

For so many Yukoners, Mr. Fentie was an inspiration and an example of the true definition of public service. He first arrived in Yukon as a boy, as we were told by the Member for Watson Lake — a 12-year-old boy from the City of Edmonton. Like so many others, he fell in love with his new northern home as he grew up in Watson Lake.

As an adult, Dennis pursued many opportunities — trucking and logging, tourism, mining, construction, and fuel distribution. He was a business person and gained a deep understanding of our territory and the needs of Yukoners. He was chosen to be the director of the Association of Yukon Forests and also of the Watson Lake Chamber of Commerce.

Eventually, he was tapped to enter into politics — first with the NDP and then with the Yukon Party, where he became the party leader and Yukon's seventh Premier. Mr. Fentie represented the people of Watson Lake and of southeast Yukon for 15 years in the Yukon Legislative Assembly. His distinguished career had a significant impact on the territory and on all Yukoners. Dennis brought a common, plain-spoken approach to government and to his role as Premier. It was this authenticity that helped garner him so much support.

Beyond his home riding, Dennis was also a champion for all Yukoners. He helped our economy grow and he supported the mining and tourism industries. He wrestled with Ottawa in 2003 over the national health accord. Mr. Fentie worked with other northern premiers in negotiating funding agreements that better met the needs of our unique northern circumstances. Thanks to his hard work, we received greater and stronger recognition in respect to our ability and our desire to make our own decisions about the future of our territory.

He fought very hard on behalf of others — no matter who the person was — and he fought no matter which federal party was in power.

Inside the territory, Dennis travelled extensively and listened to Yukoners in absolutely every community. He took good ideas wherever he found them, and he translated those ideas into actions. Dennis Fentie will always be known as an outstanding person who helped shape this amazing territory. His legacy will continue carrying us forward and we will work hard to honour his legacy.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: I rise on behalf of the Yukon New Democratic Party to join in paying tribute to Dennis Fentie. Much has been said today and in the past in this Chamber both to and about Mr. Fentie. Regardless of whether he served the

citizens of Watson Lake as a New Democrat or as an opposition Yukon Party MLA or ultimately as Premier, Dennis Fentie displayed a ferocious tenacity of spirit and commitment.

Having worked with Dennis outside the political realm in a previous career, I was privileged to witness his skill and adroit management of many federal political leaders, ministers, and senior Ottawa officials. Clearly — and quite often quite emphatically — he would communicate the Yukon perspective on any issue.

I think there are few who knew Dennis who would consider him to be a guy who was constrained by protocol. Back in 2003, when uncooperative weather threatened travel plans for the *Kluane First Nation Final Agreement* signing ceremony in Burwash Landing, Dennis quickly turned to Bob Nault, the federal minister of the day, and said, "Want to drive with me, Bob?" — leaving a gaggle of ministerial- and premier-minders to attempt to catch up with the Premier's famed "flying" truck and to wonder what deals were being cut beyond their watchful eyes.

Dennis Fentie had the shrewd and piercing gaze of a hawk, quick to assess both the situation and to seize an opportunity. He knew that it takes two strong wings to have that hawk soar, and so he was not reluctant to take good ideas from both the left and the right wings of this Assembly. His endorsement of my predecessor — and his former caucus-mate and friend — Todd Hardy's private member bills on smoke-free places and safer community and neighbourhood acts are lasting legacies for them both.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, the lyrics of an old country song always come to mind when I think about Dennis. The song goes:

... Son, I've made my life
Out of readin' people's faces
And knowin' what their cards were
By the way they held their eyes...

... If you're gonna play the game, boy
You gotta learn to play it right

You've got to know when to hold 'em
Know when to fold 'em
Know when to walk away
And know when to run
You never count your money
When you're sittin' at the table
There'll be time enough for countin'
When the dealin's done...

Mr. Speaker, Yukon is richer for the fact that Dennis Fentie knew the risks of the gamble and was willing to take and make them for Yukon. We too extend our condolences to Dennis' family and many friends in Yukon and across Canada.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further tributes?

I would like to thank all the honoured guests in the gallery for attending today, and we will now be returning to Orders of the Day, so feel free to stay or not.

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Deputy Chair (Mr. Adel): I will now call Committee of the Whole to order.

The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: We will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

Deputy Chair: I will now call Committee of the Whole to order.

Bill No. 200, *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — continued

Deputy Chair: This afternoon we will resume general debate of Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*.

Mr. Silver, you have 15 minutes and four seconds.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I believe that I have answered the member opposite's question, so I will cede the floor.

Mr. Kent: I thank those members, including the Premier, the MLA for Watson Lake, and the MLA for Whitehorse Centre for the tributes to former Premier Fentie as we broke. They were all very well done, and having served a little bit of time in the House with Dennis, I have some fun stories perhaps to share later — in this Legislature from 2000 to 2002. We can save those stories for a pint of beer or something.

When we left off before the break, we were talking about this \$30-million annual commitment, and I did mention in my remarks and did congratulate the government for securing \$120 million total for, I understand, the next four years — so \$30 million per year, perhaps even a little bit more being spent — and that is great news.

But, again, what I was focusing on was this conversation that the Premier was having with a constituent of the Member for Kluane during the election campaign and the subsequent mandate letter that the Premier gave to his Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. The Premier — I'm not sure — I mean, I know that we had tabled this a couple of times. Perhaps it wasn't accepted, but I have a copy that I will send over with

one of the pages to the Premier — just of the excerpt that I am referring to. If this wasn't him, then that is important to know as well, because it looks like it is a Facebook message conversation between him and this other individual. I mean, if this isn't him, that would be an important clarification.

Again, I am just curious, because, as this is worded, it seems as though the Premier is indicating to this Yukoner during the election campaign that work had already been completed with Ottawa and that they are willing to provide \$30 million a year for green energy and retrofits.

Perhaps the Premier can confirm that this is him in this conversation, for starters, and then just give us a sense of clarity. If he was indicating that the \$30 million had been secured — and again, I did reference as well that I believe that there was a press conference with the Premier and the now Minister of Community Services in which it was indicated that there would be \$30 million a year pretty much right from the start rather than three budgets into this mandate.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I think that I have answered the question a few times, and again, from our platform commitment — and I know that the Minister of Community Services has had the exact same conversation on the floor of the Legislative Assembly as well.

So, I will comment on our platform commitment. I will comment on the mandate letters.

Again, when we were campaigning, the campaign promise was “building up to”, and here we are at \$30 million. We have worked out a deal with Ottawa, and we do have \$30 million a year in retrofits.

Mr. Kent: If the Premier can confirm that this was him in this conversation — on the paper that I have sent over. It is dated October, 29, 2016 — obviously about a week or so before the election that year. Then perhaps he can provide me with this “up to” language that he is speaking about — with the campaign commitment — because the campaign commitments that we have seen are for \$30 million a year for green energy, retrofits and the stuff that we are talking about here and what was included in the mandate letter. If he could provide us with the “up to” language, then that would also be great.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, this isn't the first time that this conversation has been had in the Legislative Assembly. I am not going to comment on Facebook posts, but I am going to comment on our platform commitment, and we have done good by that platform commitment. We are sitting here right now and we have \$30 million a year for retrofits.

If you take a look at the green economy and green energy files as well, we have actually surpassed that — if you take a look at that.

We can get into this over and over again, but we are going over issues that have been addressed by the Yukon Party. I guess we are going to have to agree to disagree, but here we are at \$30 million a year. Last year, it was \$14 million for retrofits, and every year we have more and more. Now we are at a place where we have \$120 million over four years.

Again, with our platform commitment, we are here now with this commitment. I wish that we could have gotten this off the ground from the first year — absolutely. That would have

been great, because think about all the great opportunities, but here we are now — away we go with \$30 million a year.

Mr. Kent: I am just looking for clarification on this. The Premier is not going to comment on the conversation that he had with a Yukon voter during the election campaign in which he said — and I quote: “We have worked with Ottawa and they are willing to provide \$30 million a year for green energy and retrofits.” That is the end of the quote, so once again, for the Premier — and I sent him over the document that I’m referring to — is that not him in this Facebook conversation with the Yukon voter during the 2016 election?

Hon. Mr. Silver: The member opposite can ask me over and over again to talk about conversations on Facebook. I am going to say again that we did work with Ottawa and we do have \$30 million a year for retrofits.

Mr. Kent: This conversation that the Premier was having with a constituent from the Kluane riding before the election campaign in which he said, “We have worked with Ottawa and they are willing to provide \$30 million a year for green energy and retrofits” — it sounds like a pretty cut-and-dried statement in a conversation that is in writing. Obviously, we are just trying to figure out exactly why there were gaps in this funding in the first three budgets that the Premier and his colleagues tabled during a time when — obviously, as candidates during election campaigns, we have engaged with individuals in a multitude of media, including Facebook message conversations and text conversations, e-mails, door to door, in coffee shops, and the list goes on. The question is for the Premier: This statement that he made during the 2016 election campaign was incorrect — is that what he is saying?

Hon. Mr. Silver: No, Mr. Deputy Chair, I am saying that I am not going to comment on a half conversation that the member opposite has on a piece of paper, but what I will say is that we committed to securing federal funding for retrofits, and we did.

Now we are in our third mandate with that commitment, as opposed to opposition when it comes to building a rec centre in my community. I did get up on this floor many times in the Legislative Assembly and asked over and over again about that. They failed to commit to that, but they did make those promises two elections in a row.

Again, we could go back over and over again. He can keep on asking me to comment on something that I’m not going to comment on because it’s a partial conversation that the members opposite have on a piece of paper. What I will comment on is the unique relationships that we have built with the federal government. We have secured federal funding through many different facets in different infrastructure opportunities. We have increased the ability for THIF funding to be locally controlled and locally used with less strings on it from Ottawa. We have also increased the flexibility when it comes to Ottawa federal funding. We’ve done a great job to secure the funding.

Do I wish that we had that \$30 million in the first year? Yes, I do. At the same time, we are here today making good on a commitment. We are making good on that commitment — \$30 million a year in retrofits. That’s where we are.

Mr. Kent: Okay. Maybe we’ll just go about this in a different way. The Premier doesn’t want to comment on this. We’ll work with the Clerk’s office about tabling the entire conversation that we’ve tabled a couple of times before the most recent throne speech and since the most recent throne speech, and we will see exactly why it is not being accepted. That’s work that we’ll do outside the House.

The Premier has mentioned that they have worked with Ottawa. Is he willing to provide us with any documentation of those negotiations that he had with Ottawa? That perhaps would give us a better sense of why it took three years to get up to this — to what will be this \$30-million-per-year commitment.

Hon. Mr. Silver: As the member opposite knows, we came into office and immediately went to work — went to work solidifying our commitments to Yukoners through mandate letters, and we worked on all of these files. We continue to work on all these files. We have done the Speech from the Throne to showcase to Yukoners what we have accomplished and what we still need to accomplish.

I let the record speak for itself as far as the work that we have done — bringing reconciliation forward, increasing relationships with governments, whether it be the federal government, First Nation governments, or municipal governments. It has been our *modus operandi* to make sure that we focus on common goals and expand conversations where we can find those common goals.

It’s our opinion on this side of the House that working together with other governments is the pathway forward. I know in the past that this may not have been so much. We have talked about former prime ministers being left at the airport here because I guess their polling numbers weren’t so good for the Yukon Party, but we believe that, with whatever government is in Ottawa, we need to treat them with respect, because a positive relationship with Ottawa, a positive relationship with First Nations, and a positive relationship with municipalities is what we’re always going to strive for.

Are we always going to agree? No, Mr. Deputy Chair. Are we always going to get the funding right away? No, Mr. Deputy Chair, but what we’re going to do is commit and continue to commit to trying our best, to working with integrity and continue.

When it comes to the commitment, I’ll read from our press conference, which the member opposite cited before about the campaign. I quote: “We want to create a building retrofit program for all residential, commercial and government buildings in order to reduce energy costs, minimize greenhouse gas emissions, create skilled trade jobs and make it worthwhile to switch the source of heat away from fossil fuels. The program will grow to \$30 million per year to implement such an energy retrofit program for residential, government, and commercial buildings. We know the federal government is looking to support the north to transition to a sustainable energy future and we would work directly with them to leverage funding sources.”

That’s what we did. We worked with the federal government, and we leveraged those funding sources. It did

take some time — I will give the member opposite that — but here we are with \$120 million over the next four years for retrofits.

Mr. Kent: I obviously didn't mean to upset the Premier with this. I'm thinking that perhaps I struck a bit of a nerve. There's some reliving of the past and other things that we often get when members opposite, members of the government, feel like they're being backed into a corner and get upset about the line of questioning.

Again, just to go back to the previous question that I had, if there were negotiations back and forth with the Government of Canada — either prior to the election, as was suggested in this Facebook conversation, or since the election and since the Premier and his colleagues were sworn into government — then obviously there would be a record of those. Will the Premier provide us with that record of negotiations? I guess that's essentially the same question that I asked before. Will the Premier provide us with a record of those negotiations?

Hon. Mr. Silver: No nerve has been struck, and I have answered the member opposite's question. I do remember, when I was in opposition and the member opposite didn't like my question, he would call me a "Timbit hockey player" and personally insult me that way. I am not going to do that. No nerve was struck. I am not going to talk about Facebook posts, but I will talk about our commitment to Yukoners. We made good on that commitment.

Mr. Kent: So, again, will the Premier provide us with a record of negotiations, either prior to the election — we need to talk about prior to the election, because he doesn't want to talk about this document, so we will work on getting the full conversation tabled. Will he provide us with any documentation or record of negotiations with the Government of Canada on this since he was sworn in as Premier of the Yukon in December of 2016?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Deputy Chair, the conversations we have government to government with the federal ministers are a two-way conversation. Whether we are talking about retrofits or whether we are talking about getting money for infrastructure like rec centres for communities, those conversations are ongoing all the time. The member opposite can be assured that, through those conversations, we did get that commitment.

I could see if we are at a place right now where we made a commitment and we didn't actually make good on it, such as a rec centre in Dawson, where I would want to know more about these conversations. I would want to know more about, maybe, the Cabinet meetings that were had when it came to a major investment like that. Maybe the member opposite could share some of those conversations that they had at the Cabinet table, or maybe they could share some of the conversations they had with Ottawa when it came to twice, in two different elections, promising a rec centre for Dawson. In that case, it just never happened. Maybe it could be a conversation about how a government switched from a large, beautiful glass building at F.H. Collins and then kept on increasing all of the different assets that would go into that building, put things back to

tender, but didn't change the actual amount for that school, then scrapped that commitment and built something else.

Again, we could play this game, Mr. Deputy Chair, and talk about commitments, whether or not we made good on those commitments, and produce some documentation for something that came to fruition, and we could ask the same thing to the members opposite about things that didn't come to fruition.

Again, we made a commitment to Yukoners and we made good on that commitment.

Mr. Kent: It appears that the pressure of this questioning is starting to get to this Premier, and I'm not meaning for that to happen.

Obviously, there were some negotiations between our publicly elected government and the publicly elected Government of Canada, and we feel that taxpayers should have the right to know how those negotiations went — what the back-and-forth was. I am assuming there is a record beyond just conversations with respect to these negotiations that the Premier has claimed he had. Obviously, there were some that happened before the election, but let's just park those for a second and let's focus on what has happened since he was sworn in as the Premier.

Again, the question is: Will he provide us with the record of negotiations between the Yukon government and the Government of Canada when it comes to securing this annual funding for energy retrofit programs for residential, commercial, and government buildings — which has been expanded to First Nation housing and their community building infrastructure?

Again, I will congratulate the Premier for securing the money — but we are looking for the record of negotiations that led to the securing of that money.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I am under no obligation to the members opposite when it comes to these conversations. I could ask him the same about 14 years of government. Can you give back all the negotiations that they had with the Ottawa government to the opposition at the time? The member opposite can rest assured that we had those conversations because the proof is in the pudding — we secured the funding.

The member opposite keeps on referencing that this line of questioning is somehow painful to me. It's not. It is an interesting line of questioning. It is under that guise of what's good for the goose I guess isn't good for the gander with the Yukon Party. Now that they are in opposition, they are asking for all the things that they would absolutely never, ever have offered to the opposition. So, that's fine. I remember the Select Committee Regarding the Risks and Benefits of Hydraulic Fracturing, and I remember jumping into the Legislative Assembly one day and finding that I am on a committee — without a conversation and without a dialogue about that. I was assigned to that committee.

So, again, there is a little bit of a double standard here — no obligation right now for me to be sharing conversations that I have had with other levels of government with the members opposite. But at the same time, these conversations happened. They happened whole-of-government — not only necessarily just with me and my ministers at meetings in Ottawa, but also

with other ministers as well. Yukoners can be guaranteed that these meetings happened because the money is here. It is in the mains budget.

I'm happy to continue on this for the rest of the day if the member opposite has no other questions — no problem. It didn't strike any chord. But again, that's where we are, and the money is in the mains.

Mr. Kent: Again, look — I'm not trying to put pressure on the Premier or back him into a corner where he feels like he can't provide me with some documentation. He said that he was under no obligation to provide us with that, but I mean, \$30 million doesn't just come from the sky. These are Canadian taxpayer dollars — Yukon taxpayer dollars — that are going into it. We're just curious as to the record of negotiation.

When the Premier refers to a committee he was on — I mean, I have to remind the Premier that, for quite a bit of time in the previous — from 2011 to 2016 — he was a caucus of one. So, it's really interesting that he would complain about being on a committee during that time when he was the only elected representative from his party. But again, I don't want to — I do want to move on. I do have a number of other questions. But, I guess, why won't the Premier provide us with this record of negotiations with Canada? Do we have to ATIPP it? Is that what he's saying — we have to ATIPP it either through the new and wonderful process that the Minister of Highways and Public Works says exists here in the Yukon, or should we go through the Canada process? I mean, if we want that information, is that how the Premier is suggesting that we get it — by going through ATIPP? Or will he just simply provide it to us here in the Legislative Assembly?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I have answered this question a few times already.

Mr. Kent: So, we should ATIPP it? Is that what the Premier is saying?

Hon. Mr. Silver: The member opposite is aware of the options he has in front of him, and he's aware of our obligations on this side of the House. Again, I'm happy to report that we definitely have the \$30 million secured. He can ask me this question over and over again about getting together a whole bunch of documentation of a bunch of different meetings. I'm not convinced that's the best use of the public servants' time — whether it's in Ottawa or in Yukon — because the funding has been secured. It's in, and it seems to be an odd distraction.

I thought we were here to discuss budgets, but the members opposite can ask these questions as much as they want. I have answered it. I believe there are some Standing Orders about repeating a question over and over again once it is answered. I know the member opposite isn't happy with the actual answer I gave him. But again, we have addressed this issue. That's fine. It's 4:00 in the afternoon. If we want to continue like this, then it's an easy way to pass the afternoon. But I think Yukoners would be more interested in us moving on.

Mr. Kent: I think Yukoners are obviously interested in the expenditure of \$30 million a year — I mean \$120 million over the next four years, as the Premier mentioned, to help out with this program. Obviously, it's something that will be supported. I believe all three political parties that are

represented in this Legislature today made commitments around energy retrofits during the last campaign. Obviously, the Premier made them in a conversation with a Yukon voter before the election last time. But he's not willing to provide us with any record of negotiations between his government and the Government of Canada, so we will — we'll just look at other options, I guess.

It's disappointing, obviously, that the Premier will make us jump through these hoops — whether it's the Yukon process or the Government of Canada process — when it comes to ATIPP. But we'll look at our options and see what we can come up with as far as securing any of the documents that we're asking about here today.

I will move on to a different topic. In that 2017 mandate letter that the Premier gave to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, one of the tasks or one of the key goals that the Premier identified for his minister was: "... ensuring a strong environmental assessment process without unnecessary duplication of effort". I'm wondering if the Premier can give us an update on the work that was accomplished along those lines. Obviously, we have heard significant concerns from industry about the unfulfilled promise of dealing with timelines and reassessments when it comes to the environmental assessment process.

So, yes, if the Premier can give us an update on work on this front, that would be great.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I believe the member opposite is talking about overlap with concerns on the YESA process, the Water Board process, and an overlap there. I'm just looking for clarification if that is what the member opposite is — okay.

Mr. Kent: Yes, this is the January 6, 2017, mandate letter from the Premier to the Deputy Premier in his capacity as Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. I will go up and read it and then read that one bullet so then we can get some clarification from the Premier on some of this stuff.

It says, "Promote responsible resource development balanced with environmental management and demonstrable benefits for Yukon by..." Then the second bullet down, it says — and I quote: "... ensuring a strong environmental assessment process without unnecessary duplication of effort". Could the Premier give us a sense of what has been accomplished along those lines? Because obviously we have heard some pretty strong concerns from industry about the current EA process and how it's working for them.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would love to have this conversation — absolutely. I want to absolutely give credit to the current Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. We were left with a bit of a mess with 49(1) when it came to a really important piece. I think there has not been a lot of disagreement right across Yukon — whether it be in First Nation communities that have to deal with processing when it comes to land use and our processing through YESAA or through the Water Board process. What a great opportunity to take a look at trying to modernize an approach and a process to reduce red tape, but trying to reduce red tape in an area that is not going to have a devastating effect on the environment or any adverse effects on the environment. I think that is a really important piece.

The problem with that was that the previous government decided, in the five-year review of YESAA — which shouldn't take five years, but it was a five-year review that took almost five years — to not have that conversation with all the stakeholders. Then at the same time, through the Senate through Bill S-6 — which is an interesting way to go — they were trying to shove a few amendments that didn't have that consultation piece. Long story short, that did not help the industry. That didn't do us any favours in reconciliation. That didn't do industry any favours — even though, out of the four, we could debate some of the ministerial control pieces that they were looking for which were not necessarily the best approach or the best thing to try to put in at the last minute.

But 49(1) is an interesting concept, because, again, if you are in an area like my riding — with the placer miners or Alexco, for example, currently dealing with this — it would have been great if that process had been a little bit more forthright or a little bit more open and transparent, because we do hear from a lot of different governments in the Yukon that, in concept, 49(1) or something like that might be worth looking at. But at the same time, it has been years where industry could have used a provision such as this, but because of the previous Yukon Party government's approach when it came to Bill S-6, we have spent years trying to bridge gaps with First Nation governments. We spent years telling industry, "Look, we're working on advancing our processes. We are working as much as we possibly can to reduce red tape." So, we hit the ground running with some things — hopefully in the first couple of years trying to figure out the best way forward.

Under my responsibility in the Executive Council Office, I went to work looking at the Water Board and that unique relationship in the Water Board. I want to give credit where credit is due from the chair's position — Mr. Piers McDonald, former NDP Premier of Yukon, in his role — we share an understanding about the policy.

A lot of times in the past, this concept of "quasi-judicial" — it was interpreted in a way that really did a separation of the governments per se and the chair's responsibilities, the board's responsibilities, and the secretariat. There was not a lot of conduit of communication there, and it led to a lot of difference and confusion as to what the roles of each of these particular organizations and individuals had. So, we got right to work to establish and formalize that process through my shop. That was the memorandum of understanding with the Water Board and the secretariat's role — who they report to, what the requirements are, how the chair reports, how the board reports, and also the role of the Premier in that.

So, that was important work and I honestly — as I look back and see the process that you had with Victoria Gold and a water licence. You had amendments to a water licence that took a herculean effort of industry, technical advice, First Nation governments, the secretariat's good role, and the roles of the folks in the Executive Council Office — but the chair — that chair and his ability to work in that role and to coordinate — I shudder to think — if during that process — the people who are in place now, including the secretariat, including the board, the good folks in the Executive Council Office — all working

together on a new interpretation — a new interpretation of very solid regulations and legislation.

Quasi-judicial has to stand — it's an extremely important part of the conversation. It's extremely vital that we respect the quasi-judicial nature of the Water Board, but it's also an opportunity for us to increase conduits of communication, for us to work together more on a human basis with industry and redefine that reporting progress so that we could expedite the process, but never in any way infringing on the extremely important role of the use of water for not only this generation, but generations to come.

When it comes to the mining regulation process improvements in general, we recognize that a healthy and an active mineral sector is a major driver of Yukon's economy. I know the members opposite share our vision on that and our opinion on that — maybe just different approaches to how we get a successful mining industry.

The Government of Yukon continuously strives to ensure that mineral exploration and mineral projects are permitted to proceed in a timely manner while ensuring high environmental standards and aligning with Yukon First Nations and Yukoners' interests — absolutely.

For example, the Yukon government and the Yukon First Nations have established a collaborative process through a memorandum of understanding to explore and to advance improvements in all aspects of mineral exploration and development. What a herculean effort of the chiefs, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, the Yukon Forum, the Department of Environment, and the Department of Community Services. This was good work and hard work.

We had to break down a lot of barriers. We had to rebuild relationships, and we had to build up trust. We got there, and we got the signing done. The *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* — the oversight group continues to move forward on shared priorities. Industry has identified amendments, and they have identified renewals of the previously assessed projects and timelines for assessment and discussion-making as a top priority. We agree. We need to move forward on these issues. These are both on the oversight group's priority list.

That's the good news: We have industry, First Nation governments, and the Yukon government, all together in a memorandum of understanding — all together understanding the oversight group's priority list. That's what we're working on every day.

In the interim, the Yukon government is exploring how to clarify the requirements for amendments and renewals for projects within the current legislation, and we will be engaging with other regulators on a streamlined approach. The First Nations on the MOU table have now endorsed the Yukon to look at policies in Yukon control that can reduce duplication of assessment, and that work is underway, and we will ensure that we report back to the Assembly as we can in due process.

That MOU table continues to work. MDS works now — and that work is underway. As the members opposite know, we did provide the members opposite with a briefing on the work in respect to the working group of the leaders, so the member

opposite has that information. Again, we're going to continue to do this background.

Suffice it to say that regulatory uncertainty has been a long-standing issue in the mineral exploration and mining industry in the Yukon. Recommendations for streamlining Yukon's regulatory regime have been a part of the Yukon Minerals Advisory Board's reports since devolution. In opposition, we always went through those when the member opposite was sitting in the role of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. These were issues then. They weren't solved. We could go on talking about bringing up the past, about the MLII process. I remember chiefs calling me and saying that they're not being consulted on the MLII process — which is interesting — if you look at the litigation that got us to that place, that was the whole intent of that process.

Again, a lot of those issues were unsolved. These were issues that had come up repeatedly over the years — unnecessary reassessments under the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* when a project is renewed or amended; lack of firm, consistent timelines for regulatory assessments; lack of regulatory clarity, making it difficult for operators and investors to understand Yukon's regulatory regime.

What we have now is a huge opportunity, as we're increasing the quartz royalties with the First Nations, their share of that. For years, the previous government argued back and forth as to how much of the cut they wanted to give the First Nation governments when it came to how we shared that royalty. We came in and decided, look, that's not something that we want to necessarily argue about. So, we're hoping — and again, with the minister working with this MOU, we're setting a path forward. It's going to take time, and we understand the concerns that the mining industry has when it comes to this process, but this is good work.

We could talk about the YESAA reset oversight group as well — continuing to advance the dialogue and the technical work from the YESA forum that was just held this week. Over 60 people from Canada, Yukon, First Nation governments, the YESAB, the board itself, transboundary and non-settled First Nations, NGOs and industry organizations all coming together. This didn't necessarily happen in the past — and if it did, it wasn't on a regular basis.

The Yukon Forum — I have to say, a lot of that reconciliation, a lot of that advancing of conduits of communication — I give credit to Grand Chief Peter Johnston and his good work at the CYFN and the public servants there. I give credit to the chiefs who are willing to take a look at a new approach from this government and work forward. It takes time; it absolutely takes time.

We recognize the value and necessity of industry engagement. I completely understand the members opposite wanting the industry to be more engaged. I understand that. But again, we have a process. We're working with two other levels of government, and we're continuing through that oversight group to offer to meet directly with industry over the coming months.

The members opposite talked about an agenda that was somehow given and then taken off — agenda items that were taken off. I would like to see, from the members opposite, exactly what — if they could provide — and I'm sure if they can, they will — provide a copy of that agenda that had industry that recommended something and then that was taken off the agenda. I don't think that's really what happened. I think there were two different — we'll just leave it at that.

Again, that's what we were being asked about the other day. I understand the members opposite — because they want to see — I know the Yukon Party supports mining, and they want to see mining happening. The good news is, Victoria Gold did open up the largest gold mine in Yukon history. We're having conversations with some amazing junior and senior companies right across the Yukon, and we're continuing to support them — whether it be through geoscience or investment tours or trying to drum up business.

One of the big concerns from industry was with the legalization of cannabis — investors who normally went toward mining industries and certain plays — a lot of that money kind of went to a whole other industry because there were some gains to be made there, so they were happy to see not only the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, but me as well going on these investment tours to talk about the bounty here, to talk about the renewed relationships with First Nation governments, to talk about the MOUs — memorandums of understanding — and whether that be with the mining regulation improvement process or the reset of YESAA. It was trying our best to reduce the red tape, but again, we weren't necessarily given the best starting position to start those negotiations. That is why it's so important that we give credit to the chiefs whose traditional territories are being affected and also to the CYFN and the leadership of the Grand Chief there.

Mr. Kent: That response from the Premier solicits a number of additional questions. My question was pretty focused on what has been accomplished to ensure a strong environmental assessment process without unnecessary duplication of effort. The Premier identified a number of impacts, but did not really relate them to how they would deal with the unnecessary duplication of effort with the EA, but maybe we will dig in here to a couple of things that the Premier talked about in that response.

We have talked about this a number of times with respect to the collaborative framework that was announced in March 2017 by the Premier talking about working with industry and First Nations dealing with timelines and reassessments. Those are the two important aspects important to industry — they have been and continue to be important to industry. As we have asked questions over the past number of Sittings with respect to that particular issue, I think the Premier mentioned the YESAA reset MOU. Then I think that morphed into what was held this week, which was a YESAA forum. I think he mentioned 60 individuals from varying backgrounds, including industry organizations. It has come to our attention from industry organizations that timelines and reassessments were not on the agenda yesterday. Obviously, we are taking them at their word on that. If the Premier wants to provide the House

with the agenda of the meetings from earlier this week, that would be great. It would settle it once and for all if he has some knowledge of that agenda that suggests that timelines and reassessments were on the agenda, because that is not what we are hearing from the industry participants who were there.

So, I have just a simple question for the Premier, then: Is he aware that the industry organizations that were at that forum — you know, stayed through the welcoming remarks and the introductions, but then, since timelines and reassessments weren't on the agenda, they left the forum. Is the Premier aware of that?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I wasn't at the meeting, but I do know that the individuals whom the member opposite is talking about — the industry — did leave before the agenda-setting part of the meeting.

Again, if the members opposite have an agenda with certain items, I would like to know which ones they are talking about — that were then taken off the agenda. I am not clear what particular agenda item fell off the agenda. If the member opposite can let me know which particular agenda item fell off the agenda — I looked into it. The member opposite asked the question in Question Period, so we did look into it. I did ask, "Is there any truth to this — that there was an item that was taken off the agenda?"

What I heard, from my department at least, was that the industry representatives that the member opposite is speaking about did leave before the agenda-setting part of the meeting. If that is not true or if something else happened, then please — if the member opposite can let me know which agenda items were taken off.

Mr. Kent: We have heard from folks in industry that there was to be no discussion of timelines and reassessments. Those are the two important issues for them that started, obviously, with the collaborative framework through the YESAA reset MOU and to the YESAA forum. I am assuming that there was an agenda circulated before the meeting — if the Premier can provide us with a copy of that agenda. Yes, our understanding is that it was those two issues that didn't make the initial agenda — timelines and reassessments.

Hon. Mr. Silver: These are government-to-government conversations and in those government-to-government conversations — like I said, those conversations are currently government-to-government. The members opposite have been asking these questions for a while now, and the minister has been very clear — if the members opposite would like to listen to the answer to the question — that we need to make sure that the governments meet together, and we need to make sure that the governments in that room — plural — are comfortable on when and where to engage with industry.

Now, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources — I don't think there is anybody more excited to share more information with the industry, because he knows how important these topics are to the industry, but we must respect that process.

The members opposite would have us not respect that process, not respect those First Nation governments that are in that room as well and share —

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible)

Deputy Chair's statement

Deputy Chair: Order. I'm having a little difficulty hearing with the off-mic stuff going on here. I'm a little older than you guys, so please give me a break — okay? Keep it down just a bit so I can hear what the person who has the floor is saying.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you very much. Again, this is an ongoing conversation. I'm not trying to frustrate the members opposite. I do respect their desire for industry to have more engagement and conversation with this now that they're in opposition. It's a good question to ask of a government — to push us, to make sure that we try our best to engage industry in those conversations, but currently these conversations are happening government-to-government. They are happening that way for a reason. We had to spend an awful lot of time repairing a lot of damage.

Mr. Kent: Can the Premier clarify for us, then — he said that the meeting that took place earlier this week was government-to-government, but industry organizations were invited to attend. There were no proponents invited to attend. Nobody who had actually gone through the YESA process was invited to attend, but industry organizations were invited to attend. To me, that suggests that the two governments were inviting industry into this meeting and into this discussion, but they wouldn't put timelines and reassessments on the agenda.

Maybe the Premier can clarify for me what exactly he meant when he said that this was government-to-government but, when industry was there, then their issues weren't on the agenda. I understand very respectfully that they decided to no longer participate once the initial agenda was sent around. It didn't have the two big concerns for them on it.

The Premier has mentioned that it was government-to-government somehow. Maybe he needs to clarify it for me here, but I'm not understanding why he said it was government-to-government but industry was in the room.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I'm happy to clarify. Again, this isn't the first time that the members opposite have been pushing for more information for industry on this particular topic. My comments are — the government-to-government conversations are ongoing.

The specific meeting that the member opposite is talking about — what I will do to clarify is that we will endeavour to get back to him, because I wasn't there at that meeting. I can't speak on behalf of the department because I wasn't there. But we will get for the member opposite some clarity from a statement that we can talk about in the Legislative Assembly as to who was invited at what point, what conversations were public — because I don't know right now. I don't know the answer to that specific question.

The member opposite, when he asked the question in Question Period, made it seem like he saw some kind of agenda. The question that he asked — and we can look at the Blues again — was: Why did we take these items off an agenda? I don't think that is how it happened, Mr. Deputy

Chair. It might be a dispute among members. It's not my department, but we will clarify. We will find out exactly who was invited, what the actual protocol was and what the day plan was, and we will give him as much information as we possibly can share.

The members opposite have been asking us to make an announcement on the floor about progress when, interestingly enough — if we could announce more, we would definitely be announcing it right now.

Mr. Kent: Can the Premier also let us know then — we went around and around this last year in the Fall Sitting about geoscience and the collaborative framework. The minister of the day or the Premier said that we were confusing the collaborative framework with the YESAA reset MOU, but it sounds like the collaborative framework has morphed into the YESAA reset MOU, which morphed into the YESAA forum earlier this week, which the Premier characterized as a government-to-government meeting.

I guess my question is pretty straightforward: Will the Premier invite industry — not only the organizations, but proponents that have actually been through the process — to a meeting with these two items on the agenda?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Deputy Chair, I will happily pass that question on to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Again, we are not trying to confuse things. The member opposite might be, as far as the responsibilities therein, but those mining regulatory process improvements under the guise of Energy, Mines and Resources were a herculean effort, untangling an awful lot of knots, so that would be their responsibility, especially when it comes to those specific topics.

We are sitting down and talking with industry on a regular basis. We will be doing so at the Geoscience Forum as well. If there is a mining company, a proponent, who has a specific ask, they are not shy in asking us at these meetings. I know that the minister has sat down with CEOs and board members of a multitude of different junior and major corporations on exactly these issues. If the member opposite has a particular mining company that he wants us to talk to, we are happy to talk to all of the different individuals or corporations, but to that extent, we have an open dialogue with all of the mining companies to date already.

Mr. Kent: I'm sure that the Premier is not just hearing this as fresh news on the floor of the Assembly. Every time we brought it up, I'm certain that companies and industry associations and others have talked to him about the problems that they're having with our assessment process. Obviously, I think some of them have talked to him about the problems with timelines and reassessments specifically, and I think it has gotten to the point that this is the focus that they would like to see at a meeting.

I'm just curious — the Premier said that he would ask the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources — I believe those were his words previously — with respect to scheduling a meeting with industry proponents, industry associations, First Nations, and whoever else the Premier believes is important to have at that meeting, but will he direct the minister to do that, or is he just going to ask the minister to do that?

The Premier, you know — he's in charge. We need him to direct the minister to do that.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you to the member opposite for clarifying my role in this government.

What I am saying is if there is a specific company that has come to the member opposite and said that we're not having those conversations, then please let us know, because, again, we are having those conversations. I know that the members opposite are on the outside looking in now when it comes to those conversations, but to make it sound like industry has not approached the minister on these particular issues, that's not true — they have.

Again, those conversations are happening, so I'm happy to report that I don't have to instruct my minister to have these meetings, because they're already ongoing.

If there is a particular mining company that feels that we didn't have that meeting about those conversations, by all means — the minister doesn't need to be instructed — he was all ears. He is tirelessly working on exactly this file, because it is extremely important not only to him personally and not only to our government personally — or the roles of the ministry or my own ministry — but it's important to Yukoners. This is an extremely important file. For the members opposite to make it seem like the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources is not having these conversations, that's just not true. He is having these conversations.

I do believe that, as he said, the First Nation governments, they're definitely extremely important in these conversations. I hope he agrees with that as well, but I'm a little confused as to what particular mining company or what particular industry is the —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Silver: I think the Leader of the Official Opposition wants to ask me a question here. He's talking off-mic.

Again, I'm at a loss. Those conversations are ongoing, whether it be YESAA reset oversight under my purview in the Executive Council Office or the mining regulatory process improvements under the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources — always looking to improve the systems and always looking to improve the climate for mining companies as well. We believe that the mineral development strategy is a great opportunity for industry to share their thoughts. I hope the member opposite agrees with me on that, because those conversations are ongoing.

If I could get the member opposite to clarify which particular mining companies — of course, I will go back and I will talk with the minister specifically about whether those meetings have already happened or to maybe give an outline to the member opposite about the mineral development strategy and the opportunities for industry therein.

Mr. Kent: Clearly, the Premier wasn't listening to the question, because I have said, of course, that I am sure he understands how frustrated industry is. I'm sure he doesn't hear about it, nor would his minister only hear about it on the floor of this Assembly.

I guess the very simple question for the minister is: When was the last meeting with industry on timelines and reassessments? When is the next meeting with industry on timelines and reassessments?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you for the clarification. To the member opposite, yes, I have personally had conversations and meetings with industry a lot about opportunities, but also frustrations of systems. In my role, I have had such a great opportunity to be able to talk to not only industry in Yukon, but also industry — Canadian companies that work all over the world or even international communities that work here in Yukon.

What a great opportunity it is to take a look at best practices in different areas. I heard from a lot of companies that have worked not only here, but also in Ontario, about some frustrations in areas such as the ring of fire in Ottawa. That play and the way that the system is set up there compared to how it's set up here — it's not all bad here in the Yukon. The members opposite know that as well, and they can compare it to other jurisdictions. I remember the former Premier bragging about the one-stop shop here in Yukon, because imagine having an environmental process and a water licence process and having to work not only with just a one-stop shop, but with several different First Nation groups in different capacities and organizations.

There are frustrations about some of the processes here, but there are also some great comments about the system itself. The system itself works well, but we always have to do better with it. That's what we're doing. That's what the minister is doing — having those conversations.

I will endeavour to get back to the member opposite as far as the latest and most specific meetings with the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and particular companies — no problem.

Mr. Kent: I look forward to getting that response or following up in the balance of this Fall Sitting and as we get into the geoscience week next week and toward the tail end of the Fall Sitting.

In an earlier response, in a lengthy response, the Premier mentioned the Yukon Minerals Advisory Board report and the fact that, when he was in opposition, he used it. We tabled it in May of each year as soon as it was made available to us, and often, when our roles were reversed and I was in Cabinet and he was in opposition, he would often ask questions from that report in the spring so we could kind of get a sense of what was happening in the upcoming mining season.

His current Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has departed from that practice of tabling the YMAB report in the Spring Sitting. Will he direct him to table the YMAB report in the Spring Sitting going forward?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Yes, as the member opposite does correctly cite, we have changed a lot of past practices from the former government. I will talk with my Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and get a sense of his current plan when it comes to the tabling of such a document.

Mr. Kent: I'm going to cede the floor to my colleague, the Member for Lake Laberge, but I anticipate that we'll

continue EMR discussions as we continue with general debate on the supplementary estimates going forward this fall. I thank the Premier for the conversations today. Once the Blues are available, I'll share the conversations with a list of mining proponents and mining organizations that I regularly interact with — what was said on the floor of the Legislative Assembly. I look forward to their response, and then perhaps their response will inform questions as we move forward in debate.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair, and I thank the Premier and the official for the conversations this afternoon.

Mr. Cathers: I am pleased to rise here this afternoon in continuing debate. As my colleague noted, I will also be asking questions primarily about Energy, Mines and Resources. As the House will recall, the Member for Copperbelt South and I share the responsibilities for the Energy, Mines and Resources portfolio — he being responsible for most areas of that, but my responsibilities cover the sustainable resources area.

To that end, one area I want to begin asking some questions about is forestry. In that area, we have had discussions here in the Legislative Assembly on several occasions about the issue of looking at forest management and harvesting through the lens of wildfire risk mitigation. As the Premier will recall, in the House both this spring and last fall, the discussion about this occurred between the Minister of Community Services and me, as well as — I believe there was some discussion with the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources — recognizing that, of course, wildfire fighting is a Community Services responsibility, and when it comes to a question of harvesting trees to mitigate the risk, that, of course, is the responsibility of Energy, Mines and Resources.

At that time, just to recap, in the spring, one of the things that I noted in the Assembly, in responding to a ministerial statement made by the government, was that Yukoners are growing increasingly aware of the importance of wildfire risk mitigation due to the efforts of groups including FireSmart Whitehorse and Yukon Wood Products Association and other Yukon citizens who are raising awareness of the importance of reducing wildfire risk in and around communities. Just for the reference of Hansard, I am partially quoting and partially paraphrasing from April 18 on page 4508.

At the time, I noted that Yukoners are growing increasingly aware of the importance of this issue. Due to these efforts, as well as seeing the effects of serious wildfires in areas including Telegraph Creek, Lower Post, Fort McMurray, the Paradise fire in California, and other wildfires in BC — and that has resulted in increased public awareness about the risk.

I noted at the time, and I am going to note again this afternoon, that while the beauty of the boreal forest here in the Yukon is a big part of what many of us appreciate about the territory and what we love about the Yukon, from a wildfire risk perspective, people are growing increasingly aware of the fact that, especially when it is older growth boreal forest in and around communities, there is also a wildfire risk associated with that.

In the event of the wrong weather conditions such as a dry summer and a forest fire coupled with a wind from the wrong direction, there is a serious risk in certain areas of Whitehorse

where we would not be able to effectively fight the fire and would be dealing with it from the perspective of trying to minimize the loss and help people get out in time to save themselves and their families. The risk also exists in other communities.

I know that my colleague, the Member for Kluane, has had recent discussions with constituents about the situation around Haines Junction. There is part of the Quill Creek forest management plan that is ongoing. We have also seen the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes forest management plan out, but it does seem that the issue of wildfire risk mitigation doesn't seem to be front and centre in those areas.

As I noted several times in the Assembly, I would encourage the government to work with municipalities and affected First Nations, as well as groups including the Yukon Wood Products Association and FireSmart Whitehorse, to take a look and come up with a targeted harvesting plan that is really primarily starting through the lens of looking at where the risks are in and around communities pertaining to wildfires and looking at cost-effective ways of dealing with it — not just looking at it the way government tends to do now through the FireSmart program — which, though a valuable program, is simply not enough and is not as cost-effective a solution as is coming up with a way to involve the private sector and give them the opportunity — instead of wood at the end of FireSmart programs, which is typically left for people to collect. We have heard from the Yukon Wood Products Association — as I'm sure the Premier and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources have as well — that they believe that if they were given the opportunity to harvest and keep that wood, it would reduce the costs of doing that harvesting work.

With that introduction, I would just ask the Premier a couple of things — or perhaps the minister may wish to respond — and that would be: What is the government doing on the issue of doing that planning work for wildfire risk mitigation? What recent conversations have they had — if any — with other levels of government or groups, including the ones I mentioned? Are they dealing with this as a priority matter, or is this something that has been relegated to the back burner or the side burner?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I have a couple of responses — and thank you to the member opposite for the question on an extremely important topic. Again, as the member opposite knows, Community Services is up for debate if we get out of general debate, and he will have ample opportunity to ask questions of the Minister of Community Services as far as the good work that Damien Burns and the team at Wildland Fire Management and others — I shouldn't just name one; there is a plethora of amazing people, both past and present, in that department. I am amazed at the leadership of Mr. Dennis Berry as well. We have so many good people in government right now who are working on extremely prioritized parts of Community Services. There is no back burner in this government. A lot has changed since the member opposite has been in these positions.

But again, what I can do — the member opposite started by saying that he is going to ask some questions on the Energy, Mines and Resources side of this — so what I will do is keep

my comments to the forest management planning that pertains to the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, because that department doesn't have a supplementary budget, so it will not be up to debate a budget. Community Services does have a budget, and again, the majority of the small supplementary budgets that we are here and supposed to be debating is exactly Wildland Fire Management.

It is a huge responsibility and a huge priority, because this is one of the most — you know, when I think about the public servants who are involved in this, whether they are the individuals who are out fighting fires — and from my community of Dawson, I can think of so many individuals who have made this their career right across the Yukon — let alone the partnerships with the First Nation crews and the good work that Ben Asquith is doing with the First Nation crews and training. There is the Beat the Heat program, which is a fantastic endeavour. I really appreciate being involved with that every year and being able to see the young recruits — getting a really good start at a really excellent economic opportunity in their communities — not even an economic opportunity, but an opportunity to serve their communities. It is awe-inspiring to see the work that this government is doing — whether it be through Energy, Mines and Resources or the Department of Environment or the Department of Community Services — but again, partnering with First Nation organizations and governments as well. It's amazing.

The forestry resource management plans — they provide certainty. That's what it's all about, Mr. Deputy Chair. They're providing certainty for the Yukon land base. They identify sustainable forest management practices and they foster economic opportunities for all Yukoners. Like I mentioned in the past, we have very positive relationships with First Nations in planning on how we manage our forests and have collaborated on plans for the Haines Junction, the Dawson, and the Teslin regions in that pursuit. We've asked Yukoners with an interest in forest management in the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes areas to provide their views on the recommended plan this summer — the summer that we just went through — and that information that we collected — that's absolutely going to help us make decisions on a recommended plan. We're very close in a lot of these areas.

They are sectioned into different areas of the Yukon, so I might go through a few of those. I know that Energy, Mines and Resources is working toward a new forest plan for the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes areas. That work is coming close to fruition. That's in partnership with the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and the Carcross/Tagish First Nation. We have a long history of working with the Kaska toward a forestry resource management plan for southeast Yukon. We have recently been in conversations with Liard First Nation on forest management in the region as well and we're hoping to continue discussions to find a pathway forward.

The member opposite spoke specifically about the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes area. There was work that was done by the joint planning committee — I believe that was May of this year — the Government of Yukon with our partners — it was May 10.

The Government of Yukon, with our First Nation partners, initiated consultation on the recommended plan on June 18, 2019 and consultation closed September 30, 2019. The Taku River Tlingit First Nation — they raised some concerns and made sure that we were considering climate impact specifically to caribou habitat.

I know that the Forest Management branch worked diligently with Aboriginal Relations in my department, Executive Council Office, to respond to questions about the plan and met with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation representatives early on this fall in that pursuit. I know that consultations had been concluded with Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Teslin Tlingit Council, and Little Carmacks First Nation, as well as Carcross/Tagish Renewable Resources Council and I believe also the Laberge Renewable Resources Council.

I know that public consultation meetings and events were held throughout the region, and letters were sent to interested groups and stakeholders, including the Yukon Wood Products Association that the member opposite mentioned. I know that also, following the consultation — the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources has been working with First Nation partners to review consultation feedback and determine what, if any, changes are required — lots of good work.

You can see from all these conversations, when it comes to forest management planning — high priority in the minister's department — really good work being done here working with a whole bunch of partners and a whole bunch of stakeholders. I know that, within 120 days of that consultation process closing, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources must accept, vary, or reject portions of the plan that apply to public lands and must provide written reasons for that decision. The member opposite obviously knows that from his experience in this department.

The planning committee addressed the main values identified by the public, with recommendations on things like mitigating wildfire risks to the community — as the member opposite mentioned, wondering if that was a priority. Obviously, the planning committee would have addressed that. We're in a new climate. We have forest fires burning longer in the season.

I had an opportunity this summer to do a flyover with Wildland Fire Management, looking at some of the northern fires. Here's what is a real priority for the Department of Community Services — I hope I'm not speaking out of turn here, because the minister will be up and he will probably want to spend some equal time or more time going on about this particular department. The care that this department takes on assets that are being surrounded by forest fires — it is awe-inspiring to see the effort and to see the commitment to making sure that assets — whether it be in the placer industry or cabins and traplines.

The member opposite talks about priorities. This is a priority for this department. It is unbelievable to see — you fly over a cabin or a placer mine, and you see forest fires on both sides of the creek, both sides of the mountain, and there is this cabin by the creek, completely saved.

A lot of times in my community of Dawson, there are an awful lot of small mom-and-pop placer operations that are not making a lot of money. They rely on these cabins. They rely on the assets that they have and to know that the department has that understanding and the people of Yukon's best interests in mind when they are fighting these fires. I tell you, we are very lucky to live where we live, and we are very lucky to have the expertise that we do have within Community Services and Energy, Mines and Resources as well when it comes to management planning with Energy, Mines and Resources and the saving of assets through the Wildland Fire Management branch.

So, again, the committee, as I said, has to address the main values identified by the public when mitigating the fire risks to the community. Providing access to fuel wood is another recommendation that they need to identify — maintaining caribou habitat, managing access, and respecting the traditional use of those forests as well — extremely important.

There is considerable overlap. When it comes between the areas of risk of wildfire and the Southern Lakes caribou herd's winter range, this is complicated. This is extremely important. Considerations need to be made in this area. The Southern Lakes caribou is listed as a species of special concern under the federal species at risk legislation. Governments have worked together for many, many years to recover caribou in that region. The departments of Environment and of Community Services, and Wildland Fire Management will continue to play a key role in implementing the plan and have very closely engaged on this key priority to the department.

Again, when it comes to the specific question on the Yukon Wood Products Association, they have had an opportunity to participate in the development of the plan and have also indicated support for the recommended plan as well.

There are other areas I could speak to — but I will take my seat — whether it be southeast Yukon forest management planning, the southwest Yukon — which is Haines Junction — forest management planning — or Teslin as well — and there is also the Dawson region — but the member didn't ask specifically about those regions, so what I'll do is cede the floor to my colleague on the other side and see if he has any more specific questions in the forest management planning conversation.

Mr. Cathers: I do appreciate that the Premier provided some information in answer to my question. That concern that I have — and I would suggest that perhaps the Premier could get back to me with legislative returns, since he doesn't appear to have the specifics here today. The rather long list of things that the Premier read off seems to have lost the focus on the need to do targeted harvesting. I'm not for a moment dismissing the many other forest resource issues that come into play, but recognizing the risk and recognizing the growing public sense that, as a society, we have been a little bit — what's the right word for it — more casual about the risk of wildfires than we should have been, and there's a need to deal with it in a manner that is well-thought-out but so that it is also dealt with as a priority action item.

It seemed to be just one item in a rather long list of priorities listed by the Premier, as it pertains to forest management, and my concern is that, if it gets tied up in protracted planning processes, the work isn't going to happen on the ground. As the Premier knows, as we saw this year, high fire seasons or fires in a specific area don't tell us when they're going to occur, and we will never really know when there might be a fire in the Whitehorse area, the Haines Junction area, the Watson Lake area, or near any other community until the problem is right there.

While I do appreciate the work done by Community Services, the part that seems to be falling out of focus a bit, at least in the answers that the Premier provided, is the importance of looking at wildfire risk mitigation by harvesting trees — being a short-term priority action item that is looked at as a priority, not bogged down in discussions about a long, varied list of priorities, all of which have their own value.

I am not sure that I am going to get much more in terms of answers from the Premier in this area this afternoon, but I would appreciate a legislative return. I also would just note that — when talking about how it seems to me that the government hasn't really been focused on this area of targeted wildfire risk reduction, I note that the throne speech, on page 19, talks about the costs of dealing with the wildfire season. It talks about those expenditures. But it doesn't talk about harvesting trees in and near communities to reduce wildfire risk. That seems to have fallen off the table, at least as a specific focus. I will just leave that part there.

I do have some questions on behalf of my colleague. The Member for Kluane had asked me to ask a couple of specific questions related to one of the communities he represents. These, I believe, were prompted by what he has heard from constituents. What work is forest resources doing to address fire mitigation in communities including Haines Junction? Also, the Quill Creek forest management plan is underway, so how much is fire mitigation taken into consideration in these plans and is it a specific focus as a priority? As well, what work has been done with the forest management branch and the Village of Haines Junction and the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations with respect to community fire mitigation? Also, has the Yukon government been working with Parks Canada, which is also a key player in this?

On a related matter — since it relates to what the Yukon Wood Products Association has been asking for and pitching as part of arguing that there are upsides to targeted harvesting — there is the opportunity for developing more biomass, taking the wood that has been harvested in and near communities and then using that to ultimately burn and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. Is there a government policy or directive that requires upgrading Yukon government buildings' heat sources to use green energy options like biomass? Other than in Teslin, is the government looking at other communities for biomass? If so, can they provide some specific examples?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I have to take a little bit of issue with how the member opposite is trying to make it seem like we somehow aren't prioritizing Wildland Fire Management in general debate here when — if the member opposite wants to

get to very comprehensive questions and answers about Community Services, that's one of the two or three departments that does have a line item here in the supplementary budget, and that one line item is Wildland Fire Management. It's forest fires.

So, for him to say that somehow it's not a priority — because (1) during House Leaders, the members opposite said they wanted to talk about Energy, Mines and Resources today, so I'm happy to talk about Energy, Mines and Resources today, and (2) the member opposite knows that, if he really does want to — if it is a priority to him, then he has ample opportunity to spend as much time as he wants with the Minister of Community Services on exactly this topic, if we can be set free from general debate at some time.

It's just such an interesting — it's too bad, because I think it just demeans the conversation here when the member opposite makes it seem like he's being genuine in his desire to have a thorough conversation on Wildland Fire Management when he knows exactly how to do that. If the general policy — what we have usually done is general debate, and I have been very happy to talk about those departments that aren't in a line item in this bill that we're supposedly debating, and then once general debate is done, then the member opposite has so much time — depending on, I mean, if we can get there. I can see maybe they don't want to get to Community Services, because — well, I'll challenge — the department is doing an awful lot of work and a lot of change, change that hadn't been done in the past, actually.

I know that my Minister of Community Services is champing at the bit — I know that for a fact — to have this conversation, and the member opposite knows exactly how to do that. So, what I will do is continue to answer the questions, based upon House Leaders' direction today, when it comes to Energy, Mines and Resources' component about forest management and forest planning.

The member opposite asked me to go on a bit more about some of the specific other regions, so I will. I'll take this opportunity to do that, and I thank the member opposite for the ability for me to speak on the Energy, Mines and Resources side of the forest management planning process.

But again — for the record for Hansard — my attempt here is not to somehow belittle or not prioritize Wildland Fire Management as a department or as an issue. My goodness, it's a huge issue — it absolutely is. We will definitely do our best to answer all of the questions that the member opposite has because the good news is that Community Services is here in this particular *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* schedule A. Community Services has a supplementary of \$19 million and it's very, very specific to Wildland Fire Management. There's a certain amount of dollars to that. There's a certain amount of dollars dedicated to infrastructure. I hope I don't get accused because I'm not talking about infrastructure in this answer — that somehow that's not a priority either — but the member opposite knows exactly how to get to there.

What I could do — maybe I'll start with the biomass strategies that the member opposite talked about and then I'll get back to the forest management in general.

As you know, Mr. Deputy Chair, our government continues to support the use of wood for heat and electricity and to develop local sources of renewable energy to meet our growing energy needs and to move the territory toward a sustainable and self-reliant energy future. When we're working with First Nation and municipal governments, Yukon businesses, and individual Yukoners to develop local opportunities related to the use of biomass, we have to rely on industry professionals who we have — and we have many of them here in the Yukon. This will reduce our collective greenhouse gas emissions and provide the means to diversify economies of Yukon communities. It's fantastic work, really. The Government of Yukon is working with the indigenous forestry initiative through NRCan to provide \$1.4 million in funding support of the exploration of biomass related to opportunities for First Nation governments. My goodness, we have an awful lot of very active First Nation communities and development corporations that are working on this file.

We're also working to support the uptake of biomass heating systems through an inclusion of heating system improvements, including the installation of biomass boilers. The \$17 million in the good energy commercial rebate program is a great example. Also to that end, the 2016 Yukon biomass energy strategy provides direction to the Government of Yukon for that continuing development of a sustainable forestry industry, reducing consumption of fossil fuels, the diversification of Yukon's economy — as I mentioned — but also the regulation of particulate emissions.

In addition to reducing the greenhouse gas emissions and also providing local economic development, the use of biomass for heat or electricity also supports job creation. It supports infrastructure renewal, improving local resilience to the impacts of climate change and to wealth retention in Yukon communities. There is great work going on by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources to accomplish some really neat projects here, working in partnership with First Nations as well.

I would note that, over the last three years, the Government of Yukon has worked with nine First Nation governments and one First Nation development corporation to undertake and complete 20 different projects, Mr. Deputy Chair, including community development planning, feasibility studies, and the installation of three biomass boilers in their communities. That is a lot of work. That is exponential growth compared to where we used to be in this particular department.

These initiatives include examples like the refurbishment of existing biomass district heating systems — owned and operated by the Kluane First Nation, for example — and also the installation of smaller boiler systems by the Carcross/Tagish First Nation, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, and the Ta'an Kwäch'an' development corporation as well — Da Daghay.

There is lots of work going on here, and I don't have a lot of time to go into it, because I know the member opposite wants me to speak about the forest management plans in general in different jurisdictions in the Yukon. I want to say as well that, in April of this year, the Government of Yukon co-hosted the first Alaska-Yukon Wood Energy Conference in Fairbanks,

Alaska — the first, and what a great partnership with a massive partner and a massive neighbour beside us.

It is interesting — I had a great conversation down in Watson Lake with an individual, Derek Loots, who is no stranger to the forestry industry. What amazing partnerships we have with First Nation groups that are transboundary. They don't see a line between a smaller investment in our forestry with a bigger investment that transcends Yukon and BC but is all within the traditional territory of certain transboundary First Nations. It is so great to see the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources moving on so many files, whether it be with our partners in Alaska, our transboundary First Nations, or associations here in Yukon.

The Government of Yukon has organized and led a tour of nine biomass operations in Yukon and Alaska by five Yukon First Nations, Government of Yukon staff, Government of Canada, and also private sector members. That is some fantastic work that is happening in the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources these days.

The Government of Yukon is also currently working with CanmetENERGY — that is the Government of Canada — the Alaska Energy Authority, and the Southeast Conference in Alaska and also just to organize a second Alaska-Yukon wood energy conference in 2021 — not a one-off. This is important work and we have to keep moving on this.

Just one more thing on the biomass strategy — and I could go on, because there is so much work going on in this department. Thank you to the public servants who are leading these files — it is such great work.

We are also, through Energy, Mines and Resources, working with Hvactech to explore the development of a market for combined heat and power by the private sector in Whitehorse — just fantastic. You know, as we look at more mines coming on line, a booming economy, a need for us to think outside the box — how important is this work? It is unbelievably important.

The member opposite talks about priorities. Finally, we are working on these things because these are priorities for this government. It is amazing work, and I want to again send out my appreciation to the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources not only for the work that they do as a government, but it is one thing coming in with a mandate for a whole-of-government approach, but to be countered by that on a public servant who says, "Yes, not only internally to government, but we want to see that whole-of-government approach to our partners in different governments and to our partners in the industry" — and to watch the public servants take this lead and run with it, it is fantastic to watch, and it is a humbling experience to be the Premier with such an amazingly dedicated team of public servants.

The member opposite was talking about specifically — I went on to talk about the good work in the Whitehorse-Southern Lakes area, but I will continue with the forest management planning, as he asked for, in the other jurisdictions.

With Dawson, there were a lot of collaborative efforts with the Dawson forest management planning team to implement a

forest management program. That is ongoing work right now within the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources — and that is the Government of Yukon, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, and the Dawson Renewable Resources Council. They did complete a timber supply analysis which will support the annual allowable-cut determination. That's some good, ongoing work.

When it comes to specifically the southeast Yukon, the Yukon government was engaged with Kaska representatives on a review of the draft plan in 2016, with funding provided under the framework agreement planning. The planning there stalled when parties began developing a work plan to outline steps and timelines to conclude a recommended plan, but the Government of Yukon concluded that it is not possible to continue with the existing process. There was an internal analysis, and that determined that it was unlikely that the draft plan would qualify, pursuant to section 14 of the *Forest Resources Act*, as it does not meet the consultation requirements or the common-law duty to consult with other First Nations or with transboundary First Nations within the planning boundary.

The preferred approach is to establish a new planning area for the purpose of developing a forest resources management plan under the act. More recently, though, the forest management branch has been in discussions with the Liard First Nation on a range of forestry issues, including concerns regarding past practices, potential impacts of timber harvesting — fuel abatement, for example — the pursuit of biomass heat, and participation in the *Forest Resources Act* reviewing process.

The Liard First Nation indicated their interest in establishing a forestry table to address these concerns at the government-to-government level — so good work happening there. The Liard First Nation, with Chief Morgan, indicated that it is seeking to move forward with forest management planning and also timber harvesting in a manner that respects community interests, and not only respecting community interests, but also making sure that it's environmentally responsible and also maintains — and this is of utmost importance — Kaska aboriginal rights and title.

The Government of Yukon and also the Liard First Nation are working toward establishing a funding agreement that supports participation in the *Forest Resources Act* review, forest management planning, and estimates of a forest table. A licence to harvest timber burned at Cache Creek was issued to the first Kaska development corporation, and that was this summer, in August.

The member opposite asked about Haines Junction when it comes to forest management planning. To note, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations and the Government of Yukon did sign a renewed forestry implementation agreement in April 2018. This agreement provides a forward-looking long-term focus for collaborative forest management within the traditional territory and builds on many successes that have been achieved in the region to date.

The Yukon government, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, and also the Alsek Renewable Resources Council are working together on implementing priorities on initiating the

annual allowable cut decisions, developing a monitoring program, and fuel abatement planning as well.

A timber supply analysis has been completed and the department — they met with Champagne and Aishihik First Nations to confirm the shared work plan priorities and to plan for this fall. That's some of the good work there and a little bit of an update for the member opposite.

Last but not least, when it comes to the forest management planning and an update for the member opposite — because I know he's interested in this file — the Teslin Tlingit Council is moving forward with a community biomass heating project that requires the implementation of that 2007 forestry resource management plan to secure a sustainable wood supply. On that, our government is working with the Teslin Tlingit Council to develop a timber harvest plan and to advance other forestry resource management plan implementation activities such as the monitoring program and the public consultation of the timber harvest plan. That ended June 17, 2019.

Again, to reiterate, it's great to see the good work being done by forest management planning through the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources — not to say that Wildland Fire Management has not also been a priority when we're talking about planning for our forests. But again, the member opposite has an opportunity when Community Services does appear here in Committee of the Whole on the *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20* — and of course, because there's no extra funding needed for the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, they're not up for debate in the Legislative Assembly at this time. But I'm happy to continue to answer questions on behalf of the department here in general debate.

Mr. Cathers: It's unfortunate — from the way the Premier began his response to my last question and the way he finished it — it seems that he really was not getting what I was saying. I will simplify it for him.

I am asking about harvesting the trees in a targeted manner so that they don't burn. That is primarily an Energy, Mines and Resources responsibility — not to take away from the good work done by Community Services' Wildland Fire Management branch, but if it gets to that stage, you already have a problem — you already have a fire.

We're talking about proactive work and an opportunity for the private sector as well as First Nation development corporations to do targeted harvesting of timber in and near communities based on a prioritized plan and then to use that for things, including biomass heating.

I'm going to move on to other topics, just in light of the time. I do have to point out that talking about talk and conferences and photo opportunities, and tours doesn't actually result in action on the ground, and we do need to get to the point of action happening. I would also note — so just moving on to other questions here that colleagues have asked.

The St. Elias school had, I believe, an RFQ put out a few years ago for biomass to heat the school. Nothing appears to have happened in that area, but now there's a tender out for a propane furnace to heat the school. Have they abandoned the idea of going with biomass, and if so, why? The same with regard to Watson Lake — I believe it was an RFQ or an RFP

type of process looking at biomass heating there that was out at one point and seems to have gone by the wayside. Has that been abandoned, or is the government proceeding with that?

I would just note that we have heard from the Yukon Wood Products Association contractors that they are frustrated by the lack of action in the area of biomass. I just have to point out that, while the Premier spent a fair bit of time talking about forest management plans, et cetera — and various matters covered by it — in looking at the plans that I have seen so far, there doesn't seem to be the focus that really should be there in terms of targeted harvesting for wildfire risk mitigation — not that there's no mention of it, but it just does not seem to be doing enough or moving quickly enough.

I will just leave that there, moving on to other areas. I'm just going to ask the Premier again for an update on more planning work in other areas of EMR that seem to be largely stalled. I'm going to begin in my riding with the Shallow Bay zoning discussions about potentially allowing subdivisions.

As the Premier probably knows and the minister will certainly know, there was a survey done in the tail-end of the time that we were in office asking property owners if they wanted to see rural residential lots be able to be subdivided. There was an extremely high participation rate from property owners. If memory serves, I believe it was around 79 percent who responded. There was clear interest. The majority wanted the ability to subdivide. While there were people who did not favour it, it was also quite clear from the results that the majority of property owners wanted subdivision of rural residential land — similar to what has occurred in the adjacent Mayo Road area, the Hot Springs Road area, as well as areas south of town and in the Ibex Valley area.

I am hearing frustration from constituents that it seems like that process has largely stalled. At the beginning of the summer, a letter was sent out to residents indicating that the land planner who was on it wouldn't be working on the file there, and they were not providing clarity about what would happen regarding the process. Can the Premier provide an update of what the status is of that process, when people will see some tangible results — including a proposal coming out of the committee that has been developed — and also when or if the government actually plans to amend the regulations?

The other one I would ask about is the Fox Lake local area plan. The planning process started, I believe, seven years ago. At the last public meeting I attended, there was very little sign of any actual progress. There was a discussion about what the area meant to people. I'm not saying that this had no value, but it didn't seem to be having any tangible results in that area — so if the Premier could provide an update on what the status of that is.

In recognizing, Mr. Deputy Chair, that our time is relatively short here this afternoon and in the interest of getting to questions that perhaps the Premier can reply and provide answers to — the sheep and goat control order is an area that — while noting that I recognize, as do my colleagues, and appreciate the importance of keeping our wild populations of sheep and goats disease-free and recognizing in particular the concerns around Movi — one concern that I've heard from

constituents, which is even acknowledged in the government's own documents regarding that, is that people feel that there wasn't a lot of consultation in developing the control order.

The control order provided a lot of power to the government, and then the details of that — the fencing requirements that people are being forced to pay for have been downloaded to them with a requirement that they have it in place by the beginning of this upcoming January, which effectively means, of course, that if you need to put in fenceposts, your deadline for installing those new fences is whenever the ground freezes hard in the fall. It may not be impossible, but it is certainly not practical to put in fenceposts after that. Recognizing that the government has paid for some of the costs of installing the fencing, what they haven't done is pay for the labour costs and people's time, which in some cases — as I have heard from constituents and others, including constituents of the Minister of Community Services — has posed a concern for people about their ability to actually comply with the order.

I'm just quoting from the government's own document — this being their "what we heard" document, which was actually after-the-fact consultation. They had issued the order and then they consulted. That "what we heard" document said on page 7: "We also heard that some groups felt frustrated by not being consulted in developing the control order or examining options before the control order was decided on as the approach. Some groups were surprised by the announcement of the control order and were worried about the lack of detail initially provided about how certain elements of the order would be implemented." Again, that is page 7 of the "what we heard" document that the government issued on, I believe, the engageyukon website, entitled "What we heard: Control order for domestic sheep and goats". Again, that stakeholder engagement was actually after the decision had been made, which is unfortunately becoming far too common with this government.

My question with that is: What have the impacts of that been? I know that I have heard from constituents and others who were concerned that they might not be able to comply with the order by the hard deadline set of January 1. They are concerned about the costs of the order, concerned about the requirements in the order — that if they weren't prepared to do the fencing — again, the fencing requirements themselves have not been clearly defined in the order. They are being decided by Energy, Mines and Resources.

We have seen a situation here where this order, signed and implemented by two ministers and, of course, completely up to the government to change or modify the order, including either extending its date or modifying certain provisions of it — the question is: How many farms have been impacted by this control order? How many have applied for funding and received funding?

How many farms, at the current time, are looking like they will not be able to comply with the fencing requirements of the control order and thus may be forced to destroy animals to comply with the control order on January 1? Does the Premier have an estimate of how many animals are likely to be killed if

the government doesn't modify the control order? To that end, as well, if there are animals that the owners are going to have to destroy because of the wording of the control order, is the government prepared to modify that control order to give them more time to comply with the provisions of it and not result in them having to destroy stock?

Mr. Deputy Chair, just noting the time that we're at, I would just add two final questions regarding that. I have heard concerns about the lack of flexibility of veterinarians working for government in attending people's farms to do testing, including people who have advised me that they have had to take time off work to comply with the testing requirements and the staff not being able or permitted to go out after-hours, apparently. I would also ask the Premier: Have there been any animals that have been destroyed as a result of the control order already that government has paid compensation for or will pay compensation for?

With that, Mr. Deputy Chair, seeing the time, I move that you report progress.

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

Motion agreed to

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

Deputy Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Streicker that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Adel: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 200, entitled *Second Appropriation Act 2019-20*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

The time being 5:32 p.m., this House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday.

The House adjourned at 5:32 p.m.

The following sessional paper was tabled November 7, 2019:

34-3-18

Yukon Heritage Resources Board Annual Report April 1, 2018 - March 31, 2019 (Dendys)

The following legislative return was tabled November 7, 2019:

34-3-8

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Mr. Istchenko related to a Ministerial Statement re Cannabis Yukon retail store closure (Streicker)

The following document was filed November 7, 2019:

34-3-21

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy, letter re (dated November 5, 2019) from Porter Creek Secondary School Gender and Sexuality Alliance to Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee, Minister of Education (White)