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Thursday, October 13, 2022 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Jeremy Harper

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2022 Fall Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Jeremy Harper, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Annie Blake, MLA, Vuntut Gwitchin
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Emily Tredger, MLA, Whitehorse Centre

CABINET MINISTERS

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

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

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

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Kate White	Leader of the Third Party Takhini-Kopper King
Emily Tredger	Third Party House Leader Whitehorse Centre
Annie Blake	Vuntut Gwitchin

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Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, October 13, 2022 — 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

Speaker: Prior to proceeding with the Order Paper, the Chair will make a brief statement. Yesterday during the ministerial statement, the Member for Mountainview, in her reply to the comments made by the Member for Kluane and the Leader of the Third Party, referred to the Member for Kluane as “the member for the Yukon conservative party”. This goes directly against my instructions from Tuesday to refer to members by their proper titles.

In addition, members from each political party register their party names with the Yukon Elections Office. Those are the party names that are recognized for the purposes of this Assembly. All members, if they are making a reference to a party, should use the party's proper name or accepted short form.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I think that our standard protocol within the House — and we have been informed — is to make sure that people in the gallery — I think that our challenge is — right now, there is a group of people on the other side of that door who are about to be in the gallery.

So, with that being said, I would like my colleagues in the Assembly today to welcome a number of individuals who are here for a tribute — really talking about individuals who are coming to the territory from Ukraine, but also the Ukrainian diaspora and others who have supported the diaspora to ensure that folks who are coming to the Yukon have been well-supported.

So, the organizer, Jeff Sloychuk, is here with us today, as well as Anastasiya Matlashevskaya, Taras Yurkiv — I think that we're waiting on Eileen Melnychuk — Elena Kozhevnikova, Lesia Hnatiw, Grant Zazula, Violetta Umanes, Mason Beaulieu, Nikolay Potapenko, Halyna Derevianchuk, Mikhail Ponomarev, and Josh Robinson. I am trying my best, but I know — thank you for coming.

Applause

Ms. Tredger: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today we have some guests who are visiting our chief of staff and are visiting from Germany, and I wanted to welcome them here today.

Applause

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Yukon Ukrainian community

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to pay tribute to our Ukrainian arrivals and the incredible work that has been undertaken to provide support and a warm and welcoming environment for those fleeing the conflict.

Yukon strongly condemns the unprovoked Russian invasion of Ukraine. The unjustified invasion has created a humanitarian crisis with more than 7.6 million people having fled Ukraine to other countries around the world, with many millions more displaced internally or in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. Providing support to Ukrainians has been, and continues to be, a priority for both our territorial government and Yukoners alike.

The Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport has welcomed many Ukrainians on arriving flights, and working alongside the Multicultural Centre of the Yukon, government employees and countless volunteers have provided essential services for Ukrainians arriving in and travelling through our territory.

Local Ukrainian-speaking volunteers have provided translation services and arranged homestays for those arriving in Whitehorse who found themselves requiring a temporary place to stay.

Snacks and drinks have been provided at designated rest areas in the airport, activity packages for kids, and one-night hotel rooms, including transportation, and food vouchers have also been made available for those in need.

I would like to recognize the inspiring dedication that Jeff Sloychuk has shown over the last few months as he continues to help Ukrainians affected by the Russian invasion. Jeff, the president of the Yukon Building Trades Council, opened up his home to welcome Ukrainians. He travelled to Warsaw to assist civilians along evacuation routes and has provided multiple donation opportunities for Yukoners to contribute to the relief efforts for Ukrainians.

Jeff also organized the raising of the Ukrainian flag in honour of Ukrainian Independence Day on August 24, 2022. I know all parties were represented at that event.

Ukrainians are finding sanctuary in our nation through various immigration programs, and I would like to thank our local Ukrainian diaspora for everything you are doing to support those in need.

The Ukrainian family support desk remains available for a means of assisting Ukrainians arriving to the territory with helpful guidance and resources. Assisting with this cause is important to Canadians, and I am proud that our country is working hard to provide aid where it is most needed.

Thank you.

Applause

Mr. Dixon: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition in support of our resilient, multi-generational Ukrainian community here in the Yukon and in support of those who remain in their torn yet beautiful homeland. The Ukrainian community has been part of the

fabric of Canada throughout our history since the arrival of the first Ukrainian immigrants at the end of the 19th Century. The community has helped to advance Canadian society and contributed to our economy and culture ever since.

The Yukon is home to a strong and resilient community of Ukrainian Canadians. It has been touching to see the strong support and solidarity that we have seen, not only from this group but from their friends and allies across the territory. The Yukon-to-Ukraine project was created by the Yukon Support Ukraine group. This project is aimed at collecting goods to support those facing hardship in Ukraine.

Currently, they are preparing another shipment of goods to depart Whitehorse in mid-November. Donations are being accepted at the carpenters union hall, at 106 Strickland Street, every Saturday from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., and every Tuesday from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Among those items requested are new thermal underwear and shirts for men and women, used and wiped iPhones and Androids, used laptops and tablets, GoPros and older digital cameras, winter sleeping bags and rolls, military and hunting boots of all sizes, anti-flu medications, GPS units, binoculars, and power banks for charging phones.

Thank you to all those who are helping to organize and collect these items and to those of you who have donated so far. I would like to join the minister in giving a special mention to Jeff Sloychuk for his dedication to the relief effort in Ukraine. Jeff has been working to help raise funds, collect donations, and organize events since the beginning and has also opened his home to a young man from the Ukraine who is eager to hone his skills as a carpenter. Best of luck to him and to you, Jeff.

I would also like to give a warm welcome to others who have newly arrived in the Yukon from Ukraine. It is not easy to leave your home and your family and friends, but we hope that you have found a warm welcome here in the Yukon. It is wonderful to have you here. I have heard how quickly some of you are connecting with the community and sharing your knowledge, experience, passions, and culture with us.

We would like to recognize the unparalleled determination and bravery of Ukraine Armed Forces and the resiliency of the Ukrainian people. Please consider donating, if you can, to this important effort, and help to embrace those who have chosen our beautiful territory to call home, whether it is for a short or a long time. Show some of the Yukon hospitality that we are known for.

Thank you very much and slava Ukraini.

Applause

Ms. White: It's an honour to stand on behalf of the Yukon NDP to welcome some of our newest residents to the Yukon and to celebrate those who are making that transition so much easier. To those Ukrainians who have newly arrived in the Yukon, we are so glad to have you, but are so sorry for the circumstances that brought you here. No one should be forced to leave their home due to war. In this day and age, war should be something that is read about in books, not something that should be a lived experience.

We know that each of you will add to the culture and the fabric of the Yukon. You bring with you skills and experience, and more than anything, you bring yourselves. You are so very valuable.

We know that the Yukon Ukrainian community and its friends are mighty and that they'll be here to support you, but we want you to also know that the Yukon, and those of us in this Assembly, are also here to support you. Thank you to Jeff, Anastasiya, Taras, Eileen, Elena, Lesia, Grant, Violetta, Mason, and so many others living and working in the Yukon for providing amazing support and solidarity to new arrivals and to each other.

Slava Ukraini.

Applause

In recognition of Fire Prevention Week

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Fire Prevention Week kicked off on October 9 and I rise today to talk about fire safety. Fire Prevention Week draws our attention every year to the essential steps that each of us must take to protect ourselves and our families from fires that are easily preventable. I want to thank Yukoners who are making fire safety and prevention activities a priority. This year's Fire Prevention Week theme is: "Fires won't wait. Plan your escape." Lives depend on preventing fires from starting, hearing smoke alarms on time, and knowing how to get out fast. If you haven't already, make sure that you install smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms outside all sleeping areas and on every level of your home, including the basement. If you are a tenant, make sure your landlord installs them. It's the law.

Test your smoke alarms once a month and replace them after 10 years. Next, create a home escape plan and go over it with your family. Here are some safety tips to help you plan your escape: Make sure everyone in the home understands how to get out of the house from any room; learn two ways out of each room; make sure all doors and windows leading outside easily open and are free of clutter; make sure your escape plan meets the needs of your family members, including those with sensory or physical disabilities; and don't forget to include your pets. Once you have an escape plan, practise it regularly.

In the event of a fire, Mr. Speaker, listen for the sound of the smoke alarm. Everyone should know that when they hear the alarm, it is time to get out. Leave calmly but quickly. You could have only minutes to escape safely once the alarm sounds. Go to your outside meeting place, which should be a safe distance from the home. Everyone in the house should know to meet there. Once you get out, call 911.

I want to take a moment to commend and thank all of Yukon's firefighters. They work tirelessly to protect our lives and property from fire. Together, we are contributing to healthy and safe communities. More information about fire safety and prevention is available online at prepared yukon.ca.

Applause

Mr. Istchenko: I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to recognize October 9 to 15 this year as Fire Prevention Week. Fire Prevention Week is the perfect

opportunity for families to talk about fire safety, make escape plans for their homes, and check fire and carbon monoxide detectors as well as fire extinguishers to make sure that they are located in the right places and in working order.

The Fire Marshal's Office and Yukon fire departments do a great job each year providing important messaging to families and communities around the importance of fire safety and planning to bring attention to a number of important aspects of fire safety, including ensuring that your family has a plan in case of a fire and is aware of the risks associated with different activities around the home, such as cooking, fire alarm maintenance, and charging electronics.

I would like to take a moment to recognize our municipal and volunteer fire departments throughout the territory for the work they do in fire prevention and firefighting. Thanks to the Fire Marshal's Office, Wildland Fire Management, and our Yukon First Nations Wildfire crews for the support that you do to keep our territory safe.

I would be remiss if I didn't also give a heartfelt thanks to all of those dedicated Yukoners who do not have access to standard fire equipment or trained professionals to deal with potential outbreaks of fire in their communities. We have seen how community members rally together to face emergencies with creativity and ingenuity. They deserve our thanks, recognition, and full support.

There are a number of planned activities this year, including informative school visits by the local departments and the Fire Marshal's Office and a colouring contest being held by the Whitehorse Fire Department. Forms can be picked up until October 15 at either the Canada Games Centre or Angellina's Toy Boutique.

Please take the time to brush up this week on your fire safety and prevention, check your smoke detectors, and review your own household safety plans. Thank you.

Applause

Ms. Tredger: I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP to recognize national Fire Prevention Week. It is actually the 100th anniversary of Fire Prevention Week this year, and it is held every year on the anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire, which burned for three days in 1871. Society's response to that enormous tragedy is a beautiful example of how we can take individual and collective action to create safer homes and cities.

I will start with the things that individuals can and should do to prevent fires. My colleagues have already spoken about the importance of having working, up-to-date fire alarms. Did you know that fire alarms need to be replaced every 10 years? We have also talked about the importance of having an exit plan, because I learned from a City of Whitehorse post this week that the time you have to exit your home after hearing your smoke alarm can be as little as two minutes. This highlights the importance of knowing to get out of your house in a hurry and making sure that your exits are easy to access.

I also want to talk about our collective response to fire safety. In the last century, we have changed the ways we plan cities, changed the ways we manufacture building materials and the way we design and build our homes. Every time a fire starts

and doesn't spread, there are many behind-the-scenes people to thank — from city planners, to policy experts, to architects, to construction workers — and, of course, last but not most certainly not least, firefighters. I can't think of a better example of service to community than firefighters, for both our paid and volunteer firefighters. It is a tremendous privilege to know that if a fire starts, there will be people on the way to help.

So, today I want to say a tremendous thank you to all the folks who help with that response — dispatchers, administrative staff, and, of course, the firefighters. We are all safer because of the work that you do.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I have for tabling the 2021 annual report for the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Pursuant to section 22 of the *Yukon Development Corporation Act*, I have for tabling the 2021 annual reports for the Yukon Development Corporation and Yukon Energy.

Speaker: Are there any reports of committees? Petitions.

PETITIONS

Petition No. 14 — received

Clerk: Mr. Speaker and honourable members of the Assembly: I have had the honour to review a petition, being Petition No. 14 of the First Session of the 35th Legislative Assembly, as presented by the Member for Copperbelt South on October 12, 2022.

The petition presented by the Member for Copperbelt South meets the requirements as to form of the Standing Orders of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

Speaker: Accordingly, I declare Petition No. 14 is deemed to be read and received. Pursuant to Standing Order 67, the Executive Council shall provide a response to a petition which has been read and received within eight sitting days of its presentation. Therefore, the Executive Council response to Petition No. 14 shall be provided on or before October 26, 2022.

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 20: *Animal Protection and Control Act* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Clarke: I move that Bill No. 20, entitled *Animal Protection and Control Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Environment that Bill No. 20, entitled *Animal Protection and Control Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

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

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

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House supports the Government of Yukon and the City of Whitehorse's bid to co-host the 2027 Canada Winter Games in Whitehorse.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to fulfill its legal responsibility to abide by and adhere to the articles expressly stated in the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to confirm best practices for responding to any incident in education where a child is, or is likely to have been, physically, sexually, or emotionally harmed and design and implement an inter-agency response process that includes:

- (1) competent investigations;
- (2) child- and family-centred approaches to information sharing;
- (3) protection of privacy;
- (4) communication with families; and
- (5) coordination of services, as recommended by the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to provide clear information to educators and families about their mandatory duty to report any incident where a child is, or is likely to have been, physically, sexually, or emotionally harmed and to provide clear steps on how and who to report incidents to and how to follow up, as recommended by the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to implement best practices to ensure developmentally and culturally appropriate interviews and victim support services for students who have been physically, sexually, or emotionally harmed, as recommended by the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to:

- (1) provide developmentally appropriate sexual health information throughout the school year to all Yukon students;

- (2) make sexual health programming mandatory and accessible for all students, including those with individualized learning plans; and

- (3) provide additional guidance to families about how to talk to children about sexual health, as recommended by the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to determine therapeutic needs of students and families impacted by alleged abuse and ensure low-barrier access to appropriate supports identified by students, families, and professionals, as recommended by the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to provide accessible, therapeutic supports to educators impacted by alleged abuse in schools, as recommended by the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to develop a plan to create and fill clinical counsellor positions in all Yukon schools, as recommended by the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to provide specialized educational support programs for children with special needs that include input and oversight by learning assistance teachers, Student Support Services, and external specialists, as recommended by the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to provide a public report outlining the planned response to the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office's report *Responding to Sexualized Abuse in Yukon Schools: Review of Policies and Government Response* by November 22, 2022.

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Darius Elias Community Centre

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I rise today to celebrate the opening of the Darius Elias Community Centre in Old Crow.

Some time ago, the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation identified a new community centre as a priority project for Old Crow. Our Infrastructure Development branch worked with the Vuntut Gwitchin to make their ideas and plans for a community centre become a reality. After years of work, I was pleased to see the new community centre officially open its doors this past May as part of Caribou Days.

Caribou Days is a weekend filled with fun activities and celebrations that honour the connection between the Vuntut Gwitchin people and the Porcupine caribou herd, bringing the

whole community together to celebrate the importance of this animal to their culture and their way of life. I truly couldn't think of a better event to open this new centre with.

In addition, this space was also recently used as the venue for the first Yukon Forum ever held in Old Crow, and that took place just this past June.

It was great to be able to meet in this new, beautiful building with indigenous leaders from across the territory. The Yukon government invested more than \$3.6 million in this project and received more than \$10.8 million for this centre through the rural and northern community infrastructure and the community cultural and recreation streams of the Investing in Canada infrastructure plan.

The new centre features multiple meeting rooms, a games room, an elders lounge, a gym, and a full commercial kitchen that will serve the community for years to come.

The Darius Elias Community Centre replaces the previous aging community centre, the Chief Peter Moses Centennial Hall, which has been repurposed as the new home for a children's play centre in Old Crow.

The new community centre is more energy efficient and built to withstand possible issues due to climate change, such as permafrost thawing or flooding. We have mitigated these risks by building the new community centre at an elevation that will protect it from floods. We have also hired an engineer with expertise in permafrost foundation to help with the design, taking into account the expected subsurface warming over a 30-year time scale.

I want to end by thanking our partners who helped to design and build this project, including the federal government and the Vuntut Gwitchin themselves. I look forward to continuing to build projects like this in communities across the territory to help build a stronger, healthier, and more inclusive society.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. McLeod: I am very pleased to stand in this Assembly today to talk about the new community centre in Old Crow — aptly named the “Darius Elias Community Centre”. Of course, the centre is named after the late Darius Elias. Many members of this Assembly can recall how the former Member for Vuntut Gwitchin stood in this House and talked about — quote: “... my community of Old Crow”.

One of the items that Darius made his priority was the need for a community centre in his community of Old Crow. In this House, he often spoke about the importance of youth and how sport could make their lives better. I'm sure those who were here remember his tributes and speeches about coaching the Old Crow youth during hockey tournaments. Thanks to the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, the community, and the builders, Darius' vision is now a reality, and that's why I'm pleased to stand and talk a little bit about this facility that officially opened in time for Caribou Days in late May.

It contains features that Darius would have wanted: a games room, an elders lounge, meeting rooms, a training and exercise room, and one very important item, a commercial kitchen to cook up the traditional foods of the people of Old

Crow. Darius was always aware of the impacts of our changing climate on his community and the Porcupine caribou herd, so it's great that this new community centre is energy efficient and built to withstand flooding and changes to the permafrost.

As we know, Darius championed the power of sport. He was, of course, an avid hockey player, but he tried to get all youth involved in many other activities as well. That's why this community centre is so important.

I'm going to wrap up by thanking the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and those involved in making the Darius Elias Community Centre a project that we can all be proud of.

Ms. Blake: I am thankful for the opportunity to respond to this ministerial statement on the Darius Elias Community Centre. This centre was named in Darius' honour in May 2022 where family gathered to share a meal with the community for the naming ceremony.

Darius Elias is remembered as a leader who deeply cared for the well-being of the young people and kept the youth at the forefront of all that he did in his career.

It was only fitting for the community to name this new facility in Darius' honour. This new recreation facility is an important addition to the community of Old Crow as it provides a modernized space that supports the community in their gatherings. Since the opening of this new facility, the community has been able to host their annual Caribou Days celebration, the biennial Gwich'in Gathering, the annual general assembly, and a wedding, as well as many dances that bring the community together. Some citizens refer to this new centre as “Moccasin Square Gardens”, as it has the best flooring for jiggging.

The Darius Elias Community Centre sits along the banks of the Porcupine River, is central to the downtown area of the community, and is accessible for all people. Like the Chief Peter Moses Community Hall, I am sure that the Darius Elias Community Centre will hold meaningful space and capture many memories for the Vuntut Gwitchin government and its citizens as they continue to host celebrations, government meetings, and other initiatives that will utilize this space.

There are questions that I have heard from the community since the opening of this space. This beautiful space was built with a non-commercial septic and water tank system, so when big events are being held at the Darius Elias Community Centre, it requires the Yukon government's water delivery and septic pump-out services to come to the centre multiple times a day to fill the water tank and pump out the septic tank. Are there any plans to replace the current septic system with industrial-sized tanks?

It was also noted that there has been no training provided to the community in terms of how to run and maintain the boiler system and to operate the air conditioning system. These are important elements that keep this beautiful facility functioning and accessible. What is the government doing to ensure that this problem is addressed?

What training has been given to the community to operate the engineered glass partition wall? This has proven problematic since the centre's opening.

When the keys were handed over to the Vuntut Gwitchin government, they were only provided one key. Because the centre is utilized so frequently, they are not able to send a key out to Whitehorse to get extra keys cut and wait for the keys to be sent back to the community. So, when will the Yukon government ensure that additional sets of keys are supplied to the community?

I look forward to dancing and celebrating with my community in this beautiful space. I know that Darius would be so honoured to know that he is celebrated in such a beautiful way.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I appreciate the kind words from the members opposite, both about the centre and about Darius Elias. He was truly a champion for his community and an amazing ambassador for the Yukon. In my interactions with him as a reporter, he was always a very fair and very strong champion, so I really do appreciate the words of the members opposite.

To the questions posed by the member opposite, the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, I will look into her concerns today.

I want to take a moment to highlight some of the work being done in Old Crow through a partnership with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and the Government of Canada. A new 940-kilowatt solar array has been installed in the community. This allows Old Crow to turn off the diesel generators in the summer. I was recently up there and I can tell you that the community is very, very proud of this solar array facility. The community is a lot more quiet now that it has been installed. It is also saving the community up to 189,000 litres of diesel fuel per year.

In addition to the innovative solar array project, we are investing in a new health and wellness centre and a tenplex housing project in the community. Following a 2018 review of all Yukon health centres, the Old Crow health centre is identified as a top priority for replacement. The mixed-use housing project will provide safe, healthy housing for Yukoners in Old Crow, and the new health and wellness centre will include a collaborative care model that will better meet the needs of residents.

The tenplex is scheduled to be completed this year, and the health and wellness centre is anticipated to be completed in 2023. I am anxious to see that completed. I have toured that facility as well. I saw the concerns there, and I think the new facility will certainly serve the community well.

In addition to these important projects, our government is also providing more than \$4 million for the new Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation elders complex. The complex will provide eight one-bedroom assisted living units for elders and a one-bedroom unit for a live-in caregiver. These are just some of the projects underway, in addition to the new Darius Elias Community Centre. Our government will continue to work with the Vuntut Gwitchin government and the people of Old Crow to ensure that our northernmost community is resilient and thriving for future generations.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Sexual abuse within elementary school, government accountability

Mr. Dixon: Yesterday, the Child and Youth Advocate Office delivered an absolutely scathing report on this government's response to incidents of sexualized abuse in a Yukon school. The report covers the massive inadequacy of this government's response following the incident. One of the key findings was that the Department of Education's communications in the aftermath of these incidents demonstrated an alarming lack of attention to upholding children's rights.

In particular, the advocate found it unacceptable that communications following the 2019 incident were, in her words, "ostensibly self-serving" and that the department was more concerned with the legalities and HR implications of the incident than the well-being of impacted students. Specifically, the advocate highlighted the decision not to send a letter drafted by the then-principal to the school community in December 2019, calling this a "gross oversight".

Will the Liberal government now acknowledge what the advocate calls a "gross oversight" in their handling of communications following this incident?

Hon. Ms. McLean: I thank members opposite for the question today and an opportunity to speak, at the first opportunity, to the report that I tabled yesterday on behalf of the Child and Youth Advocate. We are reviewing that report and will respond to its recommendations by the requested date of November 22.

I wanted to take a moment to reflect on the tabling of that document yesterday. I had a quick glance — Annette King and I made eye contact, and I could see a deep relief in her eyes, and I really appreciate that her staff worked really hard to get this report completed. Again, at the heart of this is the well-being and safety of our children. I know it is something that Annette and I both share. This was a difficult report to write. Anytime you have to write about harm to children, I think it's difficult, and I wanted to publicly thank her for the report.

We will continue to undertake system change, as I have committed to all the way through.

Mr. Dixon: Among others, the Child and Youth Advocate's report tabled yesterday outlines how the government's communications failure represented a violation of children's rights. Here's what she said — and I quote: "There were many opportunities between November 2019 and July 2021 where many people employed by..." — Education — "... could have easily revisited their decision not to communicate with families — when the incident first occurred, after termination of employment, after WAB's conviction, after his sentencing, after the civil suit was launched, or at any point of transition between superintendents, Assistant Deputy Ministers, or Ministers of Education."

Does the government acknowledge that the failure of the former minister to inform the current Minister of Education

about this in 2021 contributed to what the advocate called hurt, confusion, and outrage of those affected?

Hon. Ms. McLean: Again, this is my first opportunity to speak to the report tabled yesterday. We are continuing to review that report, and we will have official responses to the recommendations and the findings of this report within the time frame that has been requested of us.

It sounds like the member opposite has read potentially even just the executive summary or maybe the whole report; I'm not sure, but I wonder — the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate, as well as the Hidden Valley independent review, found that there were prior incidents that happened in 2014-15, and they were not properly documented or reported. Now we have the Child and Youth Advocate who has found the same finding.

Can the members opposite explain why the incident was mishandled by their government? I think that the Yukon Party's inaction in 2016 really led to further harm of children. I think that is something that Yukoners deserve to hear about as well.

Mr. Dixon: I think that answer from the minister speaks for itself.

The Child and Youth Advocate found that the lack of communication from Education led to expressions of outrage, confusion and hurt among those affected.

I will quote from the report again: "The first formal communication to families from..." — Education — "... came over 1.5 years after the 2019 sexual assault was reported. Additionally, families of students who had moved schools report not being included in communication from..." — Education — "... even if their children had been in close contact with WAB. Internal communications records obtained from..." — Education — "... demonstrate a lack of action to address the impact of sexualized abuse on students and the broader school community. With sufficient exploration and targeted communication with families following the 2019 charge, additional victims could have been identified."

Does the government now accept that their inadequate communications contributed to the fact that — and I quote: "Delays in accessing justice and therapeutic supports could have been prevented."

Hon. Ms. McLean: Again, at the heart of this is the well-being, safety, and protection of our children. This is certainly an issue that I have taken very seriously and one that I have been committed to addressing. We launched the first review of the matter. We had an independent review done. We now have a report from the Child and Youth Advocate.

Since the spring — the safer schools action plan was released in February, less than a month after the Hidden Valley Elementary independent review report was completed. We are implementing all of the report's recommendations to ensure that what happened at Hidden Valley Elementary School does not happen again. We have completed 13 of the 23 commitments to the safer schools action plan, representing significant progress to address policy gaps and enhance safety and oversight across all Yukon schools and government departments.

This includes the establishment of a Hidden Valley parent advisory committee. I have met with them three times now. The completion of training in post-incident guidance procedures, prevention, detection, reporting, and communication — the list goes on and I will continue to build on my answer as we go forward. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Order.

Question re: Support services for Hidden Valley Elementary School victims of abuse

Mr. Cathers: Over the course of the past year and a half, the school community, directly affected families, and both opposition parties have consistently raised concerns about the lack of therapeutic support for students in the school community in the wake of the serious incidents involving the former EA. The Child and Youth Advocate's report tabled yesterday laid bare this exact issue. It found — and I quote: "One of the major flaws in this entire situation is the lack of a coordinated response between departments that ultimately resulted in the untimely and inadequate provision of therapeutic supports and healing to impacted members of the school community."

Now the Child and Youth Advocate is making the point that parents, the Hidden Valley school council, my caucus colleagues, the Third Party, and I have been making consistently over the past year and a half. Will the minister finally admit that the supports offered by the government to children and other impacted members of the school community have been inadequate?

Hon. Ms. McLean: Again, the well-being, safety, and protection of students, when they are in our care, is our highest priority. We are focused on taking the needed steps to rebuild trust and provide the best targeted supports to the school community. I continue to hold up the dedicated staff of Hidden Valley, who are ensuring that children feel connected, supported, and safe at school. I have heard first-hand from families that the Hidden Valley school community has had a good start to the school year. No family will be left behind. A range of free-of-charge supports have been and continue to be available, and the school community consultant continues to work individually with families to find options that work for them.

I will continue to ask members in the Legislative Assembly to always refer their constituents needing supports — or any information that they may have — to our community consultant. I believe that this is their responsibility. As reports from reviews and investigations are received we will be mindful of the supports that students, staff, parents, and guardians may need.

Mr. Cathers: For over a year now, the Hidden Valley school council and the school community have been pleading for more supports. They have told the minister how disheartened and disappointed they are with the lack of support from her department and her refusal to listen to them. Among other things, they requested a full-time vice-principal and a clinical counsellor. We have also made this request repeatedly to the minister. Now the advocate's report has shown the

consequences, and I quote: “From July 2021 and throughout the subsequent school year, the Advocate observed a severely stressed and over-capacity school community and administration trying to do their best to fill services gaps for students, families, and school personnel.”

Will the Minister of Education now admit that her unwillingness to grant the request put forward by the school community has caused harm?

Hon. Ms. McLean: I continue to provide consistent messaging that the school community is my absolute highest priority. You know what? Members across the way can laugh, but these are serious issues and I take my responsibility as a minister very seriously.

The Department of Education’s school staffing committee considers all formal requests for increased staffing and supports from schools to deploy staff appropriately and equitably across all schools. We will continue to assess the needs and assignment of teaching and administrative staff at the school in a data-driven, evidence-based way. The 2022-23 staffing allotment provided for a full-time principal and vice-principal who are assigned to the Hidden Valley school. A learning assistance teacher with a specific focus on autism is in place and working with the school. An interim principal is acting while the hiring panel continues to fill the vacancy for the principal.

Again, I have heard directly from parents who have been directly impacted by this situation that the school year has had a good start. I would thank members to respect that as well.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, the Child and Youth Advocate’s report makes two very clear findings: (1) access to services has not been effectively coordinated; and (2) without adequate support from Education and Health and Social Services, Hidden Valley school staff have struggled to provide resources and supports to students and their families. These findings are stark but not the least bit surprising. They are exactly what parents have been telling the minister over and over for the past year and a half.

The advocate’s report said this — and I quote: “This should not have been the responsibility of the educators and school administration but of...” — Education — “... central administration that purports to serve these schools.”

Does the minister finally agree that these findings show exactly what the school community, individuals, and ourselves have been telling her for over a year and a half now?

Hon. Ms. McLean: I will remind the member opposite again that I launched an independent review into these matters in October of last year. We had the findings by January 31. We had an action plan in place by February 24.

We have taken real action, Mr. Speaker. We have in place a safer schools action plan that is working to address the issues. The independent review made clear — the information that we received from our independent review guided us in developing a very comprehensive government-wide action plan, and now we have the report from the Child and Youth Advocate. I have made that commitment to respond to her recommendations within the time frame given, and we will be addressing the recommendations that she has put forward.

We are acknowledging, of course, the findings of this report. As I said, I respect the work of the Child and Youth Advocate, and I’ll continue to build on my answer as I go forward.

Question re: Mental health services in schools

Ms. White: One of the recommendations from the 2021 review on special and inclusive education, in response to the 2019 Auditor General’s report, was to — and I quote: “Provide culturally-appropriate mental health counselling services, directly to students and families, and in support of teachers’ instructional efforts.”

Yesterday, the minister tabled the report from the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate, which included the statement — and I quote: “If a ... clinical counselor or social worker had been...” — provided to — “... the school before the beginning of the 2021-22 school year, students, families and educators could have accessed the necessary support to manage these stressors and begin the recovery from harm.”

While this was specific to one school, it rings true for all. Can the minister tell Yukoners how many Yukon schools currently have full-time clinical counsellors?

Hon. Ms. McLean: Again, I absolutely respect the report that was provided to us by the Child and Youth Advocate, and I take the mental health of our youngest Yukoners very seriously. We have been working very hard to respond to the Auditor General’s report, which includes a lot of action. We are truly in an historic time in education in the Yukon. We are reimagining our Yukon school system with partners in education. It has taken decades, honestly, to get to where we are, and it is going to take a lot of hard work and right work to create new system structures and to ensure that students are supported in the way that they need to be.

We have an initiative underway that we call “RISE” — it’s “reimagining Inclusive and Special Education”. We have a number of groups that are working to address the specific needs. Again, I will continue to build on my answer as we go forward.

Ms. White: I will remind this minister that this isn’t the first time that I have asked about clinical counsellors in schools, and this isn’t even the first Minister of Education I have asked the question of.

It has been brought to our attention that school employees who already have clinical counselling degrees aren’t allowed to practise to their full scope in schools. So, let’s review the situation. Experts have identified a need — and students, parents, and teachers, a demand — and a lucky few schools that have clinical counsellors on staff cannot actually use them to their full scope of practice.

Will the minister tell us what steps she is taking to ensure that clinical counsellors are able to practise to their full scope of training within Yukon schools?

Hon. Ms. McLean: I thank the member opposite for the question. Again, we take the supports of students very seriously. For sure, one of our focuses this year is the mental health of our children. It is really well-defined. I talked about it

a little bit yesterday in one of our debates around our recovery plan for post-pandemic — and as we go through recovery.

I will be happy to bring back further information for the member opposite if I am missing something.

Ms. White: One thing that will definitely help the mental health of children is clinical counsellors in their schools.

Yukon schools are in crisis. Yukon students are in crisis and the government is not offering them the full support that they need. We talk about mental illness. We talk about the opioid crisis and a suicide epidemic, yet we talk very little about the root causes of many of these problems. Children are not being given the support that they need from a young age, yet they are still expected to succeed in life. We need to meet children where they are at, and supporting them in schools is about much more than their learning goals; it's about their mental well-being and their future as healthy individuals.

Will the minister commit to working with her colleagues and to opening up full-time clinical counselling and social work positions in all Yukon schools?

Hon. Ms. McLean: Thank you for the question. I absolutely take the health, safety, and well-being of our children in our schools very seriously. As I have stated, we are reimagining the whole entire education system. It has taken a very long time to get to where we are. Our work is really guided by the principle that no family be left behind and that every child matters. We are working with our partners to reimagine inclusive and special education in our school system. We have had a number of steps already. There is probably not enough time to go through all of them — the early universal childcare model, launching enhanced early full-time kindergarten in most rural communities, working with the Chiefs Committee on Education on the action plan there, finalizing collaborative work on the framework with Yukon First Nations, the review of inclusive and special education in the Yukon and advancing RISE and we have launched the ready-to-learn schools initiative based on groundbreaking work from Dr. Bruce Perry, and the list goes on.

Question re: Inclusive and special education

Mr. Kent: The Child and Youth Advocate's report tabled yesterday made a number of findings about the current state of support for students with special needs. It stated — and I quote: "There is an urgent need to address gaps in the education system for students with special needs, as has been emphasized by multiple other reports."

It goes on to say — and I will quote again: "Frankly put..." — the Department of Education — "... consistently states that they are dedicated to helping all students reach their full potential, yet does not provide the necessary resources to schools in order to achieve this goal."

Will the minister accept that the Liberal government is not currently doing enough and provide the necessary resources to help students with special needs reach their full potential?

Hon. Ms. McLean: I think I have spoken quite extensively already here today regarding the work that our department has been doing to reimagine the education system and to really respond fully to the Auditor General's report,

which included the review of inclusive and special education, which we did during a global pandemic. It resulted in a very extensive report by Nikki Yee that really gave us a road map to addressing the needs of the children overall in our education system. We are working very closely to implement that plan now, and we're working with all of our partners in specific areas under the reimagining inclusive and special education to really define the right actions to be taking to address the issues that have taken a considerable number of years to get to.

I appreciate the question from the member opposite, but he was previously a Minister of Education and had an opportunity to address these same issues.

Mr. Kent: Another area of concern identified in the report is with respect to the recruitment, assignment, and training of educational assistants, or EAs. We have heard from several school communities that there is a shortage of EAs in their school and that their children are suffering as a result. Of course, this has been exacerbated by the challenges experienced through the pandemic.

Will the minister ensure that each school has an adequate number of EAs to meet the demands of their students who require support?

Hon. Ms. McLean: Again, through a reimagining of inclusive and special education, we're examining how we allocate educational assistants and other resources. There is a community of inquiry working on understanding better ways to align budget allocation, funding models, and staffing allocation with students' needs.

We also need to review the increase of allocation requests from schools in order to better understand the needs of students and how to best support their educational programming. Again, the way that EAs are allocated is a direct result of a 2015 decision by the Yukon Party then-government lead. The allocation model was based on their decision. We are re-looking at all of that and how it's done so that we are assigning educational assistants based on a needs model. There are a lot of other supports in school systems that the members opposite do not speak about. They include school counsellors, learning assistant teachers, and central student support services. There are a number of other supports that are in place in schools, and EAs are one of them.

Mr. Kent: So, when it comes to the lack of training for EAs so that they are equipped to do their jobs, the advocate's report is very blunt. It says — and I will quote again: "To be clear, the blame for this lack of training should not be pointed towards individual EAs themselves, but rather an education system that continually fails to equip its employees with the requisite preparation, resources, and skills necessary to deliver special education programming."

So, will the minister instruct the department to deliver this training and will she ensure that the necessary resources are in place to do so?

Hon. Ms. McLean: Thank you very much for the question. I will continue to build on my answer. Educational assistants are one of several resources that are in schools to support students' learning. There are others — inclusive classroom practices implemented by classroom teachers to

provide learning activities that support students with diverse or exceptional needs, and school counsellors and learning assistant teachers are one — the central Student Support Services unit, the Curriculum and Assessment unit, First Nation Initiatives branch, First Nation education support workers and community education liaison consultants, and community-based supports such as those provided by Health and Social Services.

So, there is a long list of other supports that are in schools. Again, I will just go back to the work that we are doing on reimagining and inclusive special education. We now have the report from the Child and Youth Advocate, as well, to consider, and I have always been committed to responding to any recommendations that the child advocate brings forward. I am committed to that. I have stated many times today that I will be responding officially within the time frame allotted.

Question re: Sexual abuse within elementary school, government accountability

Mr. Hassard: The report of the Child and Youth Advocate tabled yesterday found across the board that the government's response to this has been more than just inadequate. The report found that the initial harm inflicted was "... compounded by inadequate government response..." Further, "Investigations, communications, and supports to families and the public were poorly managed and highly inadequate, and ultimately impacted access to therapeutic supports for students and their families."

This is scathing but not surprising. We have heard this over and over from the school community, from opposition members, and from individuals. What we haven't heard is about the accountability. The report states: "For many, it means personal responsibility for those in charge of the situation..."

When can we expect to see personal responsibility from those in charge?

Hon. Ms. McLean: Mr. Speaker, again, I am happy to rise to speak to this report that we have just received. I tabled it yesterday. There are a number of findings. There are a number of recommendations. We are in the process now of assessing the findings and recommendations brought forward by the Child and Youth Advocate. I have committed several times on the floor of the Legislature today that I will be working to respond within the time that has been allotted.

We are also very committed to working with our partners on this. We have a number of educational partners that we will be working with. I will continue to build on my answer or to give the same answer if the questions continue to be similar.

I speak, of course, first and foremost to Yukoners. This is something that I have not taken lightly as the minister responsible for Education. I started out talking about this from a woman's perspective, from a mother's perspective, and I take my responsibility very seriously.

Mr. Hassard: The advocate's report found that — quote: "Following the incident, communications to family and the public were poorly managed and mostly non-existent. This ultimately impacted access to therapeutic supports for students and their families..."

The report is critical of senior decision-makers. It says — and I quote again: "... there were numerous distractions at the decision-making level that took the focus further away from children."

Mr. Speaker, it's very simple: When can Yukoners expect to see personal responsibility from those decision-makers?

Hon. Ms. McLean: I have stated a few times here that our department and our government overall has taken this situation very seriously. I launched a review myself in October of last year, and I received the final report by January 31. We had a government-wide action plan by February 24. This is an extensive plan that has been put in place around the safer schools action plan that directly addresses the findings of the first review. We now have in our hands the Child and Youth Advocate review, which I have stated many times that I take very seriously. I respect the work that she has done and I will be responding appropriately — we will, as a government — to the findings and recommendations that she has brought forward. I remain committed to that. Again, I say these things directly to Yukoners.

Mr. Hassard: We have seen report after report on this. We have seen the school community pleading for help. Both opposition parties have spent hours debating with the minister and explaining that people weren't getting the support that they needed. We have even seen an unprecedented motion calling on the former minister to resign, yet despite all of this, the current minister has failed to take sufficient action. It's getting hard to imagine what more it will take to bring about some change.

The advocate's report says the following about accountability — and I quote: "For many, it means personal responsibility from those in charge of this situation..."

So, again, when can Yukoners expect to see accountability for this failure?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, I think that my minister has done an exceptional job today explaining actions taken to date and commitments to responding to the Child and Youth Advocate.

We also know that the Yukon Party leader has repeatedly made unfounded allegations about the Deputy Premier in this House. Now we have a report from the Child and Youth Advocate saying that the Hidden Valley independent review found that there was a prior incident with this educational assistant in 2014 and 2015 and it was not properly documented or reported.

Can the members opposite explain why that incident was mishandled? They don't talk about that in the report today, do they? The Child and Youth Advocate has found that — and I quote: "In 2015-16, EDU did not uphold their obligation to report abuse..." and that — quote: "Consequently, the EA was able to continue to work with vulnerable students..."

Mr. Speaker, talking about being accountable, the Yukon Party's inactions in 2016 led to further harm of children. Will the Yukon Party apologize for that?

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 17: *Clean Energy Act* — Second Reading

Clerk: Second reading, Bill No. 17, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Streicker.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 17, entitled *Clean Energy Act*, be now read a second time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources that Bill No. 17, entitled *Clean Energy Act*, be now read a second time.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, today, I am honoured and it is my privilege to rise to introduce Bill No. 17, *Clean Energy Act*, 2022, for the Yukon Legislative Assembly's consideration. The *Clean Energy Act* sets and legislates the Government of Yukon's targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the Yukon and for reaching net zero emissions in the territory by 2050. The bill also promotes and ensures action, transparency, and accountability in meeting those targets by requiring the government and future governments to track and publicly report on progress. This new legislation also creates the regulatory authority needed to make additional greenhouse gas emissions targets.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the *Clean Energy Act* is one of the Government of Yukon's commitments under *Our Clean Future*. The Yukon is warming disproportionately compared to the rest of Canada. In recent years, the Government of Yukon, several Yukon First Nations, the Council of Yukon First Nations, the Assembly of First Nations Yukon Region, and the City of Whitehorse have each declared a climate change emergency.

Our climate action strategy came from the need to address and adapt to the climate crisis that we are all experiencing in the Yukon. *Our Clean Future* is an ambitious and important document with critical implications for our territory over the next 10 years. We are pushing to make significant shifts and changes in response to the climate emergency. It is the Government of Yukon's comprehensive and forward-thinking approach to addressing the impacts of climate change and reducing our greenhouse gas emissions.

The proposed *Clean Energy Act* before us today is critical for delivering on and achieving our shared ambitious climate commitments. Key elements of the act include: a 45-percent reduction in greenhouse gases by 2030; net zero emissions across all sectors of the Yukon by 2050; 10 percent of new vehicles leased or sold in the Yukon will be zero emission by 2025; 30 percent of new vehicles leased or sold in the Yukon will be zero emission by 2030; and 50 percent of heating for buildings will come from renewable sources by 2030.

The act requires the Government of Yukon to publicly report on progress made toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions annually. The act also provides the regulatory authority to set additional sector-specific targets and other economy-wide targets. These will support the overall objective of reaching and maintaining net zero emissions in the Yukon by 2050.

The *Clean Energy Act* directs the Government of Yukon to take action to achieve those targets and ensure long-term and ongoing accountability and transparency. That is why this bill and the act, which I hope that we pass, is critical.

While the *Clean Energy Act* falls under the joint responsibilities of the Minister of Environment and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, it sets a standard for the entire Government of Yukon to progress toward our clean climate change objectives. Upon coming into effect, the *Clean Energy Act* ensures long-term government accountability and sets a benchmark for developing measures to reach the legislated targets.

The *Clean Energy Act* will legislate a pathway to reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and will inform future decision-making to achieve these targets.

I'll just acknowledge that we currently are engaging on mining intensity targets, and I hope to bring those back to this Legislative Assembly. They are not part of the act that we have before us, but I look forward to bringing those forward, as well as other renewable electricity generation requirements and renewable fuel content standards that we have identified under *Our Clean Future*.

We are completing additional policy and legal work and will be separately legislating these commitments through subsequent initiatives.

The *Clean Energy Act* will bring the Yukon in line with the most progressive greenhouse gas emission reduction legislation in North America, and I just want to take a minute to comment on that. Through my professional career, I have looked at this type of legislation here in Canada and internationally, and this is a very strong piece of legislation. It's clear, it sets out our goals, and it's going to help to ensure that any government — all future governments — has to live up to these goals. It helps us to build thriving, resilient communities powered by renewable energy and supported by a sustainable green economy. It's a legislative tool that supports us to move toward a sustainable future that benefits Yukoners and the environment while laying the foundation for a net zero economy by 2050.

I look forward to hearing from colleagues of the House on second reading, and look forward to voting on this bill before us.

Mr. Kent: I rise on behalf of the Official Opposition, the Yukon Party caucus, to speak to the *Clean Energy Act* at second reading. I would like to first of all thank the minister's officials, as well as officials from the Department of Environment who participated in the briefing yesterday, and for the quick response in getting back to us with questions posed by me and members of the New Democratic Party. We appreciate that so we can move into second reading, and potentially Committee of the Whole, later on today.

The Yukon Party, the Official Opposition, will be supporting this bill at second reading. There are a few things that I will identify during my time on the floor here now that we'll be looking to discuss further in Committee of the Whole.

Of course, this act, as the minister said, is relatively straightforward. It is not a very long act. There are not very

many clauses or chapters in it or that type of thing, but, again, it rests on the shoulders of a number of other documents that will help to feed into how we reach these emission targets.

A net zero-emission target by 2050 is something that we have heard from a number of other governments, national or subnational governments at various levels throughout not only Canada, but throughout the world. We will be interested in getting a better idea from the minister during Committee on what the plans are to reach that net zero-emission target by 2050.

The 2030 target as described in *Our Clean Future* initially was set at 30 percent. Of course, since the signing of the confidence and supply agreement between the Liberals and the Third Party has come into place, that has been bumped up to 45 percent, so we will be exploring some of the ways that the minister feels that this 2030 target can be reached, given that it is has gone up 15 percent since the *Our Clean Future* document was initially released.

Some of the sector-specific greenhouse gas emission reduction targets that we will be talking about — the minister did mention that mining intensity targets are being worked on now, so perhaps during general debate in Committee of the Whole, we will be able to get a little bit more detail and update on progress on those specific targets.

Renewable heating resource targets, assuming that this would be either generated from electricity or biomass — we will be wanting to get a sense from the minister on what the targeted breakdown is between electricity and biomass heating and how he envisions us getting there between now and specifically 2030.

With the zero-emission vehicle targets as well, there is information available online on the *Our Clean Future* webpage that the Yukon government hosts. I would like to get some more details around some of the Yukon government actions when it comes to that and heating sources and the transportation sector.

Of course, there was recently a report released by the Yukon Climate Leadership Council to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources as well as the Minister of Environment. It is entitled *Climate Shot 2030: Recommendations on how to reduce Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions by 45% by 2030*. So, there are a number of recommendations in this document as well that I won't get into here during second reading, but when we get into Committee, I will want to walk through some of the specific recommendations around leadership and capacity building and education and awareness. I think that those are the top themes that the Climate Leadership Council identified as ways to get to the target that we will be enshrining in legislation, should this go through.

So, with that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my remarks and again thank the minister and his staff in the department, as well as the Minister of Environment's staff, for the briefing and reiterate that we will be supporting this at second reading and look forward to getting into details when it comes to Committee of the Whole later on in this Sitting or perhaps later today.

Ms. Tredger: I am pleased to be speaking at second reading of this bill. There are a number of things that I would

like to discuss before we get into Committee of the Whole — some of the broad strokes. I want to start by talking about the 45-percent reduction goal — our commitment by 2030 that we will have a 45-percent reduction in greenhouse gas levels over 2010 levels. I might just say a “45-percent reduction” from here out as shorthand.

I am so proud of that number, and that number wasn't pulled out of thin air. That was the number that, according to the United Nations, we need to do in order to keep our global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees. We need to reduce our emissions 45 percent by 2030. So, I am just really proud that this is the number that we have brought forward and, of course, that came about as a result of the confidence and supply agreement with the Yukon NDP and the Yukon Liberal caucus. We looked at the original target of 30 percent and said that it's not going to cut it. It is not going to cut it. We need to do better. I am really, really proud that, through negotiation and collaboration, this number is what we have landed on — this 45 percent.

I am, of course, disappointed that, when we talk about that 45-percent reduction, it doesn't include the mining sector. We have gone back and forth about this before — about the need for intensity-based targets versus absolute targets — and I just keep coming back to — at the end of the day, what matters is how much carbon we put in the atmosphere. I keep having these visions of there being landslides, floods, and forest fires and us saying: “But our emissions were so efficient, and it just doesn't matter.” That's a missed opportunity, for sure.

I'm also disappointed that even within the decision to go with intensity-based targets, those aren't in here either, though I do understand that there's the possibility of including them later, and I certainly expect that to happen in short order, as the consultations have wrapped up now.

I'm also really interested in the ability in this bill to create interim targets. I do hope that happens, because there is a big gap between our emissions — which I think have gone down slightly in the last year — and a 45-percent reduction by 2030. What I don't want is that, in 2029, for us to say, “We haven't done it. How are we going get it done in the next year?” We need a careful plan that is going to take us through those years with benchmarks along the way so that we can see if we are making it or not. That has to happen soon, so I do really hope that we will see interim targets set, as is contemplated by this legislation.

One of the other big gaps in this legislation is when we talk about the release of carbon through the destruction of carbon sinks. By that, I'm talking about things like wetlands and forests that contain huge amounts of carbon, and every time we disturb them or destroy them, or tear them up in whatever way, we are releasing a large amount of carbon into the atmosphere. That's just not captured in anything that we are talking about yet.

Again, I have these visions of us saying, “But we got our emissions down, and it doesn't matter if we are still putting out carbon in all these other ways.” I know it won't be in this legislation, but I do hope that we can start having that conversation in a more serious way with some actual plans to

try to account for that and then change it and stop it and make sure that we aren't releasing carbon in that way — or are releasing as little as possible.

This piece of legislation, which we will be supporting at second reading and I am happy that it's coming forward — the thing about it is that it's only worth the paper it's written on unless we breathe life into it. We have set the goals, but the goals don't matter unless we do the work to get there.

We have been talking a lot about *Our Clean Future* lately. When I look at the progress on *Our Clean Future*, I have to say that I am really impressed with the way the departments have worked toward the goals that have been set out in *Our Clean Future*. I see a lot of really hard, careful work. I think progress toward that plan is moving along at a pretty good rate. The problem is that plan only gets us one-third of the way to a 45-percent reduction. As much work as we do on that plan, it won't get us there until we come up with a new and improved plan. That's why I am so excited about the Yukon Climate Leadership Council's report, *Climate Shot 2030*, which has their recommendations on how to get to that 45-percent reduction.

It's really a path forward, and I want to talk about this report for a little bit, because it's such a great report and it does a number of really interesting things. One of my favourite parts about it is that it talks about what some of the side effects are of these actions that we could put into place. There is more than one way that we can go about getting our emissions down, but they will all have societal consequences, and I think we need to consider which are the consequences that we want.

For example, in this report, every time they include a suggestion that reduces greenhouse gases, they also look at how that suggestion will improve social equity, whether it increases system resilience and diversity, whether it increases self-sufficiency or security, and whether it fosters community health and vitality. I love that way of looking at these actions so that, as we make this enormous shift in our society, we're not just reducing emissions, but we're doing it in a way that also makes us stronger and healthier as a society.

Last week, I was profiling a different one of the actions each week on my social media, because I really wanted people to hear about these, and I want to mention a few of them now because there are such great ideas in this report.

We talk a lot about labour shortages and staffing shortages in all kinds of areas, and that's a major barrier to doing a lot of the work that we need to do for *Our Clean Future* — the building retrofits. I really loved one of the suggestions in this report to develop a labour force strategy specific to building retrofits. I just love the idea of having local training to get people to do the jobs that we need done at the same time as we're building our skill base here in the Yukon.

I thought there was a really interesting recommendation about tying active and transit-specific transportation budgets to automobile transportation budgets. Let me break that down a little. The council recommends we start at 15 percent, so, however much money we spend on roads for cars, we're spending 15 percent of that on active and public transportation infrastructure. Imagine what we could do if our budgets were

15 percent. That's amazing. We could have incredible safe bike lanes where people don't have to worry about getting hit by cars; we could have public transit that runs on a schedule that works for people; we could have inter-community transit. There are just so many things that we could do with that, and I think it's a really exciting way to think about it, to make sure that we're really committing to putting equal effort into these different streams of transportation.

I thought another really interesting one that the leadership council recommended was that, for government decisions, we include carbon budgeting as part of that. So, when someone goes to their supervisor and says, "Hey, I have this proposal and it's going to cost X amount of money", they are also saying that it is going to cost X amount of carbon. We need to be thinking about that with every decision that we make. Climate change isn't something that can just stay in the Climate Change Secretariat; it has to be everywhere in the government. I know that this is happening already. I know that there are lots of people in every department doing this work. I just think that it is so important that it becomes part of every decision and calculation that we make.

I don't want to go through every recommendation in here because it is easier for people to read the report anyway. I just want to finish by thanking the council for their work. I know that it was so, so many hours, so much effort, and so much work for the group of people to come together to do on a volunteer basis. I just thank them so much for their work.

I want to finish with that. I hope that, as we move forward with this legislation, it becomes so much more than a piece of legislation and that it becomes a guiding document, a guiding principle for everything that we're doing, and everything this government is doing, so that we really can meet those targets and create ourselves a safe, healthy, and beautiful world to live in.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: As Minister of Highways and Public Works and Minister of Environment, I am also honoured to be presenting the *Clean Energy Act, 2022*, today, with my colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, for the Yukon Legislative Assembly's consideration.

As we have heard from the speakers so far, climate is indeed changing in the Yukon and throughout the world. In the Yukon, average temperatures are increasing at twice the rate of the rest of the world. We are seeing shifting precipitation patterns, severe floods, wildfires, shrinking glaciers, and thawing permafrost. The thawing permafrost was evident as recently as two weeks ago south of the Dempster cut-off on the north Klondike Highway and west of Henderson Corner approaching Dawson City as well as on the north Klondike Highway as we had unprecedented slumping and permafrost that was detaching or delaminating from the rest of the hillside.

These changes are impacting our communities, ecosystems, transportation networks, infrastructure, and individuals. Further, we know that, as our population continues to grow, we will require more energy. At the same time, we need to reduce our carbon footprint and ensure economic stability and energy security.

Mr. Speaker, globally we are increasingly seeing the impact of greenhouse gas emissions that are occurring all over the world. Flooding sea levels, sea level rise, wildfires, extreme heat, and other changes are becoming more commonplace, leading to global destabilization, supply chain issues, and food and water insecurity. As we saw most recently, up to one-third of the country of Pakistan was under water by unprecedented flooding, and we know the number of the countries that are most impacted by climate change are those countries that have contributed the least to the problem.

In order to reduce the impacts of climate change both at home and for the rest of the world, collective and coordinated action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is essential. As a government, we have a responsibility to lead climate action in our territory. We are already seeing that the Yukon's climate is changing, affecting the landscape we live in and the places we call home. We are seeing the impact that this has on Yukoners from challenging and significant snowpack and additional flood risks to wildfires and escarpment slides in our communities.

The risks that climate change pose in the Yukon affect the values that Yukoners hold close — the culture and heritage of our territory, our very health and well-being, our food and energy security — all of which are inextricably linked to a healthy environment. Taking action on climate change supports reconciliation with Yukon First Nations by showing that we are serious when it comes to protecting our environment, our history, and our culture. We treat the threat of climate change seriously. We know that we need to mitigate and reduce the impact of climate change.

In September 2020, we released the 10-year strategy called *Our Clean Future* to guide our response to the climate emergency. In the *Our Clean Future* strategy, we set out four goals to address climate change. These include: reducing Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions; ensuring that Yukoners have access to reliable, affordable, and renewable energy; adapting to the impacts of climate change; and building a greener economy.

As part of our commitments under *Our Clean Future* and our goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, we have set an ambitious target to reduce emissions by 45 percent below 2010 levels. This is not wishful thinking, but it is incredibly ambitious. But the Yukon is ambitious, as it is ambitious, if not more, when compared to climate action strategies from across other jurisdictions in Canada.

You may be wondering how legislation plays a role in reaching our ambitious target. The *Clean Energy Act* enshrines into legislation the Government of Yukon's commitment to take ambitious action on climate change and provides a framework for climate change reporting, accountability, and transparency.

The *Clean Energy Act* is the first climate change legislation in the Yukon and sets the strategic direction for action on climate change for the next 30 years and beyond.

The purpose of the *Clean Energy Act* is to: (1) set targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the Yukon and for reaching net zero emissions in the Yukon by 2050; (2)

promote transparency and accountability in relation to meeting those targets; and (3) require the government to track and report on the progress in meeting those targets each year.

The *Clean Energy Act's* framework was developed to incorporate provisions found in British Columbia's *Clean Energy Act* and *Climate Change Accountability Act* and aligns with the federal government's commitment to achieving net zero emissions by 2050 under the *Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act*.

Mr. Speaker, the *Clean Energy Act* will ensure that we are on a path to meet our climate goals. The act fulfills commitments made under *Our Clean Future* and the 2021 confidence and supply agreement to legislate greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. We will support long-term climate change accountability by legislating greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets in the Yukon.

In addition to greenhouse gas emissions targets, the act contains a 2030 renewable heating target, annual reporting requirements for the Government of Yukon, and regulatory authority to set interim economy-wide and sector-specific greenhouse gas targets.

The *Clean Energy Act* provides clear direction to the Government of Yukon to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across the territory, using energy more efficiently for heating and transportation, and to invest in renewable, non-emitting energy resources while laying the foundation for a net zero economy by 2050.

It is not easy work, but it is the right work. It will take a collaborative effort to reach our goal and to protect our northern way of life. Yukon First Nations and transboundary indigenous governments and groups, municipalities, climate advocates in the territory, and many Yukoners are already taking significant action to address climate change.

Our government is doing our part through the actions under the *Our Clean Future* strategy, and now we are taking additional steps to show Yukoners that we are serious about our commitments.

Not only does the act legislate our greenhouse emission reduction targets, it also holds the Government of Yukon to account by including comprehensive annual reporting requirements. The act will foster government transparency and accountability through public reporting, because Yukoners deserve to know if we are making progress toward our climate goals. As these reports will be released annually, leading up to and including the target years, the public will be aware of the status and trajectory of meeting greenhouse gas emission reduction targets in the Yukon.

While we are starting to see progress toward our climate goals, we know that there is more work to do, including significant action to meet our 45-percent emission reduction targets by 2030. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we did see our 2020 greenhouse gas emissions drop by 12 percent — below 2010 levels. However, as noted a number of times in debate and discussions, these emissions are at least in part due to the impacts of the pandemic. However, the data is also proof that we can change our behaviour, our patterns of consumption,

our transportation and travel choices, and that we can, in fact, decrease our emissions.

I would also note, from the most recent report, that there was an indication that, on a per capita basis, the consumption of Yukoners has in fact dropped and not insignificantly. We do certainly anticipate that the per capita consumption will continue on this downward trend.

The *Clean Energy Act* is a key piece of the puzzle in reaching our emission reduction targets. Thank you to all Yukon First Nation and transboundary indigenous governments and groups, municipalities, climate advocates in the territory, and, for the most recent report, the Climate Leadership Council and, in fact, to every Yukoner who is taking action in your and our everyday lives to reduce our emissions and the impacts of climate change. It is our northern way of life that will continue to support our efforts to respond to the threat of climate change.

Before I close, I would just like to provide perhaps just a few comments in response to the comments from the Member for Whitehorse Centre, which were, I would say, generally supportive, but I certainly accept that there are challenges ahead. Certainly, in our discussions, we do recognize that we are now in 2022 and there are eight years now to reach our targets. There has to be a solid foundation in order for government or Yukoners to meet the targets set for 2030. You have to make incremental progress in 2023, 2024, 2025 and so on to get to where you want to be in 2030. What I would say is that the teeter-totter of green energy systems and relatively green transportation options — that tsunami appears to be coming so that, although the road map may not be immediately apparent in 2022, there are very influential persons around the world who are metaphorically pushing in the chips and saying that this is where we are going.

As recently as perhaps four or five weeks ago, the CEO of Chrysler Corporation, Christine Feuill, indicated that Chrysler, which is perhaps the number two or number three automaker in North America, has committed to being completely electric by 2029. So, if the third or perhaps the fourth largest automaker in North America has made that commitment for 2029, you can see the road map forward, that there will be an acceleration — or that there's an anticipation from persons who are investing billions and billions of dollars on transportation infrastructure — whether it's for light-duty vehicles, light-duty trucks, medium-duty trucks, delivery vans, and ultimately full-on tractor trailers — for them to be electric in the near future.

We know that, in the Yukon, approximately 75 percent of our greenhouse gas emissions come from either transportation or heating. So, I am more than guardedly optimistic on the transportation front that a revolution is coming in a very positive way. On the heating side, I'm sure that my colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, will get into this in anticipated Committee of the Whole debate, whether it's today or later in the Sitting, but we have certainly started that process of identifying grid-scale battery storage, other storage capacity, and identifying assets for the Yukon government that are islanded grids. Putting on my Minister of Highways and Public Works hat, we have identified eight islanded-grid grader

stations that have very inefficient diesel power units that use hundreds of thousands of litres of diesel every year. I have just signed off on two contracts to create significant solar arrays at both the Klondike and Ogilvie grader stations on the Dempster, and we will do more.

So, this snowball of green energy and green transportation and accessing as much renewable energy as we can possibly identify — and I know I'm looking on a daily basis, and I know the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources is looking for opportunities on a daily basis to find those sources.

The Member for Whitehorse Centre and I have had conversations over the course of the last 18 months on this topic. I certainly applaud that she is pushing for an aggressive agenda and is impatient in a good way, as I am, to move as strongly as we can.

In my portfolio at Highways and Public Works, Highways and Public Works is responsible for the repair, oversight, and maintenance of between 500 and 600 buildings, as well as approximately 500 to 600 vehicles. Those are both incredibly fruitful areas to start with respect to having Yukon government do its part to provide the foundation in 2022-23 and 2023-24 on both the building heating side and on the transportation side. As I indicated in my second reading speech, I have directed — with respect to Fleet Vehicle Agency acquisitions — that every vehicle purchase should be reviewed as to its suitability to consider either a hybrid, a plug-in electric, or a full electric vehicle. We know that, in the next year, year and a half, or two years, there will be significantly sized vehicles that would otherwise be emitting a lot of carbon — will be fit for the purpose as we completely defeat range anxiety. If I had to look into the future, range anxiety will not be an issue because smart people are figuring out cold technology — dealing with the cold, so dealing with a lot of the Yukon climate or the Canadian climate — and battery technology will just get better and better.

I certainly understand that there are challenges, but as I said, there are very influential people on a Canadian basis, in America, and in western Europe who are, as I said, pushing in the chips and making multi-billion-dollar investments, and the Yukon is there to embrace all evolving and emerging technologies.

So, I am excited for the *Clean Energy Act*. I am excited for the ongoing work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the territory for a brighter and cleaner future.

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

Does any other member wish to be heard?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will just reply to some of the comments that came out during second reading.

First of all, I would like to thank everybody who spoke for their comments. It sounds like there is general support, although with many questions to come. In particular, I will begin by thanking the Member for Copperbelt South for thanking the department. I will make sure to pass on that acknowledgement. I got a note super late last night from the

department talking about getting a response to the members opposite, so I was glad to see that happen.

I look forward to conversations around mining intensity targets to how we are working to address heating and transportation. I think that there is a lot in there. Of course, whenever we deal with these big issues like heating or transportation, it isn't just how people shift off of fossil fuels and onto, for example, electricity; it is also how we make sure that we are supplying renewable energy to match that as we go along. That is why, within the act, we talk not only about the need to make the targets for that transition, but also to be sure that we are supplying renewable energy. Without having both of those in place, we can't make the targets that we are setting for ourselves. I look forward to having specific conversations and questions here in Committee of the Whole about those.

In general, I will say that heating will be much more toward electricity than it will be toward biomass, but it really depends. If there are bigger buildings, it can be biomass; if it's a new build, it's almost all generally now toward electricity because the homes are just so much more efficient, and even when we do the retrofitting, typically it is to things like heat pumps and baseboards. Again, that modelling is in there in projecting what the impact will be on the need for renewables.

In responding to the Member for Whitehorse Centre and her comments around the overall target of 45 percent, I completely agree with her that, when we set out the original target, it was for 30 percent by 2030, but the real target is 2050. That is our target; it's net zero. By the way, it doesn't matter whether you are talking absolute emissions or relative emissions or intensity emissions; when you are saying "net zero", it's net zero, so they all come back to the same place at that point. That is the real target.

In order to achieve that target, we need interim targets. In order to achieve the interim targets, we are going to need interim work in between. I think it's all important.

I had two conversations recently. One was over the long weekend with someone from the media, and one — maybe it's now a couple of months ago — was with someone from the environmental community. Both of them said, "You know, the Yukon doesn't have a lot of emissions. Do we really need to get our emissions down?" The answer is yes. Absolutely, it is yes.

Here's the reason why. You can always start out by saying, "I might live in a big country, but I live in a small place within that big country, so why don't we just let the country deal with it?" If we do that, we create what is called "the tragedy of the commons", because everyone will say, "I'm small; I'm not contributing much." Even Canada could say it's not contributing much or Canada is not contributing much. We absolutely — all of us — need to do it. I argue that here, in the Yukon and in Canada, we have been very fortunate in the sense that we have had this advantage of access to resources and an energy economy that has really helped us, and I think it is our responsibility as citizens to even move forward more quickly than other parts of the world. That is exactly what the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* said — that it should be those countries that have benefited from those

industrial processes to take the lead. I take it very seriously, and I think it's really important for us.

There are another couple of reasons why. The first one is that, as we look at what the future of our economy looks like, it definitely is not what the past looks like. I was thinking about other times when we have had disruptive technologies. Think back 20 years ago. Smartphones had keyboards on them — well, you didn't even have smartphones 20 years ago, but when they first came out, they had keyboards on them. Maybe 10 or 15 years ago, there were just a few smartphones, but by now, it would be surprising if someone didn't have one. That's how quickly those things will shift when they shift.

I think that is something that the Minister of Environment — but probably with his Highways and Public Works hat on — was talking about when he talked about zero-emission vehicles, or ZEVs. That transition can come quickly, so you don't want to be sitting with your old energy economy when things move because you will be behind. You actually need to go.

The third reason that we have this incredible responsibility is that we know that, because of the impacts of climate change, we are going to be feeling a bunch of those, and even when we make this transition, there will be a long period of time when we still get many of those impacts because they are still built into the system and baked in. What we're doing now, as we make this transition, is avoiding even worse impacts in the future.

The ones we have now — last night, I was at a meeting in Marsh Lake and we were looking at the Southern Lakes. I don't know — the Member for Lake Laberge, I'm sure, when he looks at his lake — but all of the Southern Lakes and the lakes around Whitehorse right now were all coming down as they always do, and then something happened about two or three weeks ago and they just started shooting up again. Today, Marsh Lake, Tagish, Bennett, Atlin, and Laberge are all higher than they have ever been at this time of year. It is completely disconcerting.

I am heading back out to another community meeting tonight in Tagish to try to talk this through with residents. It is unprecedented. We have not seen it before, and we are not sure what will happen if the lake levels stay high and get freeze-up with incredibly high groundwater. It is really problematic. We have a moral authority to move.

I want to talk a little bit about these intermediate pieces just for a second. The whole purpose of this act is to create — or, as the Minister of Environment framed it, to "enshrine" — the responsibility for this Yukon government and future Yukon governments that we have to meet these targets. We, of course, will work to try to build in more to it. When we first established this, we knew that there was much more work to do.

I would like to echo the words of the Member for Whitehorse Centre in her compliments to the Yukon Climate Leadership Council. That council really did work very hard. I appreciate the work that they have. They have put a lot of estimates into what they are doing. What we now need to do is to model that work, because I have been around long enough to see previous Yukon strategies on climate change, and we never did the modelling.

When we didn't do the modelling, then we really didn't have that ability to project where we were going to head, what we anticipated, and there are going to be complications along the way — like COVID and things like that — but the modelling will help us to understand which of the suite of solutions we need. Sometimes people look for, in climate change solutions, a silver bullet. What we need to look for is silver buckshot. That is the way that this needs to work. We need a whole bunch of initiatives that are going to work in concert with each other and across many, many sectors in order to achieve our goals.

Again, I look forward to Committee of the Whole to answer questions. One of the ones that came up was: How are we going to build capacity around retrofits? I happen to know that the Energy Solutions Centre has a program in place right now to build capacity for retrofits — both on the energy audit side and the energy retrofit side — so that we get more capacity across our communities to address it, so I think that these are all important questions.

One of the things that the Member for Whitehorse Centre talked about was breathing life into this act. Well, I want to sort of say yes and no. I am hopeful, of course, that the act passes, and there is a lot of work that must be undertaken in order to achieve the goals that we are talking about, but the goal itself then becomes set in this House and, by extension then, the Yukon government. If we pass this act, the simple fact is that it is then the responsibility to achieve the goals set out in the act and, if not, to be held accountable by Yukoners. There is no fine if you don't make it. What is there is a commitment to Yukoners through the act, and I hope that we all make that commitment together.

In the end, I come back to where I started, Mr. Speaker. I feel a tremendous privilege to stand here in this Legislature to present this bill for us to consider. I believe that it has been one of my goals in life to try to see us make this shift — this huge, huge shift of our energy economy and including, as the Member for Whitehorse Centre noted, to try to make sure that as we do that, we consider those changes and how they can have other important impacts on things like reconciliation. But it's my belief that shifts happen, so I am here to advocate for that shift.

I thank all members for their attention to Bill No. 17 today, and I look forward to Committee of the Whole and the hopeful passage of this bill here in the Legislative Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McLean: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Mr. Dixon: Agree.

Mr. Kent: Agree.

Ms. Clarke: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Blake: Agree.

Ms. Tredger: Agree.

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

Speaker: The yeas have it.

I declare the motion carried.

Motion for second reading of Bill No. 17 agreed to

Bill No. 206: Second Appropriation Act 2022-23 — Second Reading — adjourned debate

Clerk: Second reading, Bill No. 206, standing in the name of the Hon. Premier; adjourned debate, Mr. Cathers.

Mr. Cathers: I am pleased to rise today to continue my remarks on the supplementary budget. In resuming where I left off in speaking to this earlier, I do also just want to begin by acknowledging the report of the Child and Youth Advocate that came out regarding the serious and criminal incidents that occurred at Hidden Valley school, as well as the government's failures in response to it.

I'm not going to spend a lot of time talking about it here today. We did raise it in Question Period, but I would begin by encouraging everyone who is listening or reading this to take the opportunity to read the report by the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate regarding this situation, as well as the ongoing lack of support by the Yukon government for children, families, and the school community.

I want to move on to some other areas in addition to the ones that I touched on previously. What we have seen in terms of some of the measures that the government has announced in response to inflation is that, despite claiming these measures were contained within the budget, we have seen very clearly — and learned from officials during the briefings — that all of the measures which the government rolled out in September are not actually in the supplementary budget, so there are millions of dollars of unbudgeted spending.

It's also very clear that we are seeing the government reacting to criticism with last-minute, cobbled-together measures rather than actually having a plan to assist with inflation. Again, also as I noted, we see as well that the government has consistently refused to cut the territorial fuel tax which we suggested in the spring and which would provide approximately \$9.7 million in tax relief to Yukoners. As well, the government itself indicated in their own report that they issued — the interim fiscal and economic report — that it notes

that higher fuel prices have been the biggest driver of inflation; yet, despite that, the government continues to be out of touch on this issue and refused to take any reasonable suggestions. Unfortunately, that is affecting the lives of Yukoners.

I want to note as well that today we saw the debate on green energy legislation that was proposed by the government, but we have a situation here where the Yukon has, amazingly, a firewood shortage. It is not because there is a lack of trees that would be suitable for firewood here in the territory, but it is because of the government's failures to make those available. In a territory that is larger in area than almost every country in Europe, surrounded by boreal forest — a territory where, in fact, experts have raised concerns about the wildfire risk near communities because of the amount of boreal forest there — we see a situation where, surely because of government failures and inaction, wood suppliers are forced to import wood up the highway, burning more diesel fuel in the process, from British Columbia.

This government talks a good line in a number of areas, including reducing emissions, but the facts are actually very clear. Under this Liberal government, more diesel and LNG is being consumed to power Yukon homes and produce the electrical baseload. We have seen that the percentage of power on the electrical grid from renewables has dropped under the Liberals from over 98 percent under the Yukon Party to just 93 percent under the current government, and they have no realistic plan to change that. We currently have Yukoners who are now burning fossil fuels to replace the firewood they were previously using to heat their homes because, thanks to this Liberal government's inaction and failures on that important area, people can't get locally produced firewood — or, I should say, many people can't get locally produced firewood.

This has become an issue that many constituents and others are raising with me as a concern, and it has also contributed to the shipping of firewood into the territory, which has led to an increased price per cord, which is making it harder for Yukon families and is again another area where emissions are actually increasing because of the mistakes and the lack of action of the current government, and that needs to change.

Mr. Speaker, how many minutes do I have remaining?

Speaker: (Inaudible)

Mr. Cathers: Okay, thank you. I am going to have to say some of the things that I wanted to say later in general debate, but I want to again touch on a couple of issues that I raised previously and have raised consistently.

We have seen a situation where, under this government for years, over one-fifth of Yukoners have not had a family doctor. We have seen a situation where the government has consistently, for most of the years that it has been in office, chronically underfunded the Yukon Hospital Corporation. We have heard the Third Party raising issues earlier this week, which are, in fact, the direct result of the government's chronic underfunding of our hospital system. One need only look at the hospital's own annual reports to see the number of years under this current government where the expenses were millions higher than revenue, and that was an unsustainable situation even before the pandemic occurred; yet, unfortunately, this

government has failed to listen and, as a result, we are seeing the impacts within our health care system, including gaps in services.

The pandemic, as well — I should note, across the country, of course — has placed many health care systems under strain — all health care systems, I should say, under strain — but some of the impacts here are worse because of the chronic underfunding of our health care system, which existed prior to that point, and the fact — as shown by reports that the government itself has even made reference to — that during the five-year period, the Yukon was the only jurisdiction in the country that saw the ratio of doctors to patients get worse during that time period and that we have, in fact, the worst ratio of family doctors to patients in the country.

We have proposed solutions and will continue to do so, including our repeated encouragement of the government to work with health care stakeholders and the health care community on developing a modernized, comprehensive health human resource strategy that includes an appropriate suite of incentives for health professionals to move to the territory and remain here, as well as bursary programs that meet the needs of Yukon students who are interested in being educated in health professions.

Mr. Speaker, I am being signalled by the Clerk that my allotted time is running to an end, so I will just again thank my constituents for the continued opportunity to work with them and on their behalf and thank my caucus colleagues and our staff for their help and support in doing the work that I do — and also thank all Yukoners, indeed, who come to us with their concerns and priorities.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I appreciate the opportunity to speak to the supplementary budget and have an opportunity to share with the Legislative Assembly some of the activities that have been underway by the departments that I am responsible for since concluding our work here in the spring and passing the 2022-23 budget. Again, it is always an honour to have the opportunity to be in the Legislative Assembly. It is always an honour to be able to carry forward the thoughts, hopes, and concerns of the people of Porter Creek South and to work on behalf of Yukoners in a range of different responsibilities.

I want to thank family, extended family, and constituents for their support and for continuing to be there and make sure that I'm ready to have my best foot forward coming into the Legislative Assembly. Certainly, some of those constituents have, for almost over half a decade, continued to do great leadership work on behalf of the neighbourhood. Really, as a collective, I think that the people of Porter Creek South have been served very respectfully.

This year, we have seen the Yukon and the world emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic with the reopening of borders and loosening of restrictions, along with the war in Ukraine. Again, many challenges have presented themselves to governments and the private sector. We are facing national inflation rates at levels that have not been seen in almost 40 years — 7.7 percent in July. We are seeing disruptions in

supply chains and we are faced with housing shortages at the national level as well as locally, and we are seeing record-breaking unemployment rates. Of course, our rate in the month of August was 1.7 percent. I think the Yukon has seen that twice.

It has been a record number, and again, it has gone up a little bit in September. But really, the story of that is also that it is certainly a market for individuals who want to find a job or change careers, but for the private sector and NGOs, it is a very difficult market to find labour. Just this morning, I spent time on a Zoom call — not able to attend in person due to our Sitting in the Assembly — with all the ministers of Tourism across the country, and one of the focal points was: How are we looking at our labour strategy and how can we deal with this? So, certainly, we are continuing to see an extremely tight labour market.

Again, we are seeing GDP growth that is leading the country. We have back-to-back years and our preliminary estimates of 9.1 percent for 2021, and we are 5.2 percent for 2020 — so, we see that growth.

I think I will just correct for the record — you know, we have heard from opposition members at times that this is all to do with public sector growth, but certainly, we are seeing significant investment across the private sector as well where we see more businesses open and record investment into real estate and construction. I haven't seen this level of interest in the mining sector, where we see majors coming in and looking to partner up and to do advanced exploration. We are seeing that, and we are also seeing a great interest in asset investment in the tourism sector as well.

So, again, I think that we are on the right track, but we certainly have some things that we want to continue to focus on, and housing and labour are two of the most important.

Again, the challenges that we face force us to look at how we operate and how we spend our money in order to best serve Yukoners. Our government has remained committed to taking action to make the lives of Yukoners healthier, happier, and more affordable. Recognizing that the cost of living has had a significant impact on families, seniors, and our most vulnerable population, our government announced almost \$5 million worth of inflation-relief measures that are reflected in this supplementary budget. This includes funding targeted to support vulnerable groups, such as a one-time payment of \$150 for Yukoners on social assistance, a one-time payment of \$150 for Yukon seniors income supplement recipients, an additional \$100,000 for funding to the Food Network Yukon, and payments to seniors through a one-time 10-percent top-up on the pioneer utility grant payable in January 2023. In addition, we announced a six-month extension of the additional \$500 per month to caregivers of children in our home care.

In the same way that we have approached the situation of COVID-19 over a 24-month period was to continue to act, making sure that there were proper interventions, continuing to monitor and then adapt if necessary. I think that is what we saw in the spring. In the spring, it was the early days when we saw the inflationary numbers. What we are hearing from subject matter experts is that we might be seeing a flattening of that

growth. We don't know if that is what is going to happen, but it was something that the Premier spoke to earlier in the week. I think that is something we are going to continue to do — monitor the situation and adapt if necessary. These are some of the measures that we believe could be effective and rolled out now.

We are also expanding the \$150 inflationary relief rebate, which we did announce in March. The rebate provides a monthly credit of \$50 to all residential and commercial electricity customers' bills, and customers will see a rebate on their bills from October to December. So, in total, Yukoners will have received \$300 off their electrical bills by the end of the year. This is on top of the existing interim electrical rebate, again, which saves Yukoners more than \$270 per year.

Again, our government has been focused on making life more affordable for Yukoners since we took office in 2016. These new affordability measures will complement those included in the budget of 2022-23.

Again, continued investment in Yukon's first-ever universal childcare — and I want to commend the minister on bringing that in. I have to say that, when I think back to knocking on doors in 2016, the thing that really resonated with me was the parents who came to the door and said, "Look, I want to be part of this workforce. I want to get out there, but inevitably it is just so expensive for childcare. It's the biggest impediment. It's almost like a mortgage payment." With two or three children at home, it makes more sense for one of those parents to stay home to look after their children, and then what happens is that we lose a willing participant in our workforce. We do have almost 72 percent of people in our workforce — or Yukoners as part of our workforce. It is the second highest in Canada for workforce participation, but it could be higher. There are individuals out there who wanted to be part of the labour force, but at the end of the day, if it was \$1,800 or \$2,500 for three children for daycare, they are making a decision.

Our minister brought in that program. It was leading in the nation. If I look back on my time in this job, I think that is one of the most significant things — and led. It wasn't the federal government that led; it was the territorial government that led that work.

Again, it was really groundbreaking for the Yukon in what they did and what they implemented. That is so significant in making life more affordable for Yukoners. We understand that not everyone is affected by that, but it is a significant impact to the population of the Yukon. Those are some of the things that we have taken into consideration in the short term around inflation and what the pressures are.

The summertime, also, whether it's talking about housing, tourism, economic development responsibilities, liquor, or lotteries — getting a chance to go out and talk to folks and understand where people are and having a real sense of what's happening on the ground. When I think about some of the meetings this year — having a chance to go to Old Crow to look and feel what is happening with our tenplex there, going to "Moccasin Square Gardens", as it was called today, which I love, and having an opportunity to sit there with federal ministers as well as the MP and Chief Tizya-Tramm — having

that opportunity to see what's happening in the community. There were conversations with tourism operators, arts groups, and you name it — around housing, as well as where we are in tourism and culture — in Dawson City this summer again — significant conversations.

Probably one of the most memorable times was having an opportunity on June 21, which, of course, is a very significant day and a holiday that was put in place by this government. Driving into your home community, Mr. Speaker, and catching some cell signal at that time, I found out that Nun cho ga, which was a renowned find in the goldfields, had just occurred a couple of hours before. As I was getting into Dawson City, Chief Roberta Joseph called and said, "Look, we need to talk on the ground, as something pretty special happened today." From that moment on, and late in the night, we were coordinating back and forth with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Department of Tourism and Culture, making sure everything was on the ground and that we had a way to get elders out into the field within 48 hours to get there and see what had happened. Bringing together that community, from industry as well as the subject matter experts that we have in our palaeontological unit, and having Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in take the lead on that experience was something that was once in a lifetime — being able to experience that.

I had the chance to see amazing entrepreneurs like Joella Hogan investing in opening up new housing in Mayo, and it is something I will reflect back on from this summer, looking at what the next set of housing needs are, sitting with mayor and council and talking about that, trying to figure out what we can do next in communities like Mayo.

Again, taking time to meet with development corporations from Northern Tutchone communities and understanding what they are working on and what they believe are their priorities. Having a chance to see the acquisition of the hotels and businesses in Carmacks by their development corporation — the first thing I could think about is, if you go back into *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow* and you open up that booklet and you go to the very back of the booklet, you will see that each nation went through and they prioritized things that they wanted to see in the future for their nation. When you look at Little Salmon Carmacks, what you will see is that the acquisition of those businesses was something that the elders — they wouldn't be the elders but, at that time, the leaders — identified that they wanted to see acquired that hotel and those businesses. Again, seeing the realization of those dreams from those self-government agreements and from that early work that started that whole process.

Some time out in Kluane country this summer, talking about housing and looking at some of the other key pieces — I am happy to have been invited to attend, on behalf of the Yukon government, the general assembly in Teslin this year and getting an understanding of the priorities and having the opportunity with the MLA for Watson Lake to open up our new housing project that was built in Watson Lake.

What I am trying to illustrate here is that our departments do understand that it is important to be on the ground in all of our communities in the Yukon and to get a sense of what is

really happening. I would debate any day that my colleagues or I are certainly out there having conversations and understanding what is happening day to day with Yukoners.

On the tourism side of things, I think we, specifically talking about that — I think that although it was not without challenges, including travelling and transportation delays, which we saw, and accommodation and labour shortages — really tough getting things tweaked again. Indicators show that we are a little bit below the 2019 visitation numbers, but we are seeing growth in our occupancy in hotels. I think that from January to September 2022, there were approximately 113,000 passengers who arrived at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport. So, it is an increase from 2021, but we have a gap of about 30 percent that we have to make up to the 2019 arrivals.

We will continue to deploy the *Yukon Tourism Development Strategy* and we will continue to work on the things that, over this year — and we will probably talk it about here. It is going to be looking at our borders and making sure they are more streamlined. We had challenges this year, whether in some of the technology that was deployed by the federal government or getting the US border services to come on line and support our request to extend border openings, especially at Little Gold on the Top of the World Highway.

We will have other significant announcements around tourism this fall. I will save it to then. We have embarked on some new strategies, and I think they will be well taken by the tourism sector.

Labour — again, as I said, these challenges are absolutely across the country when it comes to labour and tourism, but we are seeing it in the hospitality industry and right across the private sector, as well as even in the public sector.

The Stats Canada survey of employment, payroll, and hours provides a more detailed look of how many payroll jobs are filled and vacant in the Yukon each month. Preliminary data for July 2022 show that there were almost 24,000 filled jobs and 1,500 vacant jobs, indicating a job vacancy rate of 7.2 percent. Five sectors — health care, construction, accommodation and food, retail trade, and manufacturing — continue to drive the growth in job vacancies. Those are the areas we have to continue to focus on.

We are seeing vacancies increasing more in the low-wage occupations than in high-wage occupations, so we are going to look at skilling up folks. We are going to continue to look at our nominee program, which we are pushing. Our team is doing very well at the territorial level. We are trying to work with some of the bottlenecks that are happening at the federal level coming out of COVID. We are going to continue to be very focused on looking at strategic partnerships. Globally, I have been meeting with a number of consul generals to talk about how their post-secondary institutions can feed in or we can partner here with our post-secondary institution and how we can provide co-op opportunities for folks wanting to work in those particular fields.

We will look at how we can have students — there have been some changes at the federal level. International students have the ability to work more hours and we are going to be

looking at how we can best coordinate that as well. A number of things are going to happen.

When it comes to labour, really, it is kind of the driver for our supplementary budget at the Department of Economic Development. In this supplementary budget, the Labour Market Development branch is seeking an increase of \$1.1 million, and that is related to the carry-over funding from the 2021-22 fiscal year. The federal government has provided more funding and we really want to use that.

What we want to use it for — one of the big undertakings is going to be to search out, within the Yukon, the most accurate information on what Yukoners are looking for — that opportunity to skill up — or Yukoners who are not in the workforce and finding out why they are not in the workforce. Because, at the end of the day, those individuals hopefully are in a position where they have good accommodation in a home. So, we're not putting more pressure by bringing somebody in, but hopefully they are folks whom we have an obligation to serve and advise.

I am going to make an offer — there were comments from the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin that there were youth across the north who she met with this summer. They didn't have money for training. They wanted to skill up and they wanted to be part of the workforce, so I spoke with our team upstairs and I am going to offer up to the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin — every one of those individuals has an opportunity to just reach out to my office and we will set them up with the appropriate supports to make sure. We will track that on a daily basis and we will see what we can do there.

I am going to switch quickly over to the housing piece. On that one, I just want to say — look, our budget that came through in the spring, the money that was there for every department — we are still spending that. So, just because it is not in the supplementary budget doesn't mean that there is no money for that. I read through the Blues and I think that the comments made by folks, especially on housing — they don't see it in the supplementary budget because we are still deploying the resources that we had.

I think that I would like to have a larger discussion — I think that there were some things that were inaccurate and I went back to the department concerning how we work with our clients, but we can talk about that, I think, throughout the fall.

In closing, I will just share this. We have lots to work on, and my focus will be on the responsibilities for our labour, which is a national issue, but we'll look at it regionally. On housing, we are going to continue to work with the private sector. If we look at what happened in the 10 years before, there was very little investment in housing at all. We heard from the Third Party, saying: "Well, you should be taking that lot and you should build more."

Speaker: Ten seconds.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Our feeling is that we are going to continue to work with the private sector. We are going to continue to work with the Yukon Housing Corporation and other partners and continue to focus on housing. So, labour and housing — let's talk about them this fall — two really

important issues, and this supplementary budget will be here with that million dollars to help on those undertakings.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Clarke: Salamat.

[Member spoke in Tagalog. Text unavailable.]

Thank you for the opportunity to rise today to speak to the supplementary budget. I would like to thank my family for their continued support and to express appreciation to all my constituents of Porter Creek Centre. Thank you for keeping me busy on a daily basis. I enjoy getting your e-mails, texts, Messenger messages, and phone calls. I feel very connected with you when you tell me your stories and life challenges — the good, the bad, and the ugly. All of it. Thank you for that. Thank you for inviting me to your family events, community gatherings, birthday parties, housewarmings, trail walks, and just to chat. I am honoured to be your MLA in Porter Creek Centre.

I was elected in the 2021 territorial election to represent the growing riding of Porter Creek Centre. My riding is the biggest of all 19 ridings in the Yukon in terms of population because Whistle Bend is growing. I have close to 3,000 residents in that area alone, plus the Porter Creek area from Sycamore Street down to Tamarack Street. Where I really feel that I have been able to make a difference is when constituents and even people outside of my riding come to me and thank me for the help that I have provided them. That is when I feel I made a difference. That is why I am doing what I am doing.

I would also like to note that a lot of the issues my constituents face have overlap with the City of Whitehorse. I would like to thank the members of Whitehorse City Council and the staff who work to quickly and effectively respond to concerns that I raise on behalf of Whitehorse residents.

Some of the issues that my constituents have raised with me — and I would like to take this opportunity to put some of those issues on the record: transportation in Whistle Bend — which continues to be an issue, including bus routes and schedules — student transportation, and busing issues. Traffic in and out of the subdivision has been frustrating for so many. I will continue to ask about plans to deal with this. The cost of heating oil and electricity bills are becoming a huge burden on families across my riding and across the Yukon. This, of course, is a huge contributor to the increasing cost of living. With the increasing cost of food and necessities, people are getting worried.

The Whistle Bend pond continues to be a topic of concern. My residents in the area there continue to see a problem with algae throughout the summer months. I will continue to ask the city and the Yukon government to find a permanent solution. A new Whistle Bend outdoor rink has been a concern for residents who are looking for increased recreational opportunities in the area. I would like to say a big thank you to the City of Whitehorse for working with me in my riding and getting this added to our growing area. The Goddard Park behind Evelyn Avenue and Leota Street — thank you, City of Whitehorse, for working with me and my riding and putting in a disk swing that can be used as a single or multi-occupant swing. Although

residents were concerned that there were no traditional swing sets, I am happy to hear that the city is in the planning stages for a very large playground just northwest of phase 6 to complement the surrounding pocket parks like Goddard, Aksala, Caprice Court, and the pond. I continue to hear concerns about the access road behind Keno Way. My constituents purchased these lots because they backed onto a green street or a greenbelt, but with the introduction of these access roads, residents are hoping they will remain blocked and accessible only for city trucks to dump snow.

Issues related to health care are still top of mind for Yukoners — access to family doctors, surgery cancellations, and more. I continue to hear concerns around increasing property crime and the lack of necessary resources being provided to the RCMP. We are seeing a rise in vandalism and vehicle break-ins, and residents would like to see further action from this government on these important issues.

Winter snow management continues to be a priority for Whistle Bend residents. Streets in the neighbourhood are narrow in the winter, and parking is a challenge in the winter with high snowbanks. Thanks to the City of Whitehorse for working with me to address these concerns. I am hoping that some of these concerns are alleviated this upcoming snow season.

Whistle Bend school is moving along. Residents are looking forward to this new school opening and are eagerly awaiting the establishment of a school council to begin planning. This council was originally to be established in May of this year.

Whistle Bend green streets continue to be an issue. Residents were promised one thing; government did another. There is a lot of blame being tossed around, as well as promises that things will be made right. I hope government takes the time to fix this issue and ensure that no work is done without proper consultation to ensure that the option chosen by the residents is the one that is followed.

I have a few thoughts that I would like to leave you with today — first, on housing. We just saw another housing summit take place for government to listen to people. I am thinking: Hasn't the government listened long enough? We have seen lots delayed. It is past time for talk on housing; now is the time for action.

My thoughts on affordability — Yukoners can't afford to heat their homes; Yukoners can't afford to drive their car. The bottom line is that prices have gone through the roof and Yukoners are suffering, and the Liberals refused to take action until this fall just because the Yukon Party made suggestions to help in the spring. The Liberals need to stop blaming previous governments for the choices they have made. I repeat: The Liberals need to stop blaming previous governments for the choices they have made.

I personally think that this government has been in office long enough now — long enough now. These are the Liberal messes that Yukoners are left to deal with. The Liberal government is responsible for so many of the issues facing Yukoners today. That is why I do not have confidence in this government.

I would like to, once again, thank my constituents. I will continue to work on your behalf. Thank you.

Mr. Istchenko: It is a privilege actually to be here today and to stand in the House to speak on behalf of my constituents, and I do want to thank them. I have a diverse riding, as I have said before in this House, and I won't detail my riding. I could be here forever, but there are only 20 minutes.

There are some awesome people out there, and I get to see one of them on my way home tonight, which is pretty cool. I have to go down a back road for a long way.

I also want to thank my friends and family for their support throughout the years. My family is a pretty awesome family — a long-time Yukon family, and it's very, very large. We are not all blood, but we are one big family.

I wanted to take a moment to highlight our business community throughout the Kluane riding. Things have been very tough on them throughout the pandemic, and I was so pleased to see the tourists back and the traffic back. It has been a busy summer for all. As we have heard probably, worldwide — staffing continues to be an issue through rural Yukon, but worldwide too. It seems that way. Businesses throughout the communities should be commended for working so many hours to keep services open that we desperately need. It's important that governments keep tabs on what goes on in our communities: what we need, what is working, and the things they can do to help and not hinder processes for private businesses and organizations.

There have been many reports of increased barriers for businesses, the ever-increasing red tape. This continues to be one of the biggest barriers to success facing those trying to make a living, grow a successful business, and put people to work in our communities.

I want to switch to some of the events that we haven't seen that are happening in Kluane again. I want to give a shout-out to those individuals who volunteer their time and energy to make events happen. They deserve to be commended for the work they do. I am going to highlight just a few.

Some of the youth programming that's going on in Beaver Creek is put on by the White River First Nation. There is a young man who came back to the community and is doing some awesome things for the youth there.

The Kluane Lake Fishing Derby finally happened again, and it was hosted by the Kluane Lake Athletic Association. It was an awesome weekend. It was great to see so many constituents out there and people from around the Yukon.

My little community — well, little big community of Mendenhall — their community association has community markets, and they have youth programs every weekend, teaching kids everything from cooking to — it's just an incredible bunch of programs they do.

Our Haines Junction minor hockey, which I can't say enough about either — they are just busy, busy, busy. They are active. They are waiting for the arena. We are a little bit behind, waiting for a company to get something fixed there, but everybody is chomping at the bit to get back out on the ice.

We have an interesting little thing in Haines Junction called the community market. That's another great success. That's where I always get rooked into pie-eating contests and trying to talk my way out of it.

Our Junior Canadian Ranger program, year after year — of course, a lot is happening.

I was privileged to be around for the Champagne and Aishihik — they hold an elders camp every year. They have done it the last few years and it was good to see it happen again at Klukshu and Champagne. It was good to see the elders out there canning. We had a great run of sockeye salmon this year, so it was pretty neat to have traditional foods there again. Something that I have been part of for quite a while is the muskrat camp that the Kluane First Nation puts on. There are some great volunteers who put that on. Thank you to all those involved in all of these incredible events that wouldn't be possible without your dedication.

There are always issues, of course, in our diverse rural communities, and I have highlighted many through motions, letters to ministers, and also through Question Period. Constituents ask me about issues that I have brought forward, and I find myself reiterating the responses that have come from the government. When asked about the conditions of north Alaska Highway, I have to tell people that other roads have been prioritized and money has been budgeted elsewhere. There has been a lot of good news for some of the people in Kluane. I have asked about infrastructure funding, capital projects for our communities, and I have heard from constituents about the importance of having solid-waste disposal options close to home. I have heard the importance of rural fire protection, of recreational opportunities for our youth — like a safe, functioning community pool. With all of these things, I have to tell my constituents that the government has not been able to follow through on them and that the priorities have been elsewhere.

The Beaver Creek pool is closed. Rural fire protection recommendations have gone unaddressed, and a Liberal government campaign slogan — “All Communities Matter” — was sure helpful in collecting votes. Unfortunately, for many of those voters, they have come to realize over the past almost six years that some communities matter, others not so much.

I would like to remind the government that consultation is key in our rural communities. Rather than making changes on the fly to deal with issues like dump closures or health care provisions, talk to the locals who live the issues day in and day out. Ask people what would work best for them in their communities.

In closing, the issue that I hear most about lately — and I think that we have heard it in the House — is affordability. It's the cost. Everything is skyrocketing. A lot of it is due to bad policies and decisions. My colleagues and I will keep addressing these issues and keep pushing for all Yukon ridings.

Mr. Speaker, the Yukon is such a wonderful place to work and live. We need to make sure that there are opportunities for future generations of Yukoners to be able to enjoy this wonderful place and make a life. Thank you. Günilshish.

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

Does any other member wish to be heard?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I am very pleased to rise this afternoon to close debate at the second reading of Bill No. 206, otherwise known as the first supplementary estimates for the fiscal year 2022-23. As we all know, the supplementary estimates are about responding to unanticipated areas and needs and pressures. They are used to make sure that the territorial government has appropriate funds to cover evolving emergencies and also emerging challenges. Supplementary estimates ultimately support Yukoners, and in the last several years, this has meant using supplementary estimates to ensure that programs were in place to support Yukoners throughout a pandemic. We did this through a range of business supports, wage top-ups, and paid sick leave programs that became the gold standard in Canada.

We also know that both fires and floods have been especially challenging in the last few years and, as a result of climate change, continue to impact our territory. Supplementary estimates have helped to ensure that funding was available to deal with this record-level flooding and the increasingly challenging forest fires. Last year, Yukon saw some of the worst flooding on record. Last fall's supplementary estimates supported the largest flood relief effort in the history of the Yukon, allowing us to bring in response teams, flood specialists, supplies, and equipment from out-of-territory to assist property owners with mitigation efforts.

This year, we have continued to see the impacts of climate change and once again have worked hard, together with our partners, to protect the health, safety, and property of Yukoners.

The 2022-23 *Supplementary Estimates No. 1* is being used primarily to help cover the costs associated with the unprecedented fire season that we experienced this summer. We also experienced serious flooding events in some communities this summer as well. We worked closely with our partners to respond to these events and the costs of the successful efforts are also reflected in this bill.

One thing that members will notice in these supplementary estimates, however, is that they are particularly lean. The reason for that is that our government, led by the Department of Finance, continues to improve its budgetary and forecasting abilities year after year, so much so that our government has been recognized by the not-for-profit research institute, the C.D. Howe Institute, for its budgeting abilities.

In fact, in the 2022 report entitled *The Right to Know: Grading the Fiscal Transparency of Canada's Senior Governments, 2022*, the Yukon received an A- grade in recognition of how easy it is to find our budgets and forecasts, the fact that they can be understood easily by non-experts, and for the reliability of our government's budgets, our estimates, and financial statements. This is the highest ranking that the Yukon has ever received.

With that, I would like to review the budgetary changes that we are proposing between the main estimates and the supplementary estimates. In total, the 2022-23 first

supplementary estimates contain \$26.2 million in additional gross spending. This is made up entirely of O&M expenditures, as there is no new net capital spending. The result is a revised surplus of \$33 million, which is a change of \$6.5 million from the \$39.5 million forecasted in the 2022-23 main estimates.

The first supplementary estimates also show a revised net debt of \$214 million — an increase of \$6.5 million from the mains, which coincides with the increased O&M spending and revenues.

While these supplementary estimates show little change in the government's recover picture, it does show a notable increase in revenues of just over \$18 million. I am pleased to say that this appropriation also contains no drawdowns or changes to the COVID-19 contingency fund. The 2022-23 main estimates, as you will recall, included a \$10-million COVID-19 contingency, which was reserved in the government's financial framework to fund further potential supports without affecting the surplus or deficit position in very unknown times.

As I said, the first supplementary estimates on the floor of the Legislative Assembly today propose no reduction to this fund. It's still money in the bank. What this means is twofold. First, it shows that our government has appropriately budgeted for COVID-19 spending in its main estimates, and second, it shows that the Yukon continues to navigate and emerge from the most acute phase of the pandemic, as we proceed to decrease the amount of spending needed to keep Yukoners safe and secure and healthy when it comes to COVID-19. As a result, we were able to keep \$10 million of the COVID contingency line for future use to respond to any new pandemic needs or potential future waves throughout the year, which we certainly hope to avoid.

As I mentioned, the entirety of the new spending contained in the 2022-23 first supplementary estimates is in operation and maintenance spending — O&M — a total of \$26.2 million. The bulk of that spending is the Department of Community Services. As part of the bill, the department is seeking \$20.2 million to address ongoing emergency needs that we have seen in response to climate change. Of the new spending, \$16 million is required for Wildland Fire costs associated with a more active fire season seen in the territory, and \$3.6 million is required for flood-related expenses, particularly in response to efforts needed in Teslin, Carmacks, Ross River, and Upper Liard. This includes costs associated with clean-up efforts happening this fall.

Our government declared a climate emergency in 2019, and in 2020, we released *Our Clean Future*, a 10-year territory-wide strategy for climate change, energy, and green economy. The priorities and goals outlined in *Our Clean Future* were developed in collaboration with Yukon First Nations, transboundary indigenous groups, and Yukon municipalities. This strategy reflects input from Yukoners, non-governmental and community organizations, industry, private business, First Nations, and municipal governments. It is truly the Yukon's strategy for tackling climate change, and it is helping to move our territory forward, as we navigate the complexities and real-world impacts of climate change. At all levels of government, we must plan for extreme weather events by creating

communities that are resilient — resilient to wildfire and climate change — and by investing in infrastructure that protects us from climate disasters. This means increasingly managing forest fuels and creating wildfire-resilient communities through FireSmart and also fuel breaks. This is why we also have included \$400,000 to enhance First Nation FireSmart projects, with projects that have already been identified. In flood-prone communities, it will be important to consider infrastructure improvements, permanent dikes and breakwaters, and raising roads and highways to adequate heights to protect them against rising waters.

I will move on to inflation, which has risen sharply in the last year throughout Canada and around the world, largely due to supply chain disruptions and also Russia's unjust and illegal war in Ukraine, which has pushed up the prices of food and energy. As a result, the national inflation rate is near levels that have not been seen, as members of my team have said on the floor of the Legislative Assembly already today and in previous days, in 40 years. While prices have risen across the country, the Yukon has not been immune to the forces driving up prices globally. Inflation in the Yukon is the result of a number of national and international forces, but our government remains focused on making lives more affordable for Yukoners, and we have been doing that for the past six years.

This includes the \$150 inflation relief rebate that we announced in March and which is reflected in the first supplementary estimates under the Yukon Development Corporation's budget. This rebate was delivered as a monthly credit of \$50, applied to the electricity bills of all non-government residents and commercial customers for three consecutive months over the summer. This was on top of the existing interim electrical rebate, which saves Yukoners hundreds of dollars a year, as mentioned by the Minister of Economic Development.

On these inflationary support measures, I would note that the opposition has been complaining that the Yukon government has been spending too much and has complained about levels of debt, and yet they continue to demand millions of dollars in additional anti-inflation measures. So, as we often see, the Yukon Party is trying to have it both ways here.

With regard to housing, I am happy to see the \$15-million contribution from the federal government for housing initiatives. This is also reflected in these estimates. This is a recognition of our unique northern housing challenges, but also of the significant efforts that we are already making. I will speak more about this later on.

With respect to other changes in operation and maintenance, we will see a \$1.6-million increase in the Executive Council Office, primarily related to initiatives that help support reconciliation and continue to strengthen relationships with Yukon First Nations. This funding is primarily to support consultation and engagement, bilateral negotiations, and also implementation of final and self-government agreements.

Lastly, there is an increase of \$1.4 million in the Department of Economic Development's budget to carry forward the labour market development agreement and the

workforce development agreement, as well as increasing the performing musicians fund. The labour market development agreement continues to benefit Yukon workers through skills development, apprenticeship training and on-the-job experience, workplace accommodations, employment services for job seekers, and a whole lot more, Mr. Speaker.

This labour market agreement supports the growth and development of Yukon musicians by increasing the number of established musicians who earn most of their income from music. The result of these changes is a \$1.5-million increase in O&M recoveries.

I know that my colleagues will have more to say about these important initiatives in the days and weeks to come. I am going to move to capital. I am pleased to say that, on a net basis, there are no changes in capital spending. There is a \$5-million change to the costs and recoveries related to the Mayo-to-McQuesten transmission line, as the project was delayed in 2021-22 and requires additional expenditures in the 2022-23 year. This is offset by a \$5-million reduction in the Arctic energy fund expenditures, as funding is deferred to future years.

These are the only changes that we are going to see in capital for this supplementary estimate. There are no associated changes to capital recoveries as a result. On the revenue side, the Government of Yukon will see a substantial increase, as part of the first supplementary estimates. In total, the government will see an additional \$18.2 million in revenue, related to three different areas. Firstly, the federal government is continuing to work with the territorial government in addressing housing availability and quantity that disproportionately affects northerners. In federal budget 2022, the Government of Canada committed to providing \$30 million to the Government of Yukon to assist with these challenges. Half of that amount is being reflected in this year's budget, and we will be receiving another \$15 million next fiscal year.

The second item is a \$2-million increase in the Canada health transfer to the territory. This money is being received to address the backlog of surgeries as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, \$1 million is being received from land sale agreements.

We will continue to do what is necessary to ensure that the Yukon remains a safe, healthy, and affordable place to call home. I am pleased to present a stable, sustainable, and measured first supplementary estimates which members see before them today. I look forward to sharing further about these supplementary estimates during Committee of the Whole. I urge all members to support this bill at second reading. There were some folks who decided to speak during second reading and some folks who decided not to.

For those who did, such as the Leader of the Official Opposition — unfortunately chose to spend a lot of his time theorizing about my position and my future, rather than focusing on the important work that we are demanded to do by the people who voted to get us here, which is the important legislation that is in question, but I suppose he would rather leave such remarks to his colleague, who, I guess, holds the pen with his movement.

When we get to general debate on the bill, we will debate the departments that actually have new spending requests. We will not be debating departments that see no change in their spending authority. The suggestion from the Leader of the Official Opposition that ministers all answer questions during general debate would certainly be a departure from how things were done when the member opposite was a minister. So, we are doing things in the exact same way that the Yukon Party used to do things in supplementary budgets. Yukoners —

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible)

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order, please.

The member has the floor. Please continue.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yukoners may recall that in the past spring, several departments were brought into the Chamber to answer questions and the Yukon Party members simply said that they didn't have any questions for them. So, in the spring when all departments are here ready to be presented in Committee of the Whole, they asked zero questions. Now they are flip-flopping and saying that they demand — in the supplementary budget, where we are getting accolades from national organizations for our ability to budget — that now they want to talk about the departments whose budgeting allotments were supposed to be debated in the spring.

So, they can say whatever they want as far as what their strategy is, and I'm happy to spend lots of time in general debate speaking to the members opposite and answering their questions — not a problem, not a problem at all. As the member opposite —

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible)

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order, please.

There is a lot of chattering going on in the background and I am having a hard time hearing the member speak. Please continue, Hon. Premier.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Just so folks know what we have been hearing in the gallery today — it is the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin saying that we are not going to miss much from me speaking. So, again, the taunting and the personal attacks — it is something we are used to over here, but we will continue to go with the higher road and we will continue to work really hard and diligently for Yukoners and hopefully get some time to talk about the actual budget here in the Legislative Assembly as opposed to whatever the Yukon Party decides to bring forward here.

But they have flip-flopped. They now say that every minister must answer questions in general debate on every department. They had the opportunity to ask these questions in the spring; they didn't ask them.

I showed up here for my two departments individually — not one question for Executive Council Office, not one question for Finance, and no questions in Committee of the Whole. I

guess now — I don't even know. Let them decide to speak to why it is that they have changed their opinion as to the importance of Committee of the Whole.

But, for the record, we are doing it the way the Yukon Party did. I'm happy to answer questions from the members opposite.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, we are very proud of the work that we have put into this budget to date. We want to thank the public servants who have worked extremely hard on this budget. I also thank my colleagues as well. To the NDP members who spoke to the second reading, I want to thank them as well for their contributions.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Hon. Mr. Silver: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Agree.

Hon. Ms. McLean: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: Agree.

Mr. Dixon: Disagree.

Mr. Kent: Disagree.

Ms. Clarke: Disagree.

Mr. Cathers: Disagree.

Ms. McLeod: Disagree.

Ms. Van Bibber: Disagree.

Mr. Hassard: Disagree.

Mr. Istchenko: Disagree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Blake: Agree.

Ms. Tredger: Agree.

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

Speaker: The yeas have it.

I declare the motion carried.

Motion for second reading of Bill No. 206 agreed to

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 Government House Leader that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Ms. Blake): I will now call Committee of the Whole to order.

The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 17, entitled *Clean Energy Act*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

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

Bill No. 17: *Clean Energy Act*

Chair: The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 17, entitled *Clean Energy Act*.

Is there any general debate?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: We had second reading today, so I'm not going to give any opening remarks because I think we already had a lot of that. I will just introduce the two colleagues who are here to support in providing responses at Committee of the Whole. I have with me Mr. Shane Andre, who is the director of the Energy branch from Energy, Mines and Resources, and from the Department of Justice, Rebecca Veinott, who is the legislative counsel and was the chief drafter of the bill before us. Thank you very much and welcome to them.

Mr. Kent: I would like to thank the minister and welcome the officials as well.

I am just going to jump right in. I have a number of questions with respect to the targets and going from 30 percent to 45 percent. Of course, the document that we have, the *Our Clean Future* document, is based on those 30-percent targets, so I'm hoping that we can walk through some of that with the minister here this afternoon. I do want to touch on some of the recommendations by the Yukon Climate Leadership Council and then walk through some of the actions that the Government of Yukon is currently undertaking according to some documents that I got from yukon.ca, *Our Clean Future*, and the 2030 targets.

As I mentioned, the *Our Clean Future* document was trying to get us to 30 percent below the 2010 levels by 2030.

Obviously, that has changed to 45 percent now, and that is reflected in the legislation that is before us. So, I guess my first question for the minister is: What does the latest data show, and what is the timing of that data, as to where we are from 2010 to as close to present day as possible with greenhouse gas reductions?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will check with the member opposite as I give this response, just to make sure that I'm hitting what he is looking for. I think he has asked: Where are we right now? Whenever we have our greenhouse gas inventory, it is typically a couple of years back. So, the last one we just published was from 2020, and I think that we put it out just this past summer — just a month or two ago — and in terms of our current emissions, they showed us as having come down from 2019. However, we believe that is predominantly due to changes due to COVID and people not travelling as much. Our 2020 levels are still above 2010 levels, but what I will talk about

is how, in our model, with all of the actions that we have mapped out in *Our Clean Future* so far, the expectation was that emissions still rose in 2020. So, what we actually thought was going to happen is that emissions would go up; however, COVID came along. As those wedges — the thin edge of the wedges — start to be applied, and as the programs that we are putting in place and the actions that we are carrying out start to work, it will switch over time. I can also say that — well, I will just stop there for now and check that I have answered the question the way that the member was intending to ask, and then I will fill in more as needed.

Mr. Kent: So, if the minister could clarify while he is on his feet, we are looking in the act at part 5(1) and how by 2030, we are looking for a reduction of 45 percent from the total greenhouse gas emissions in Yukon from what they stood at in 2010. I think that it is halfway to that mark, from 2010 to 2020, that we have actually increased greenhouse gas emissions. Is that correct? So, they are higher in 2020 than they were in 2010, but our goal is to get them to a reduction of 45 percent in the next 10 years, essentially.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: That is correct. So, the actions that we have in place — and I should be careful to state that *Our Clean Future* was never meant to be a static document. It is a Yukon-wide document. We worked across the territory, working with communities, to discuss all of these actions and to see them as more than just government actions alone, but that as that work goes on, we would augment it and improve it as we go along. We would take advantage where we see opportunities, and if we are not able to get solutions in one area, we will pivot. So, already in the first two years of reporting, we have seen subtle changes, but overall, the goal is to get 45 percent below 2010 levels by 2030.

Mr. Kent: I appreciate that. So, right now, we are above 2010 levels, and the goal is to get 45 percent below those levels, I guess, in the next 10 years, based on when the last data were available.

For the minister, I am going to work from the *Our Clean Future* document itself. I am not going to work from any of the subsequent reports, but I do want to talk a little bit about the greenhouse gas reduction modelling that is on pages 14 and 15. Of course, as I mentioned, this was done previously and had a goal of 30 percent by 2030. That has subsequently been raised to 45 percent. Looking at the data that is here, at that snapshot in time when this was done, the greenhouse gas reduction needed to reach the 30-percent target was 263 kilotonnes. Does the minister have the revised numbers or what we need to reach the new target of 45 percent by 2030?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Just referencing the same page where we were talking about the modelling, around what is going to be happening with emissions — the goal is to get 343 kilotonnes below the 2010 level. That would get us the 45-percent reduction.

So, you can sort of see that, in 2010, the emissions for the Yukon were roughly at 600 kilotonnes, and we need to get the 343 below.

Mr. Kent: Just so I have the numbers right and we are moving ahead on the same page — so, we need to get to about 257 kilotonnes by 2030 to meet the 45 percent. Is that correct?

As the minister said, it was 600 in 2010, and we need to get 343 below that. I just want to make sure that I'm understanding.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: My apologies, Chair. I misspoke. We need to get to 343 kilotonnes. That's the target. That's where we put the new star on the page as our target.

Mr. Kent: In this document, the actions in *Our Clean Future*, as it stood, would have given us 201 kilotonnes. There was a 62-kilotonne gap to be filled and now it looks like there are perhaps — and the minister can clarify — but maybe another 60 kilotonnes that we also need to fill to reach that 45 percent. So, what adjustments have been made to the actions in *Our Clean Future*, which would have been a 201-kilotonne reduction, to bounce it up so that we can meet that more aggressive target of 45 percent, as opposed to the 30 percent that we are looking at here?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: So, even when we first published this two years ago, we understood that we didn't have all the actions in place yet that would get us all the way. That shows that gap of about 60 kilotonnes. We have a further gap now, and I already mentioned that we have started to update the whole of the plan. So, we work through it at all times, as we go through the actions, to see where we can go further or if there are additional actions.

At the same time — or even as we were working to develop the Climate Leadership Council — we were talking with the Energy branch and Navius, the group that does the energy modelling for us, and we talked about looking for ways to increase the emissions reductions. So, for example, one of the actions will be around renewable fuels, and you will see, as well, that under the Climate Leadership Council, they talked about aligning with BC's renewable fuels targets, and those are more aggressive, and often, if you piggyback with a neighbouring jurisdiction, you can get that added benefit. So, those would be examples of where we're looking to increase the amount.

Now, I also want to say that we are going through the process right now of modelling the suggestions that came forward from the Climate Leadership Council; we will see how they fit in with the overall strategy. This will be a work-in-progress at all times, so that even though we see the target and we know what we're going for, we understand that we will continue to adapt *Our Clean Future*. We have shown that already. In the first two years of reporting, we have come back with additional actions or increases on existing actions, so that will be the way in which we work to increase the amount of reductions. The place where we are working most directly right now is on the Climate Leadership Council report.

Mr. Kent: Can the minister tell the House or tell Yukoners when he expects to have a plan in place to meet the kilotonne reduction that will take us to the 45 percent below 2010 targets — or the 343-kilotonne target that we are looking for? When can Yukoners expect to see that? We are, what, seven years away from 2030? It's not too far away, and in the

first 10 years, greenhouse gas emissions have gone up from 2010 to 2020, so there is quite a bit of work to do.

I am just curious if the minister can tell us when we can have a look at a plan to meet the 45-percent reductions in the next seven years.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: When *Our Clean Future* came out, we would talk about it, and I would have to find the reference within it, but we talk about it as a plan that will change over time and adjust, that this is the framework and there is always more work to do. Part of that is to make sure that we are always reporting on the actions that we have to ensure that we continue to meet the target.

I think that from the Climate Leadership Council, we will have that work done on the modelling with it this fall or this calendar year, anyway. I have asked the Energy branch to identify actions within it that they are confident that we should move ahead with, based on a suite of rationales around fitting in with the existing plan, costing it, et cetera — what I call “no regrets choices”.

We will, in the next iteration of the plan that we put out each year and where we report on it, have, I hope, a strategy about how to implement the actions that come from the Climate Leadership Council and the youth panel where those ones will be about additional emission reductions. That might get us all the way; that might not, and then we will iterate on it. It is a plan that will continue to evolve over time. The plan is always meant to grow in time.

Some of the solutions that will fill the gap will be to increase the expectations around certain of the actions. Some of them will be to accelerate them, and some of them will be new actions, and it will be a range of solutions that will be proposed.

I guess to answer the member opposite’s question, in the coming half year or year, we will work to integrate the suggestions from the Climate Leadership Council. We will then reassess to see whether that gets us all the way, and we will continue to do the work to get us all the way to 45 percent.

Mr. Kent: I am just going to go through a couple of the categories that would have led to the reductions. I won’t talk about the specific amounts in the *Our Clean Future* document, recognizing what the minister has said — that those will change, and they have to change, obviously, to meet the revised target. I guess the first thing that we will focus in on is increasing the use of zero-emission vehicles. In *Our Clean Future*, it says that the requirements for zero-emission vehicles are to be 10 percent of light-duty vehicle sales by 2025 and 30 percent by 2030.

Is the minister able to tell us where we are at as far as the light-duty vehicle sales right now, to see where we are going to be in a couple of years? Are we even close to that 10-percent number at this point?

Then I will just skip over to the *Our Clean Future* website, and it does say that one of the key Yukon government actions around transportation is to get 4,800 zero-emission vehicles on the roads by 2030. I will just go on. It says: “We’ll do this by working with local vehicle dealerships and manufacturers to establish a system to meet targets for zero-emission vehicle sales, providing rebates and investing in charging stations.”

So, I guess that the question I would have on that is: How does that line up with the 10 percent and 30 percent by 2030 that is in *Our Clean Future*, and does the minister have any idea what the costs of those rebates will be and what the cost of investing in charging stations will be? That is the budgetary amount for Yukon and Canadian taxpayers.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Currently, we have 161 zero-emission vehicles registered, with over 600 electric bicycles purchased. This is a little bit behind where we want to be, but the main issue here is that there have been some challenges with supply chain, but we do know, from talking with dealerships here in the territory, that all of our dealerships are keen. We have a demonstration day each year, and I was at the last one with Mr. Andre. There is a lot of keen interest out there. In fact, in the Yukon, on a per capita basis, we are third in the country after, I think, Québec and British Columbia. So, the Yukon is, per capita, in third place.

We know that there is a lot of pent-up demand. We know that there are supply chain issues, which COVID and raw materials — and, in particular, I think, around batteries — is one of the supply chain issues. We believe that there will be a lot of interest to get moving, and we think that our rebates are a big part of that and the federal rebates as well.

With respect to the specific dollars, I will have to get more information about what that cost is overall, but what I can say to the members of the Assembly today is that a fast-charging station runs at about \$140,000. We have 19 of them installed in the territory, running from Watson Lake to Beaver Creek and from Carcross up to Dawson and in-between points, of course.

I can also say that, so far, for those charging stations and the level 2s that we are planning to put in, we have had a lot of federal investment. So, it is in our budget, of course, but there is quite a bit of federal money that is offsetting those costs for Yukoners.

Mr. Kent: Does the minister have a percentage? Because the goal was to require zero-emission vehicles to be 10 percent of light-duty vehicle sales by 2025 and 30 percent by 2030. He mentioned 161, I believe, light-duty vehicles and 600 e-bikes. He can clarify for me if that is the case — if those are all considered light-duty vehicles — e-bikes and the electric vehicles themselves. I am trying to get a sense of where we are at, percentage-wise, on the vehicle sales. Obviously, we are looking to be 10 percent by 2025 and 30 percent by 2030.

Then, just quickly, if the minister can give us an idea of what the rebate is for a zero-emission vehicle, and then we can do the math on getting those 4,800 vehicles on the road by 2030 — just to get a sense of what this is going to cost the taxpayer.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: We are not counting electric bicycles in our zero-emission vehicle targets. It is replacing light-duty cars and trucks, so that is what we’re talking about there in those targets.

The 2021 sales amount to 4.5 percent of the sales, so we are roughly halfway there. That’s where we are. We believe that there is quite a bit of demand, so we think that once the supply chain catches up, we are going to see things move pretty quickly.

Also, the Member for Copperbelt South inquired about what the rebate is. The current rebate for zero-emission vehicles is \$5,000 from the Yukon government, and there is also \$5,000 from the federal government that goes toward those vehicles.

Mr. Kent: With the electric charging stations that are in place, is there a cost for vehicle owners to use those charging stations, or is it just first-come, first-served and free of charge?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: One of the things we have been doing so far is that we have been paying for the cost of that electricity right now. We have talked with the owners. Of course, when you have a zero-emission vehicle, yes, you use some of these fast chargers when you are travelling, but you also trickle charge at home, so it's definitely blended. When someone is charging their vehicle at home, they will pay for that electricity. When they are using the fast chargers that are installed across the territory, currently we are covering that cost.

The intention is to move that to a user-pay system, just like you would at the pumps. We are working now with the utilities around how to make that transition. That will come forward. I think, in the next year or years, that transition will happen. I will leave it there for now.

Mr. Kent: Just by my math, then — and this is the Yukon government rebate program — for us to reach that 4,800 zero-emission vehicles on the road by 2030 — and I'm not going to count the 161 that are currently on the road. I will just kind of roll them all into one, but it would be a \$24-million expenditure.

I am hoping that the minister can confirm the math that I have. That is for the Yukon government. There will be an additional \$24 million for the Government of Canada, if the current rebate amounts hold at \$5,000 for Yukon and \$5,000 for Canada.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I mean, the math is correct that we would be saying that, but we have never anticipated that the rebate should be there forever. What is happening is that we are in a transition to a new technology.

Earlier today, when the Minister of Environment was standing up and giving his remarks to this bill, he talked about one of the major manufacturers here in North America saying that, by 2029, they were just going to sell electric vehicles. Well, at that point, once you are selling more electric vehicles than you are internal combustion engines, what we have seen in other jurisdictions is that the price starts to drive down. This is to help initiate that move toward electric vehicles. We think that the marketplace will help to bring those costs down. It wouldn't be fair to say that this is going to cost \$24 million, because I think that there will be a phase-out of it. Of course, if we get there faster, then what we think is that the marketplace will bring down the prices faster and it will all transition. It is difficult to predict exactly, but we think that there is a lot of demand and we think that demand will help the marketplace immensely.

Mr. Kent: Rather than speculate on what is going to happen in the marketplace or not, I am just trying to get a sense of, based on the current rebate levels and the goal of 4,800 zero-

emissions vehicles by 2030, what that cost would be. That is what I was asking the minister.

I have a whole bunch more questions, but I did talk to the Third Party, and we will split time with them here this afternoon. I am sure that we will be back in Committee at some point before the House rises on this bill, but I do just want to end with a question. Again, this is the key Government of Yukon actions under transportation. It says that, starting in 2025, there will be a requirement that all diesel and gasoline fuel sold in the Yukon for transportation align with the percentage of biodiesel, renewable diesel, and ethanol by volume in leading Canadian jurisdictions.

That is from the website. The *Our Clean Future* document is a little bit more prescriptive, just saying that there will be a requirement for diesel fuel to be blended with biodiesel or renewable diesel beginning in 2025 and a requirement for gasoline to be blended with ethanol beginning in 2025.

Can the minister tell us, so that I can tell Yukoners, what that will mean to the cost of a litre of diesel, and what that will mean to the cost of a litre of gasoline, beginning in 2025?

With that, I will wrap up my remarks, let the minister answer, and then over to my colleagues in the Third Party.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The member opposite just talked about speculation, and I will say that it is our intention — not speculation — it is our intention that the rebate will phase out over time. I am not able to say today when that will happen and if it will taper off, but that is what we are intending.

I can also say that one of the things that I find very difficult to predict is the price of fuel at the pumps. It went up a lot; it has come down a bit since then, so it is difficult for me to speculate. I will say that we continue to work with partners across the country to get an idea of those prices and transitions, but I also think that what we are missing is the cost on the other side of this, too — which is the cost of not making this transition, as I spoke about earlier.

So, I am happy to answer further questions, and I appreciate that this is just the start of Committee of the Whole for this bill.

Ms. Tredger: I also want to welcome the officials and thank them for the briefing we had, as well as being here today.

I want to start by following up on the Member for Copperbelt South's question about the plan for updating *Our Clean Future* to get to 45 percent. So, if I understood correctly, the department hopes to have the modelling done by the end of this calendar year. And then I wasn't clear on when we think we will have an updated version of *Our Clean Future* to see, I guess.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I have asked the departments — because it is not just one — to do is to try to work on introducing some of those actions right away and start implementing them, but we won't get them all in. On some of them, we will need to do some costing and things like that, because with some actions, it is easy to understand the cost implications and some are not. So, there are a few things that we just have to get in place.

What I think we will do is probably get some of those actions in right away. I am happy to talk about those publicly

as they happen. Probably, the way that we update *Our Clean Future* is the way that we've been doing it already, which is annually we publish and say, "Hey, here's the new stuff." So, it's not going to stop us from starting some of those actions as soon as possible, but probably the published part of that will happen with the ongoing process that we have already initiated, which is each year to publish a report and then talk about changes to the actions that we have identified.

I think that we will have a very good idea about the actions once that modelling is done. I think that will be something that I'm happy to inform Yukoners about, like what we are looking at in terms of whether the recommendations get us all the way or not and which sectors or not — things like that. I think that will be something that we probably seek to put in the hands of the public so that they understand what that modelling looks like.

Ms. Tredger: I just want to make sure that I understood that right. The model will be done by the end of December, and the actions will start as soon as they can be implemented, and in the 2022 report/update, which I think usually comes out in August — so, we're looking at August 2023 or so to have an updated version of *Our Clean Future* that would list out all the new actions or modified actions. I guess maybe I could ask the minister to confirm that. Will they also have dates? So far, I think that all of *Our Clean Future* has dates when they are expected to complete those actions. Will that be part of that update?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Yes to both. Some actions are ongoing, and some are time-limited, et cetera, so we will try to have the same diligence against each action that we introduce. It may also be modifications to existing actions, or it may be new actions, but we will try to do that work. I want to be careful to say that there may still be ones that the Climate Leadership Council have given us that we want to continue to work on and we didn't have enough information by our next iteration, so some of it will be ongoing.

What I can say is that I have asked the departments to work to identify actions that can begin right now and, where we need a little bit more information, to go get that information, et cetera.

Ms. Tredger: I thank the minister for the clarity, and thank you to all the people in the department. I am sure it's a lot of work to figure that all out, and I appreciate the work on that.

In the Climate Leadership Council report, there were the actions that had specific greenhouse gas reductions associated with them, but there were also a number of leadership and capacity actions or recommendations. I am wondering if there will be a formal or written public response to those actions and whether they will be implemented.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The Climate Leadership Council's report, *Climate Shot 2030*, sort of has two halves to it. The front half talks about these more general ideas, and the second half gets down into the more detailed actions with their estimates of emission reductions.

I think that we will have some sort of formal response to the report. We haven't yet even fleshed out what that will look

like — whether that is correspondence back to the council itself indicating what we found — I will say that when we sat with the council as they were about ready to present the information to us and they had given us a draft of the work, I requested that we work closely with them, for example, as we do the modelling, because there are always questions that arise, like: What do you think? You have to make some choices and assumptions in that work. Many of the folks from the council know the team over at the Energy branch who work with the modelers, and I think they have agreed to try to work with us through that.

I think there will be ongoing work with the council, just to try to — I should acknowledge that they put in a lot of work and we are very appreciative of that. We will ask them, as we do the analysis on the actions and recommendations, that we work with them there. So, I don't yet know specifically what the formal response will look like, but I think that there needs to be a response that indicates what has been the result of all of this work and how we are going to integrate it into *Our Clean Future* or government practices.

Ms. Tredger: I am really glad to hear that there is a plan for the formal response, because there are quite a few, I guess — recommendations L1 through L8 and I think C1 through C7, though I dropped my pages, so I may have missed a couple. Some of them are very specific. For example, "L2. Require that an internal cost of carbon (recommended at \$250-\$400/tonne) be included in all financial and budgeting decisions, including projects funded by YG and Crown Corporations." That is a very specific recommendation. I think it will be very important to hear if that is something that the government is going to do and how they are going to do it, and if they are not going to do it, then why not?

Is there an estimate on when we can expect that response?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Just taking a look at L2, at one where we effectively put an assumed price of carbon on, so that you can take the potential emissions surrounding a project and judge its cost and compare one project to another, so that if one had lower emissions, then effectively the assumed price comes down, which is a way to compare something from an environmental perspective in an economic way — it's a great tool. We have talked about it, both in the Energy branch and within the Yukon Development Corporation, as a way of trying to assess some of the challenges of emissions.

This specific action or recommendation, though, is asking us to work across government, so I would immediately need to work with colleagues across the Cabinet table to try to say, "Hey, let's take a look at this." I want to be careful today that some of this stuff is government-wide in terms of it — and beyond, for example, because it is suggesting the Crown corporations.

I can say that I have already had conversations like this with the Crown corporations that I work with. I would have to check with my colleagues about whether they have had similar conversations. There's work to do in order to get to those requests that look like they move outside of my own purview of the departments that I work with — or mine and the Minister of Environment's — who have the lead on this.

The timing on it, I think, is similar to the timing that we are talking about for the other responses. I don't know that this one has a way to model it necessarily, but it is one of those ones that we will analyze and think about what it looks like. Typically, it is a Cabinet process that would say that it is a policy and that we want it across government. Do we agree? And then we would run the analysis on it. I am just describing that there is work that would need to happen. Then we will give a formal response about why or why not. I want to be careful — even the words “formal response”. We will make sure that the Climate Leadership Council hears a response about why this one or why we are stuck on this one and whether they have suggestions around it.

You have given me one example. I have given you one example about how that would work through the system, but we would need to work each one of these through the system.

Ms. Tredger: I completely agree that these are mostly government-wide — or wider, because we are talking about the Crown corporations and things as well. They are big recommendations, and I do appreciate that there is a great deal of work, even in just deciding what it would look like and how to implement them.

There are two things that I want to clarify. One is when that response would be. I don't expect it to be immediate, but a date would be helpful, or an approximate time would be helpful.

The minister said they would respond to the Climate Leadership Council. Will that response be public?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Let me say it this way: I think that we will publish an update to *Our Clean Future*. I hope that, in the next iteration, we deal with the lion's share of what we have in front of us from the Climate Leadership Council. I want to be careful not to say “everything”, because there are always some that become very difficult for us to work through.

What I can say is that I gave direction to my department. I have talked to my colleague about making sure that we are integrated across departments that have the lead on this, and my direction was to please work with this and be diligent to get it done as quickly as possible, so they are working right now, as we speak, on the modelling.

I gave direction to my department. I have talked with my colleague about making sure that we're integrated across departments that have the lead on this.

I think that the formal type of response will be through when we update *Our Clean Future*, and then you will see exactly what is in there. Will that be public? Yes. Will I try to make every meeting that I have with the Climate Leadership Council public? No, but it is not about not sharing the information with the public. I am just looking for the avenues that we will use to try to inform the public. So, most likely it is *Our Clean Future* and the update because that is the flagship that we are using to get us to 45 percent.

Ms. Tredger: Thank you to the minister for that answer. I will be looking, probably in about August, for the next update. I am excited to read it and I am excited to have any information that comes sooner.

I only have a couple of minutes, so I will start this and we may not finish this conversation, but I will start it.

The intensity-based targets for mining — I know that the consultation has just wrapped up on those. When does the minister expect those to be in place?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Our intention always was to try to get it done by the end of this year. I know that we have had a bit of a wrinkle with the carbon price rebate and we are working with industry right now on that.

I think that the member opposite was asking for timing. The engagement is done. We have had lots of conversation with industry. The simple part, actually, is setting the target. The tough part really is dealing with the intensity side of it and how you measure those differences across. That is, I think, the trickier part. Some things are in flux right now because of this — as I had mentioned, the carbon rebate piece — so I think that the timeline for the action says by 2023 in *Our Clean Future*. I will look it up. We have always been working to try to get it done this calendar year.

I will take more questions.

Ms. Tredger: I appreciate that and, like my colleagues, I have more questions, but seeing the time, I will move that the Chair report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by the Member for Whitehorse Centre 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 the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Ms. Blake: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 17, entitled *Clean Energy Act*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I move that the House do now adjourn.

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

The following sessional papers were filed October 13, 2022:

35-1-59

*Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board
2021 Annual Report (Mostyn)*

35-1-60

*Yukon Development Corporation 2021 Annual Report
(Streicker)*

35-1-61

Yukon Energy 2021 Annual Report (Streicker)

The following written question was tabled October 13, 2022:

Written Question No. 29

Re: medical staff shortages (White)