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HANSARD

Monday, October 24, 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' Safety and Compensation 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
Monday, October 24, 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: Before proceeding with the Order Paper, the Chair would like to remind members of the practices of this House regarding the tabling of documents and “correcting the record”.

As noted in the statement by Speaker Clarke on November 4, 2020, a Member of the Legislative Assembly cannot claim to “correct the record” of what another member has said in the House.

In addition, the rubric “Tabling Returns and Documents” is not an opportunity for debate, either in the form of comments made by a member while tabling a document or in the content of the document itself.

As members cannot do indirectly that which they cannot do directly, documents that are tabled cannot be used to “correct the record” of another member.

On Thursday, October 20, 2022, the Minister of Health and Social Services tabled a letter dated October 20, 2022 that she had written to the Leader of the Third Party. The content of the letter was designed to correct in the official records of the Assembly, by way of tabling the letter, things that the Leader of the Third Party had said during debate in the Assembly. The letter also sought apologies for the things that the Leader of the Third Party had said in the Assembly.

For the reasons that I have stated, this letter has not been accepted into the working papers of the Assembly, and I will return it to the Minister of Health and Social Services.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: On Thursday, October 20, 2022, the Member for Lake Laberge rose on a point of order during Question Period and stated that the Minister of Community Services had used the word “fearmongering” in his remarks and that the word was unparliamentary in the context in which it was used. The Chair found that there was a point of order.

Later, during that same Question Period when the Minister of Community Services accused opposition members of “peddling fear”, the Member for Lake Laberge rose on a point of order noting that the terms “peddling fear” and “fearmongering” were very similar. In addition, in speaking to the point of order, the Government House Leader asked if “peddling fear” was to be ruled out of order, then in what way could “fear” be used?

First, “peddling fear” and “fearmongering” are seemingly one and the same because they both imply intentionally selling fear; therefore, as applied to members of the Assembly, the terms are not in order.

Second, the Chair will rule on language used in this House as it comes up and will view it in the context in which it was used. In the Legislative Assembly, context is very important. It is the Chair’s responsibility to view each situation based on the context at hand. The Chair doesn’t deliver rulings in advance, but I will maintain order within the Assembly so that members remain respectful in their remarks.

Finally, I will note that during points of order, some members feel the need to editorialize events when speaking to a point of order, or else they make comments after they have cited the Standing Order they feel is being contravened. Such comments are a continuation of debate, or just taking a dig at another member and are not in order. Please keep your points of order to the facts only.

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, could we please welcome several guests here today for the tribute on energy efficiency? From the Energy branch and the Energy Solutions Centre, from our left to right, we have director Shane Andre; energy program officer, Josée Migneault; senior energy planner, Judy Booth; manager of Low Carbon Transition, Heather Semotiuk; energy program officer, Shraavan Adiyodi; and senior energy advisor, Paul Reikie — if we could welcome them all, please.

Applause

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask my colleagues to help me welcome a number of guests here today for the third reading of the midwifery bill. We have with us Natasha Phillips, the senior policy advisor with Health and Social Services; Caitlin Kerwin, the director of Strategic Policy and Planning with Health and Social Services. We have Elizabeth Morrison, the clinical manager at the midwifery clinic; Laura Stewart, the medical office assistant; Katrienne Walton, a registered midwife; Kayla Gagnon, a registered midwife; Alethea Stobbe, the director at the clinic; and Anna Starks-Jacob, legislative counsel who worked on this matter. Thank you all for being here.

Applause

TRIBUTES

In recognition of energy efficiency

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, yesterday, snow was dusting our mountaintops, and today it’s is full on. With that in mind, I rise today to pay tribute to energy efficiency. Canadians recently recognized Energy Efficiency Day on October 5, Energy Star Day on October 12, and Sustainability Day on October 19. These commemorative days have one thing in common: They recognize our shared commitment to energy efficiency and sustainability. Energy efficiency is the cheapest, quickest, and cleanest way to meet our energy needs, avoid

wasteful pollution, and reduce energy costs. Smarter energy use reduces the amount of electricity needed to power our lives. This helps to reduce, and even avoid, generating emissions that pollute our air and warm our climate.

I can proudly say that Yukoners are actively implementing energy-efficient practices and making homes and work spaces healthier, safer, and more comfortable. For example, 245 high-performance new homes were built in the Yukon over the past two years. These new homes are roughly 50-percent more energy efficient than current building code standards. By using less energy, the homeowners of high-performance homes enjoy significant savings and have peace of mind knowing that they have reduced their carbon footprints.

Another way that Yukon residents are becoming more energy efficient is completing retrofits to their homes and buildings, switching to renewable heating systems. To date, Yukon homeowners have installed 98 smart electric-heating devices, including heat pumps and electric thermal storage units. These renewable heating systems are very efficient, with some units reducing demands for electricity during peak times in the winter. I celebrate the early adopters for showing us that we can reduce our environmental impacts while living in comfortably heated homes during the Yukon's deep winter.

Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge that First Nation governments, municipalities, businesses, and non-governmental organizations are part of this change as well. They are implementing energy-efficient upgrades to their administration buildings, community and recreation centres, and residential and commercial buildings throughout the Yukon. These are major projects and I want to applaud everyone for their commitment to going efficient.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge that, on average, Yukon residents apply for 2,100 good energy rebates per year. These rebates are for smaller energy-efficiency actions like purchasing Energy Star home appliances or doing minor upgrades around our homes.

Thanks to all Yukoners for taking energy-efficient actions, big and small. Through our collective actions, we reduce our energy demands and greenhouse gas emissions and build a more sustainable Yukon.

Applause

Mr. Istchenko: I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to recognize the importance of energy efficiency both in our daily lives and our finances and in the effects that our energy consumption has on the environment. Methods, materials, construction, and appliances have evolved significantly over the last few decades. Efficiency is top of mind for those looking to purchase or build new homes or working to remodel older homes to retain heat better through insulation, roofing, siding, or overhauling aging heating systems.

There has been a lot of good work done through the Energy branch of the Yukon government to promote energy savings and upgrades through good energy rebates and other initiatives. It is great to see the number of people adding solar panels to their homes or investing in new efficient windows and doors. It

has certainly been hard to handle the drastic increase to power bills along with increases to all other aspects of life in recent years, so any adjustments toward efficiency will be helpful to homeowners moving forward.

Energy Star Canada is a partnership between the Government of Canada and industry to bring highly efficient products to the forefront in Canada, ensuring that they are available and visible to Canadians. Energy Star Day took place recently on October 12 and brings awareness to saving energy in homes and with new builds throughout the country.

Thank you to all those who work to promote energy efficiency and help to reduce consumption in their own homes.

Applause

Ms. Tredger: I rise on behalf of the Yukon NDP to pay tribute to Energy Efficiency Day and Energy Star Day. On a snowy day like today, we all look forward to coming in, out of the cold, into cozy, warm buildings. In a place as chilly as the Yukon, those buildings don't stay warm by accident. It takes energy, and that energy comes at an environmental cost. We have a responsibility to use that energy efficiently. Energy efficiency is critical to meeting our climate change goals and protecting the Earth for generations to come.

There are fantastic people working on this goal all over the Yukon. Thank you to the Energy Solutions Centre, which helps Yukoners make changes, big and small, to their homes and businesses to be more energy efficient. Thank you to everyone who has put in the money and effort to increase their own energy efficiency. We also need to acknowledge that renovating your home takes money and time, which is not a possibility for many people living in poverty. Climate action means making energy efficiency an obtainable goal for everyone.

To address the climate crisis in a serious way, we must ensure that programs and policies are designed to support Yukoners and their institutions and will adequately address the problems before them. So, as we celebrate Energy Efficiency Day and Energy Star Day, I commend all those working to make homes and businesses more energy efficient and reducing the carbon footprint of their daily lives.

Applause

In recognition of Brain Cancer Awareness Day

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Liberal government to acknowledge that October 24 is Brain Cancer Awareness Day. This year is the fifth annual Brain Cancer Awareness Day held here in Canada.

Brain cancer starts with brain tumours, and out of the 120 different types of brain tumours, one-third are cancerous. Although brain cancer has had decades of research, malignant brain tumours are some of the deadliest forms of cancer, and research is extremely underfunded.

Brain cancer kills more adults under 40 than any other form of cancer. Currently, Canada has one of the highest rates of brain cancer even in the world. If you don't know someone who has directly had this devastating type of cancer, then you likely know someone indirectly — someone like the beloved

Canadian singer Gord Downie of the Tragically Hip. Gord Downie had glioblastoma, one of the most insidious and fatal diseases. Downie's death drew media attention to this disease and raised awareness of brain cancer across the country and across the world.

Every day, 27 Canadians are diagnosed with a brain tumour. Eight of these Canadians will learn that their tumour is malignant. Malignant or not, brain tumours forever change the lives of those affected, and treatment options are often invasive and are somewhat limited. The nation-wide brain tumour awareness campaign Hats for Hope aims to raise awareness during International Brain Tumour Awareness Week, which will take place October 29 to November 5, 2022. You can show your support by wearing a hat, taking a selfie or group photo, and sharing it on social media using #hatsforhope and tagging @BrainTumourFdn.

Special toques can be purchased at www.hatsforhope.ca. Proceeds from these stylish toques will be donated to the Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada, directly benefiting the brain tumour community through information, education and support funding, research, and better patient care. Since 2019, the Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada has sold thousands of Hats for Hope toques with a tag in either English or French, and they have been raising funds as well for the awareness of brain cancer through this campaign. Over the years, this campaign has helped reach millions of people on social media.

You can also show your support by making an online donation to the Brain Tumour Foundation, where you can learn more about this terrible disease and how you, too, can help.

Applause

Ms. Van Bibber: I rise on behalf of the Yukon Party caucus and the NDP caucus to recognize today, October 24, as Brain Cancer Awareness Day.

Cancer of the brain is one type of cancer that is not spoken about as much as breast, prostate, or other cancers, but many are diagnosed each day with this cancer. Canada currently has one of the highest rates of brain tumour incidence in the world. As the minister mentioned, an average of 27 Canadians are diagnosed every day, and of those, eight will be cancerous. While others are often non-malignant, they too can have serious, negative, life-altering impacts on people.

There have been no new discoveries in this area for at least a decade. Fundraising is important to help fund research efforts and provide support services, information, and assistance for patients and survivors.

I would like to give a special mention to the incredible efforts of Yukoner Dayna Magnuson, who very sadly lost her battle with brain cancer last October. Dayna worked with the Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada to raise awareness. She rallied the community to bring the very first official Brain Tumour Walk to Whitehorse in 2019. On the foundation's webpage, there is a Dayna page, stating — and I quote: “It is with great sorrow we announce the passing of Dayna Magnuson (Large). Dayna fought her battle with cancer with grace and dignity, she passed away comfortably at home with her husband Raymond by her side, surrounded by loving family

and friends. Dayna's wishes were, in lieu of flowers, donations be made in her honour to Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada.”

For her unwavering efforts, Dayna was recognized with a national Volunteer Distinction Award in 2020 by the foundation. This year, the Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada celebrates its 40th anniversary, bringing hope to individuals facing brain cancer and brain tumours. Thank you to everyone who has supported the foundation over the last four decades and who continue to show their support through the walk and other fundraising opportunities. Let's keep Dayna's wishes in mind as we acknowledge this day.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Mr. Cathers: I have for tabling today an excerpt from a report by the Canadian Medical Association and Deloitte entitled *Measures to Address Health System Challenges: Review of Canadian, Provincial and Territorial 2022 Budgets*, and the excerpt that I am tabling is relevant to the Yukon.

Speaker: Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT Standing Order 76 of the Standing Orders of the Yukon Legislative Assembly be amended for the duration of the 2022 Fall Sitting by deleting all instances of the words “Government Bill” and substituting in their place the words “appropriation bill”.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to work with provincial governments and the federal government to establish a harmonized national licensing pathway for doctors which includes a streamlined process for verifying the credentials of foreign-trained doctors and helping them complete any additional training that may be needed in a timely manner.

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

THAT this House urges the Minister of Tourism and Culture to engage the Carcross/Tagish First Nation, the Yukon Chamber of Mines, and the Yukon Heritage Resources Board to explore the designation of the Venus mine mill on the south Klondike Highway as a heritage site.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to establish regulations requiring drivers to equip their vehicles with winter or mud-and-snow tires yearly from October 1 to April 15.

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Nisutlin Bay bridge

Hon. Mr. Clarke: I rise today to provide an update on the work to replace the Nisutlin Bay bridge.

The current Nisutlin Bay bridge has served Teslin and our territory for almost 70 years and it is time to replace this critical piece of infrastructure.

This past Friday, I was in Teslin to celebrate the next chapter of the Nisutlin Bay bridge with the community. It was incredible to see people come together and recognize all the hard work that has made this project a reality.

Bringing a project of this size to fruition is no small job. The Nisutlin Bay bridge replacement project is the largest capital project in the history of the Yukon. After carefully evaluating bids, the \$160-million contract was awarded to Graham Infrastructure LP earlier this year. I'm happy to see Graham Infrastructure begin work on this project.

They have the experience to do this job and have committed to hiring Yukon-based businesses, locals, contractors, and tradespeople throughout the life of this project. This will ensure that benefits of this project are flowing directly to the community.

Mr. Speaker, the community input has played a pivotal role in the design of the new bridge. The new bridge will also better meet the needs of the community by providing a safe crossing and support active transportation by including wider shoulders and a lit walkway. In addition, it will also have a trail underneath the bridge that will be able to accommodate foot traffic as well as off-road vehicles like snowmobiles.

Another element of the bridge that I am most looking forward to seeing is the Tlingit artwork that will be incorporated into the design. The bridge is central to the community, so it was important that we reflected local cultural components where possible.

Mr. Speaker, the future of this project is very exciting, but I want to acknowledge that we would not be here today without the collaboration and partnership of the Teslin Tlingit Council and the Village of Teslin. In the spring of 2019, the Yukon government and the Teslin Tlingit Council signed a historic project charter for the project. Through this agreement, we worked collectively to design a structure that would not only serve the needs of the community but also be economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable. I am proud to say that we have achieved that together.

Mr. Hassard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, as I rise today to respond to this ministerial statement.

I would like to have seen this ministerial statement come this past spring rather than now, but I guess we should expect nothing less from this Liberal government and this minister.

This project, of course, is of vital importance to the Yukon as it provides the main link to the southern world for Yukoners and Alaskans alike. However, as we watch the snow fall, it begs the question that I have asked repeatedly: Why is this project so far behind that it is only beginning?

As the Liberal government touts the Nisutlin Bay bridge as the largest capital project in Yukon's history, one has to ask: Why were permits not in place months ago? Why is there not concrete in the ground now? Why is the government still trying to develop an aggregate source so late in the game? Well, Mr. Speaker, the answers are simple. It is a lack of planning on behalf of this Liberal government, and I would certainly hope that, in the minister's closing remarks, he actually apologizes to the contractors in the community for causing so many holdups. The people and the equipment have been in place and ready to go for weeks and weeks, waiting patiently. Hopefully, now they can finally get on with replacing this vital piece of infrastructure.

Ms. Blake: This summer, I attended the Teslin Tlingit Council's general assembly over three days. At the general assembly, citizens spoke about the potential harms that this construction project will bring to the community. Without government support, the increase in population may limit the community's access to services, from food at the store to community safety resources. Citizens also shared serious concerns for the safety of the community before, during, and after the construction period. These concerns are directly reflected in the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls inquiry's findings, which shows that development projects and their camps increase harm against indigenous women and girls.

How is this government ensuring that indigenous women and girls are not going to be collateral damage for this bridge? What work has the minister done with the First Nation and the contractor to provide education and resources to the workers to create a safe environment both in and outside of the camp? I have also heard concerns about the risk of substances being brought into the community as a result of this project. Given that this government has declared the substance use health emergency almost a year ago, what work has the minister done with the community to ensure that proper resources are put in place? In the contract that this government offered, will the contractor be required to maintain a dry camp?

The Teslin Tlingit Council is ahead of the game. They have been expressing these concerns long before the ground broke on this bridge project. They also have solutions that they proposed to this government. One of the recommendations that came out of the general assembly was for this government to provide resources and funding for three additional community safety officers. Currently, Teslin has three community safety officers in place. By doubling this resource, citizens and residents of Teslin will have more support in adapting to the

major changes that this bridge project will bring to their community.

Will the minister commit to funding three more community safety officers in the community of Teslin? I look forward to the minister's responses to the concerns and calls to action from the Teslin Tlingit Council citizens.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Thank you for the comments from the members opposite with respect to this vital infrastructure project. The Nisutlin Bay bridge project is significant for the community of Teslin, the territory, and, in fact, Canada. I am pleased to see this project being led by Graham Infrastructure, whose can-do attitude, along with their commitment to involving the community, will see this project get built in a way that benefits everyone.

When it came to the procurement process, the department worked closely with the Teslin Tlingit Council and the community to ensure that the contractor was, in fact, a good fit. In the fall of 2021, we brought both contractors that qualified for the project to Teslin to meet the community. This provided an opportunity for residents to ask the potential contractors questions and learn about employment opportunities. Once the contract was awarded, we hosted another open house in May 2022 with the successful contractor, Graham Infrastructure. During this event, we provided information on project timelines, potential employment opportunities, project safety, and traffic management plans.

We are moving this project forward in the right way. In 2014, the Yukon Party completely fumbled this project. They had a seemingly general inability to work with First Nations and that included, at that time, the Teslin Tlingit Council. Last week, the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin provided misinformation about this project to the House, claiming that there was no water licence in place. That is inaccurate; the water licence was issued in August. The Yukon Party has proved to be unreliable, and this is yet another example. The residents of Teslin learned that the Yukon Party was unreliable when they couldn't get this new bridge done.

Thankfully, our government has built strong government-to-government relationships with Yukon First Nations, including the Teslin Tlingit Council. We signed a project charter with the council in 2019 that is ensuring that this project moves forward in a way that benefits the community. I can't express how valuable it is to have community involvement in the process. The Nisutlin Bay bridge is central to Teslin and it is important that they see themselves reflected in the project.

Thank you to the Teslin Tlingit Council, the Village of Teslin, Graham Infrastructure, and the hard-working staff at the Department of Highways and Public Works for their collaboration on moving forward the largest capital project in our territory's history. I look forward to seeing this bridge come to life over the coming years, which will serve the Yukon, Alaska, and Canada for generations to come.

Speaker: This then bring us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Nurse recruitment and retention

Mr. Cathers: Last week, the Yukon Employees' Union issued a press release outlining concerns they have with how out of touch the Minister of Health and Social Services seems to be regarding issues affecting nursing in the territory.

The title of the release stated that the Minister of Health — quote: "... Misreads Nurses' Temperature." The release was particularly critical of the Minister of Health and Social Services' comments here in the Legislative Assembly, saying that the YEU was not prepared to — and I quote: "... legitimize the political opportunism demonstrated by..." — the minister — "... in the Legislative Assembly."

Can the minister explain this breakdown between her and the nurses? Does the minister really think that picking a public fight with nurses will help with recruitment and retention efforts?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I think what Yukoners should remember, and the member opposite as well, is that I wasn't picking any public fights. What I did do was respond to questions here in the Legislative Assembly. I responded to those questions in a forthright manner. I responded to those questions with respect to how we are supporting nurses in the Yukon and how we have, in fact, put forward a proposal to be considered by the Yukon Employees' Union to support not only retention of the amazing nurses we have here in the territory, but the recruitment of new nurses.

There were a number of things that were inaccurate in that media release, which, I note, was done by the Yukon Employees' Union, indicating that they weren't interested in a media negotiation, but they in fact did a media release and had a number of facts in there that were incorrect. I look forward to mentioning those in a few moments.

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, the minister is making her fight with nurses worse by calling the union's release "inaccurate". Their press release said that the Minister of Health seems misinformed about the nature of consultations between YEU and the Yukon government regarding nursing recruitment. In particular, they said that what was being proposed by Yukon government was — I quote: "... an insult and won't solve the problem of short staffing." The release also pointed out that the minister has — I quote: "... failed to show true leadership too many times."

What is the minister doing to repair the relationship with Yukon nurses that was further damaged by her comments in the Legislative Assembly last week and probably again by her comments in reply to my first question?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I am very interested in making sure that this Yukon government shows its commitment not only here in the Legislative Assembly, but with real action on the ground, making sure that our nurses understand how much we appreciate the work that they have done on the front lines here in the territory to bring us through COVID. As it continues, their work is absolutely critical. We need to make sure that our nurses understand that this appreciation is real. It is tangible. It is by virtue of taking action to make sure they have a significant

financial benefit to the work that they have done so far and the work that they will continue to do.

Mr. Cathers: It is clear to everyone that we need to be doing much more to recruit and retain health care professionals in the Yukon. This Liberal government has the worst record on physician recruitment in the entire country, and it has dropped the ball on nurse recruitment, too.

Following the pandemic, many nurses are feeling burned out and underappreciated. Those feelings were made worse by public comments from this Minister of Health and Social Services. Unfortunately, those comments have led to a very public breach in the relationship between Yukon nurses and this government — and, in particular, this minister.

Will the Premier consider having a different minister lead this work with nurses so that consultations can get back on track?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Just to name a few of the concerns that were brought forward in the media release that has been brought here today by the member opposite — I think it's critical for our nurses and for all Yukoners to know that the Yukon Employees' Union called the bonus packages that we have brought forward — the proposal that we brought forward — for nurses — indicated that it was only for new hires. Not true — it is not only for new hires. They indicated that it was only one time. Not true — the plan is to have the cost of these significant bonuses put into our budget for the next three years.

I also indicated — and I think this is absolutely critical for our nurses and our community to know — that this proposal was brought forward at a meeting and rejected by the Yukon Employees' Union at that same meeting.

So, Mr. Speaker, the leadership of the Yukon Employees' Union unfortunately didn't even ask the nurses what they were interested in having pursued by the union on their behalf. The people most affected by these proposals were not even asked.

Question re: Community nursing

Ms. McLeod: Earlier this year, the Carcross community health centre was reduced to emergency services only for about two weeks. This is just one example of the significant challenges facing community nursing programming in many rural communities.

Can the minister tell us how many communities have faced serious reductions or closures, like Carcross did, as a result of shortages in community nursing?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I certainly appreciate the opportunity to speak about nursing here in the territory to nurses and to Yukoners — about these very important services.

This fiscal year, we are investing \$17.74 million in the Community Nursing branch. The Community Nursing branch has 52 FTEs for registered nurses. Community Nursing is currently experiencing a very high vacancy rate of over approximately 40 percent. Normally, it would stay somewhere near five percent. It is critical that we make sure that Community Nursing staff are looked after, because they look after us. Community Nursing staff continue to work tirelessly to provide Yukoners with health care services and to play an

integral role in our ongoing response to COVID-19 and to the substance use health emergency.

Ms. McLeod: We have received a confidential briefing note through ATIPP that indicates that the Community Nursing branch is experiencing critically low nursing levels. Here's what the confidential briefing notes says — and I quote: "Currently, the Community Nursing branch is experiencing critically low nursing levels, which is anticipated to result in some service disruptions at health centres in some communities."

Can the minister tell us a little about what steps have been taken to ensure that rural Yukoners have access to health care in the face of these anticipated service disruptions resulting from gaps in Community Nursing?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I know my colleague mentioned it last week. I am presumably looking at the same note that the member opposite has. It's not confidential in any way. It is not marked "confidential", mostly because it isn't. As a result, I can certainly read from the exact same note, if that is of interest. I can indicate that we continue to work with the Public Service Alliance of Canada to work out an agreement going forward. Those negotiations unfortunately are not happening at the moment, but we continue to work on benefits for nursing staff going forward — all of our nursing staff.

Community Nursing staff certainly are recognized — that they are the health care provider for many, many Yukoners at our community nursing stations. We must recognize and provide burnout protection for these nurses. It is a real and pressing issue here in the Yukon and in Yukon communities. We support Yukon nurses who have sacrificed so much of their personal lives and family lives, and their time on their jobs, over the past two years. We continue to work with community nursing to eliminate shortages.

Ms. McLeod: Mr. Speaker, the confidential briefing note obtained through ATIPP goes on to point out that — quote: "Despite ongoing recruitment and retention efforts, there continues to be barriers to ensuring the Yukon has access to an adequate supply of nursing staff."

Can the minister explain what these barriers are and what the government is doing to address them?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, the Yukon Party again proves unreliable, insisting that this is a confidential briefing note. I am not sure what the point of that is.

We are working very diligently to continue to mitigate the increased pressures that are resulting from local, national, and global shortages of health care providers. The Department of Health and Social Services has taken several actions to attract and retain nurse practitioners. In fact, I mentioned them in response to the first question. We are looking at financial support for our nurses, our registered nurses, our licensed practical nurses, our registered psychiatric nurses, and health care aides in all Yukon communities. I certainly hope that we can resolve that quickly so at least our appreciation for what nurses have done for this community can be shown.

Question re: Gender-affirming health care

Ms. Tredger: More than a year and half ago, this government announced that it was expanding trans health care in the territory. When this announcement was made, people were very excited. This was supposed to be the most comprehensive coverage available in Canada and these are often lifesaving interventions. But other than that original announcement, information has been very hard to find about the reality of that program. There is nothing on yukon.ca. There is no list of treatments that are available and no directions for how to access them. We are hearing that even health care providers are struggling to navigate the policies.

Will the minister commit to making information about gender-affirming care publicly available on yukon.ca?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is correct. Back in March of 2021, this government — the Government of Yukon — announced changes to significantly improve access to gender-affirming health care, including surgery, for Yukoners. It continues to be one of the most advanced programs of its kind anywhere.

Since that announcement, work has been continuing and must first be done to ensure that the delivery and the access to these additional services can be appropriately provided. They are not, for instance, provided here in the territory, and as a result, partnerships must be built with the health care providers who do produce and do provide this kind of care. That kind of care for Yukoners is absolutely essential. We continue to uphold our commitment while ensuring that these changes don't create unforeseen avenues perhaps, for instance, to something like private health care. Yukon is leading the country in these commitments and I look forward to them continuing.

Ms. Tredger: Despite the lack of information, trans Yukoners are still doing their best to access care. I have talked to multiple people who have done everything right. They have gotten referrals and assessments from psychologists, psychiatrists, and doctors. They have been assessed by surgeons and given the green light. They have spent years jumping through hoops, but right at the end, the process has stalled. They are stuck waiting on funding approval from this government. They have had radio silence and no indication of how long they will have to wait to get an answer. Evidence shows that the longer trans people wait for care, the higher their risk of depression and suicide. Wait times can literally be a matter of life and death.

So, can the minister tell us: When it comes to approving funding applications for gender-affirming care, are there timelines? What are they? And are they being met?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: As I have noted, we continue to uphold our commitment while ensuring that these changes don't create any unforeseen issues. We need to build partnerships with the service providers for this kind of care to be provided to Yukoners. Yukon is leading the country in our commitments to advancing gender-affirming care access and we recognize that it does come with challenges. We're working diligently to explore options to create a path forward, hopefully by the end of 2022. We can see that is fast approaching.

The department recognizes the importance of these services for the transgender and gender-diverse community and the growing number of people awaiting access to care.

We look forward to resolving this matter as soon as possible to ensure that we can deliver the support that is needed by these Yukoners. We continue to implement recommendations from the LGBTQ2S+ *Inclusion Action Plan* to enhance health equity here in the territory.

Ms. Tredger: The minister has mentioned exploring options a few times. I've heard that's being done right now. What's critically important is that people can still access gender-affirming care while that review takes place.

Will the minister commit to trans Yukoners that their applications will still be approved while the policy is being developed?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I just want to be clear: It's not about building policy; it's about building partnerships with the providers of this health care. We have to, frankly, determine how it can be properly paid for.

We continue to implement recommendations of our LGBTQ2S+ *Inclusion Action Plan* to enhance the health care quality here in the territory. We remain committed to working with our partners, including community organizations, to advance gender-inclusive health and social care here in the territory.

In June 2022, we supported Yukon councillors from both government and non-governmental organizations to attend training from the World Professional Association for Transgender Health. We continue our commitment to these Yukoners who require this medical care that must take place outside of the territory, and we continue our commitment, as I've noted, with a resolution by the end of this year to determine how we can best provide that care.

Question re: Mining project oversight

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, over the years, the Yukon has had its share of mining controversies — from Wolverine to Keno, Ketz River, or Clinton Creek. As an answer to that, governments have set regulations for mines and it's the inspectors on the ground who ensure these regulations are being followed. In a time where most Yukoners can remember some sort of environmental disaster occurring due to mines not following regulations, mining inspectors have a really tough job.

What is the minister doing to ensure that mining inspectors have adequate resources and supports to carry out their important work?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I will say is that I agree with the member opposite that our Compliance Monitoring and Inspections group does a really great job. Our natural resource officers conduct inspections, and they are responsible for the enforcement of legislation regulating our natural resources, including mining. This year so far, they have carried out over 600 inspections related to public lands, forests, waters, and mineral resources — including the *Civil Emergency Measures Act*. So, they do a lot of work and they have a great relationship with the sites where they go to work. I can say that we do

resource this group, of course. I will have to investigate further if the member opposite is looking for something specific, but generally this group is doing very good work, and I thank the member for her question.

Ms. White: During a July inspection of the Alexco Keno Hill mine, inspectors found a number of infringements. Three months later, the mine was sold and changed hands. After that first inspection under new ownership, many of these infringements hadn't been addressed yet. The situation had actually gotten worse. The inspector found unattended fires burning during wildfire season, unacceptable disposal of waste, and a hole in the discharge pipe that has been waiting months for repair.

Can this minister tell Yukoners how a mine with so many ongoing infractions is allowed to continue to operate and what measures are in place to make sure that the new owners deal with these issues in a timely manner?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I can say that I was informed, as I typically am when there are issues at our work sites, including at mines — but I know that, for this mine site, there was an inspection. The last one was roughly a month ago and they have one coming up for next month. So, inspections are ongoing. There are often issues that are identified. I have talked with the new owners of the mine, and they have assured me that their intention is to be good stewards of the land and that they will be a responsible company. I believe that, seeing their track record internationally, and I have let them know that we take this seriously and they have let me know that they do too.

Ms. White: So after purchasing the mine in Keno, the CEO of Hecla said — and I quote: “At the end of the day, we are going to care for the environment.” Well, I guess today isn't that day, because the first inspection of the mine has been done, and things weren't looking great. During the inspection, it was found that Hecla disposed of four vehicles by backhoeing them into an underground tunnel — not only a violation of their reclamation and closure plan, but also a violation of their water licence.

In this Assembly, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has said: “Our goal is to build a mining industry in the Yukon that supports responsible mining practices...”

So, does the minister consider ongoing environmental violations as responsible mining practices, and, if not, how does he plan to address them?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I certainly stand by the comment that we believe in environmentally responsible industry. I will say that when I met with Hecla just in the last couple of days, they invited to take me to their mine site over near Juneau, Alaska to show me the care with which they take — they are brand new owners. I am not sure that this incident was under their watch. I am happy to hear from my inspectors about the timing issues.

The mine has said to me, and said to our inspectors, that they are taking responsibility to make sure that this is cleaned up appropriately. I will hold them to that comment, and I think it is their intention to do so. I am happy to investigate it further.

Question re: Campground development

Mr. Istchenko: Many Yukoners raised their eyebrows when the Minister of Environment announced that the Yukon government is considering the development of a new campground that would have over 150 sites and would be within a two-hour drive of Whitehorse.

For context, in my riding, the Kusawa Lake campground has about 50 sites. That means this new campground will be more than triple the size of the Kusawa Lake campground.

Can the Minister of Environment tell us which locations have been shortlisted for this massive new campground?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member opposite for the question. I think even in the Spring Sitting this last spring, I indicated that it was unlikely at that time that a site would be identified that would be able to accommodate 150 sites. I take the member opposite's point that it would be significant infrastructure.

The Government of Yukon has assessed potential options for a new or improved campground near Whitehorse. Since 2020, we have been discussing site criteria and possible locations as well as partnership opportunities with six Yukon First Nations. This past year, the Yukon Parks branch shared preliminary feasibility study findings with the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council. We are excited about the potential of an improved campground that will provide additional sites and recreation options for Yukoners and visitors alike. This will help us to meet our strategy goals.

Reconciliation and partnerships are two of the commitments outlined in the *Yukon Parks Strategy* and are pillars for this government. Mr. Speaker, we will continue to advance reconciliation through collaborative management with First Nations and we will prioritize building meaningful relationships.

Mr. Istchenko: Last fall when I asked the Minister of Environment about these plans for the new campground, he said — and I quote: “I have also been told that there is a possibility of this plan being divided into separate and discrete but smaller sites that may be identified...”

So, the minister has spoken a little bit about it, but I am looking for a little bit of an update about these smaller locations that he is suggesting and which campgrounds he is actually looking at.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: The Government of Yukon operates and maintains 42 road-accessible campgrounds that provide over 1,150 campsites. More than one-quarter of Yukon's population camps in our campgrounds every year.

As members opposite well know, the 2022 service camping season ran from May 1 to September 30 of this year. A new record for campground use by Yukon residents was set in 2021, at more than 36,000 campsite nights. Data for 2022 will be available later this winter. We hosted over 52,000 people for over 48,000 campsite nights at our road-accessible campgrounds in 2021. While still approximately 20 percent lower than pre-COVID numbers in 2019, the total campground occupancy in 2021 was up approximately 16 percent compared to 2020.

The 2022 camping season was another busy year for our territorial parks. This was the second year of the new longer camping season that we introduced through the *Yukon Parks Strategy*. As well, in 2022, we implemented a new online daily camping permit. This option allows campers to prepay for camping online and save \$2 per night compared with paying in cash. These are exciting times at Yukon campgrounds.

Mr. Istchenko: So, it looks like the minister is still unable to let us know which locations he is looking at, but as all Yukoners who use campgrounds know, the most popular sites are adjacent to bodies of water.

So, can the minister assure Yukoners that any new campground or campgrounds will be adjacent to a body of water and will have a boat launch?

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question from the member opposite.

What I can advise is that we will certainly keep the House apprised as to the discussions that are ongoing with the three Yukon First Nations that I have identified — that we are having very fruitful discussions with — and, once again, confirm the likelihood that there will not be 150 additional sites at one location as I did indicate in the spring of this year.

However, in 2022, we made a number of improvements to Yukon campgrounds. New playgrounds were installed at Pine Lake, which I just saw in the last few weeks — absolutely awesome work done at Pine Lake, in the member opposite's backyard — and Yukon River and the Klondike River campgrounds. A boat launch at Tagish River bridge was replaced, with additional boat-launch replacements currently underway at Twin Lakes, Frenchman Lake, Nunatuk, and Ethel Lake campgrounds that are scheduled to be completed for the spring of 2023.

As well, in partnership with Singletrack to Success, a new trail at the Conrad campground was developed. I had the opportunity to visit the Conrad site this summer as well.

In addition, a new trail was designated at Twin Lakes campground and we completed a new trail at the very popular Tombstone Territorial Park, and a new pedestrian bridge was installed at Fox Lake campground in September to access walking —

Speaker: Order, please.

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. 18: *Midwifery Integration Amendments Act (2022)* — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 18, standing in the name of the Hon. Ms. McPhee.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I move that Bill No. 18, entitled *Midwifery Integration Amendments Act (2022)*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Health and Social Services that Bill No. 18, entitled *Midwifery*

Integration Amendments Act (2022), be now read a third time and do pass.

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I am very pleased to present these amendments which respond directly and specifically to my mandate from the Premier to fully integrate midwifery into Yukon's health care system. I am also so pleased to welcome our guests today. They are the professionals responsible for delivering these services — pun intended — to Yukoners and they have taken the time to be here today as we present Bill No. 18 at third reading.

This amending bill, while brief, is a key component of supporting the integration of midwifery and enabling midwives to work to their full scope of practice. From a safety perspective, it is integral that all health care providers understand their roles and responsibilities. The amendment to section 63 of the *Care Consent Act* provides that clarity.

Continuity of care is an important part of high quality and safe care. Amendments to the *Employment Standards Act*, which are also contained in Bill No. 18, will ensure that midwifery clients aren't required to see another care provider to obtain the necessary certificates to access leave related to their pregnancy.

As primary care providers, it is important to ensure that registered midwives are able to respond appropriately, in the interest of public health, when their clients are diagnosed with a communicable disease.

Amendments to section 2 of the *Public Health and Safety Act* will make it clear that registered midwives and primary health care nurses have the same obligations as other primary health care providers to report communicable disease cases to the medical officer of health for appropriate follow-up. By approving these amendments, which are all contained in this bill, we will be supporting registered midwives to provide high-quality, funded, and regulated midwifery care to Yukoners.

I would like to reiterate that we are here today because of a shared commitment and desire by many, and their dedication, to ensure that Yukoners have access to the same high quality and high level of midwifery-led care that is available across this country and that all health care providers are working collaboratively and together to contribute to the best outcomes for families. We know that safe health care is only possible when health care services are well integrated into the health care system.

On April 15, 2021, the midwives regulation under the *Health Professions Act* came into force. That regulatory framework and scope of practice for midwifery services provides a broad scope of practice for Yukon's registered midwives. The midwives regulation reflects the feedback that we received from a variety of local and national experts, as well as individual Yukoners, and the reality of Yukon's birth numbers and current model of maternity care. The timeline for bringing these regulations into force prior to the launch of services also reflects recommendations we received from experts. It allowed us to proceed with building the model.

Time was needed to take those regulations and use them to develop program policies, procedures, and other professional

processes and to support the integration of midwifery into the existing health care system — Mr. Speaker, not an easy feat. That is just what happened. Over 30 Yukoners are now accessing midwifery-led maternity care at our clinic in the Yukon. Yukoners now have a choice of birth location and maternity care provider. The amendments in this bill help support registered midwives in providing that care and reaching their full scope of practice.

Going forward, we know that there are many more conversations to be had. We are committed to having those conversations as we continue with the work to integrate and grow the midwifery program here in the Yukon Territory. We want to thank all those who have contributed their time and energy to date and realize a strong, collaborative, and well-integrated midwifery program. As I noted at Committee of the Whole, I believe, when I was addressing this Legislative Assembly, there are people who have been dedicated to working toward the implementation, the realization, and the integration of midwifery services into Yukon health care for many, many years — maybe decades for some of us. We know that there is still work to do, but we are here today to celebrate the last amendments that are contained here in Bill No. 18 to realize a full scope of practice.

We appreciate that, as we go forward, we will learn more, and we will continue to enhance and support a Yukon integrated, free midwifery care program here in the territory. We appreciate the support that I expect from the Members of the Legislative Assembly for this bill and to enhance and support this very important work.

Mr. Cathers: The Yukon Party continues to support the midwifery program being made available to Yukoners. I did speak to this legislation earlier at second reading as well as in Committee, so, rather than repeating my remarks, I would simply refer people to my previous comments regarding this legislation.

I would like to thank the staff for their work in developing this and implementing the program. I note that we look forward to seeing midwifery options in the Yukon expanded further.

Ms. Blake: I am pleased to speak again in support of this bill. Midwifery is a critical part of advancing public health services, addressing health inequities, and indigenizing health care. I want to take this opportunity to thank the midwives and staff at the midwifery clinic, many of whom are here today. Thanks to the care that all of you provide, more Yukon parents and babies will get to enjoy a safe, culturally inclusive birth. I am hopeful that this bill will open the doors to one day allowing every pregnant Yukoner to have the choice to give birth in their community with their family and loved ones nearby.

Ms. White: I just want to add my congratulations to this. When I was first elected in 2011, at that point in time, we were advocating for midwifery. At that point, it had already been advocated for in this House for a long number of years. It is exciting to know that we have gotten to this point where every birthing person will have this access. It is a good day.

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

Does any other member wish to be heard?

Hon. Ms. McPhee: I have had the true honour of addressing this Legislative Assembly on several occasions where we have had groundbreaking work brought to this Legislative Assembly — new laws and new support for Yukoners — and this is one such day that I add to my list which I am very proud of — but it's not me. I just happen to be the person who stands here and addresses the Legislative Assembly and helps to pass this this bill which will enhance the services and hopefully complete the full scope of practice for midwives here in the territory.

My thanks — and our thanks, as a Legislative Assembly, as lawmakers — must go to the folks who worked tirelessly behind the scenes with respect to first developing a regulation and ultimately all of the work that went into negotiating with partners to make sure that they fully understood the scope of practice and what we were trying to achieve here with the midwives clinic — all of the individuals who worked to staff that clinic, all of the individuals who came forward to staff that clinic to provide those kinds of health care services to Yukoners — and all of the folks at Justice — not only at Health and Social Services, but also at Justice, which I have the honour of also representing here in the Legislative Assembly — to draft the regulation, ultimately, and then these amendments to bills that will give the final bit of wind under the wings of our midwives and all associated professionals. Truly, the thanks must go to them because they are the front-line folks and they are the people who are providing care, helping Yukoners, and helping new moms, new parents, and new pregnant people to all access a free and integrated service that will enhance their lives.

Thanks to all of you who have done that and who will continue to do that on behalf of all Yukoners.

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 third reading of Bill No. 18 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 18 has passed this House.

Bill No. 21: Carbon Price Rebate Amendments Act (2022) — Third Reading

Hon. Mr. Silver: I move that Bill No. 21, entitled *Carbon Price Rebate Amendments Act (2022)*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 21, entitled *Carbon Price Rebate Amendments Act (2022)*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, I would like to start today by thanking members of the opposition for their thoughts on this bill. Mr. Speaker, it was the provinces and territories — not the federal government — in 2016 that insisted that there be a five-year review to evaluate carbon pricing. It is highly disappointing that the pathway forward from 2022 to 2030 wasn't developed in the spirit of collaboration. In Committee of the Whole, I heard and responded to points that we could have used the rebate program differently. You know, Mr. Speaker, it is clear that we all want to reduce emissions and address climate change. Given the time crunch and the unilateral position of the federal government, there unfortunately wasn't time for that type of design work.

However, I want to reiterate that carbon pricing is just one tool — a very effective tool — in the tool kit with a host of options to address climate change. The *Our Clean Future* strategy continues to be the primary avenue for looking at the wide range of options at our disposal, but I will list a few other areas where we are taking current action.

Our government continues to review the Yukon Climate Leadership Council's recommendations found in their report, *Climate Shot 2030*. This House is currently debating the *Clean Energy Act*, which, as you know, Mr. Speaker, would set targets related to achieving net zero emissions in Yukon by 2050. Our appropriation acts dedicate significant resources to climate change action; so does our five-year capital plan. We are incorporating a climate change lens into our decision-making strategy. Finally, specific to mining, we are currently working with industry on mining intensity targets and on policies to determine how to use the proceeds from the federal output-based pricing system, or OBPS, to reduce emissions from the large emitters in the territory.

I had not made this point during our previous debate, but we would also lose access to future proceeds of the OBPS without passing this bill — for the record. It is critical that we maintain this aspect of the rebate, as well as rebates for all eligible groups.

Finally, I would like to conclude by going back to the placer miners. As I said in Committee of the Whole, these are generally family-run businesses. Often they are not very large in size, and they contribute greatly to our Yukon communities and also to our economy. It is important that we support our local economy, especially rural Yukon, when we focus on reducing emissions in a viable manner.

I urge all members to support this bill, and thank you for your time today, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and speak to this bill at third reading. I will point readers and those following to my comments made at second reading in Committee of the Whole where I asked a series of questions of the Premier. At both of those opportunities, I noted some concerns that we have with the bill and that the Premier did, in fact, note that some of those concerns were shared.

As I said at second reading, I believe that this is making the best of a bad situation. Unfortunately, as the Premier explained in Committee, the short timelines for this were dictated by the federal government; therefore, a very small window was provided for the Yukon government and other jurisdictions to make changes following the changes that the federal government was making. That leaves us in a situation where we need to make the changes outlined in this bill quickly in order to preserve the rebates for Yukon businesses, particularly the placer mining industry.

I will conclude with that, Mr. Speaker. We will support the bill at this point, at third reading. We look forward to its passage. As I said at second reading and in Committee, we hope that the Yukon government remains open to engaging with industry to look at ways to improve the system going forward. It may indeed be the case that the system that is developed by this bill turns out to be appropriate and sound. I do know, from hearing from industry representatives, that there is some concern about the way that the new system will account for the size of placer mining operations. So, as I suggested, I hope the government remains open to hearing from industry about ways to improve the system going forward.

I thank the Premier for his candor in Committee of the Whole, and I look forward to voting on this bill.

Ms. Tredger: As we previously indicated, we will be supporting this bill. I believe that it is an improvement over the bill before this amendment. We understand that, in the short amount of time that was available, this is what could be done, and we are glad it was done, but we do hope that, in the future, we can look at making this stronger so that it supports climate action more strongly and it supports people bringing down their emissions even more. We hope to see that come in the future.

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

Does any other member wish to be heard?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleagues across the floor. I will leave it at that for now. I just want to say thank you. I appreciate folks acknowledging the situation that we are in and working on this together, collaboratively, for what is the betterment of Yukon First Nation governments, municipal governments, and our business sector, including the placer miners. I really do appreciate everybody's ability to work together on this amendment.

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. Istchenko: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Ms. Blake: Agree.

Ms. Tredger: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 17 yea, nil nay.

Speaker: I think the yeas have it.

I declare the motion carried.

Motion for third reading of Bill No. 21 agreed to

Speaker: I declare that Bill No. 21 has passed this House.

We are now prepared to receive the Commissioner of the Yukon, in her capacity as Lieutenant Governor, to grant assent to bills which have passed this House.

Commissioner Bernard enters the Chamber accompanied by her Aide-de-Camp

ASSENT TO BILLS

Commissioner: Please be seated.

Speaker: Madam Commissioner, the Assembly has, at its present session, passed certain bills to which, in the name and on behalf of the Assembly, I respectfully request your assent.

Clerk: *Midwifery Integration Amendments Act (2022); Carbon Price Rebate Amendments Act (2022).*

Commissioner: I hereby assent to the bills as enumerated by the Clerk.

Commissioner leaves the Chamber

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Ms. Blake): Order, please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

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

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

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

Bill No. 17: *Clean Energy Act* — continued

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

Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Kent: I would like to welcome the officials back to the House today to support the minister during Committee debate on Bill No. 17.

When we left off last time, we were talking about Moon Lake and where we were at with respect to that particular project. One of the questions that I asked about was cost estimates and federal funding. The minister spoke — I am just going to paraphrase. He mentioned at the time that there were no preliminary cost estimates done for the project, but then, when we got to Question Period and a question about federal infrastructure spending in light of some of the austerity budgeting announcements by the federal Minister of Finance, the minister was a little bit more bullish on the project, suggesting that he felt it would be funded. So, perhaps he can let us know why he was a little bit more bullish in Question Period about funding for this project, especially in light of the fact that there are no cost estimates. We don't even know what we would be asking the federal government for at this point.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I think I said during Question Period is that it is a good project. I do believe that. It is a good project because it provides us both capacity and energy. It provides us winter energy, which is really important. It also provides the ability to store energy. So, right now, what happens is that, in the summertime, we watch water flow through the Whitehorse Rapids. We don't take that energy because we don't need it. Our usage in the summer is low but our usage in the winter is high, and if you have a project where you can pump the water up and you store it, then it makes every one of our renewable energy projects, like wind and solar, more efficient and more effective, and so it is a very good project.

It is also, I think, a good project because our anticipation is that it would be First Nation-led. When I have met with the federal government and looked at energy projects, the ones that I think they are keenest on are ones that are led by our communities, and this is a great example. So, that is why I think that it is a good project. I don't want to speculate at this point on the cost, but, of course, it was chosen as a project based on several physical characteristics, like the fact that it has pump storage and that it is not too far away from our grid and questions like that.

There are reasons why we anticipate that this is a good project. I will just echo what I heard the member opposite say during our last time together here in Committee of the Whole — that this is an important project.

Mr. Kent: Yes, it obviously is an extremely important project when it comes to meeting the goals that we have set out in *Our Clean Future* and the enhanced goals that are being considered in the legislation before the House now.

We talked last time about some of the potential timelines — approximately two to three years for licensing and assessment work, potentially two to four years for procurement and construction — but again, one of the questions that I had asked at the time of the minister was when we would have some sort of a cost estimate. Obviously, we don't have that right now, but as we move toward the timing as set out by Yukon Energy Corporation in their renewable energy plan and where we need to be by 2030, when does the minister believe we will be in a position to seek funding partners, including the federal government, on this project?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I know that this project is in the early stages. We have always noted that it is part of, like, a 10-year plan — renewable energy plan — and was roughly a 10-year project from concept to build-out. I think that in a year or two is when we will start to have some idea of the cost. I know that there were potentially going to be some dollars invested in some of the feasibility work.

We know that there are quite a few different federal funds that align with the Moon Lake project and its intended outcomes. Of course, we will work with our partners to explore those. I can say that the Carcross/Tagish First Nation is in good dialogue with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, whose traditional territories overlap the site. One of the next phases about it is to firm up some of the ideas around it, such as some of the general concepts of what we are talking about, and then that will allow us to do some costing. I think that it is coming.

Mr. Kent: When the minister says that this will be a community-led initiative, I am assuming he means that the First Nations — the Carcross/Tagish First Nation as well as the Taku River Tlingit — will jointly lead the project. Does that mean that they will take sole ownership, or will there be some sort of a partnership between Yukon taxpayers or Yukon ratepayers and the First Nations as far as owning this particular project, once it is operational?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The ownership, at least in principle, is that the energy generation would likely be owned by the First Nation or First Nations — I leave that for them to discuss further. If Atlin is a good example of what we might be looking at, then we would look to have an energy purchase agreement. Then, I imagine, it would be the Yukon Energy Corporation that would take it to the Yukon Utilities Board for their review, so we would purchase the energy coming into our grid.

Mr. Kent: I am going to move on from the Moon Lake project and seek a little bit of an update from the minister with respect to the Atlin expansion project. In the Yukon Energy Corporation document and from having witnesses here in the past, we have a good understanding of what this will add for capacity and what some of the costs are, but I understand from my colleagues who attended the Yukon Development Corporation briefing on the supplementary budget that there is a \$60-million funding gap on this project currently.

I am just wondering if the minister can confirm that for us — that what we heard at the briefing with Yukon Development Corporation is correct and that there is a \$60-million shortfall currently with respect to this project.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: There is still a funding gap, and it is estimated to be in the range of \$60 million. I have had quite a few conversations, both with the Tlingit Homeland Energy Limited Partnership, the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, and the Carcross/Tagish First Nation. The Government of British Columbia was actually just down in Atlin about 10 days ago to announce some of their funding in the partnership. Of course, I remain in conversation with the federal government.

There is a funding gap, and we are working to close it.

Mr. Kent: Can the minister give us an updated cost estimate, then, of this project as we stand right now?

I know there has been some indication of what it would cost as we have moved through debate and having witnesses appear, but I am looking for the most recent numbers that the minister has. With respect to the \$60-million funding gap, is there any indication of who is going to help close it?

I guess one other question in this series would be: How much money has the Yukon government and the Yukon Energy Corporation committed to the project so far — beyond the power purchase? How much has been committed to this in capital dollars?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The overall project cost right now is estimated at \$315 million. The Yukon government at this point has committed \$50 million. Yukon Energy Corporation does not have funding committed, but they are, of course, working on the energy purchase agreement, which I believe is in front of the Yukon Utilities Board right now.

Mr. Kent: One of the other questions in there was: Was that \$60-million funding gap — have we any idea who the First Nation corporation is looking to in order to help close that gap?

I guess I will just leave it at that and then ask a follow-up here shortly.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I believe that the Tlingit Homeland Energy Limited Partnership is even travelling to Ottawa right now for conversations with the federal government about the funding gap. I think that they have had conversations with us and also with the BC government. I think that there are a lot of different opportunities for closing the gap.

I just got an update on the energy purchase agreement — that the Yukon Utilities Board issued its report to the Minister of Justice on October 18.

Mr. Kent: So, is the \$50 million that the Yukon government contributed to the project a grant to the project or does it give us any equity share in the project? Or is it just a straight grant to the Tlingit Homeland Energy Limited Partnership to move the project forward?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The \$50 million is a grant. I think I have spoken about it here in the House before. It doesn't give us an equity stake, but what it does do is make sure that the price at which we are purchasing that energy is reasonable for Yukon ratepayers.

Earlier today, I heard the Member for Kluane talk about our electricity rates going up, but that is not correct. It may be true that people are using electricity more, but the rates have not changed in recent years — not since the last general rate application, which, I believe, was 2016-17. In that rate application, of course, the most significant cost was for the liquefied natural gas plant. The rates have been holding pretty steady. The energy purchase agreement was very favourable for rates, so our thinking is, we put this in as a grant and it will help keep the cost down for Yukoners on rates.

Mr. Kent: Can the minister tell us, with that \$50-million grant, what the rates will be and what they would have been without that \$50-million contribution from the Yukon government?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: It is roughly 13 cents a kilowatt hour. It's important to note that there are some differences around those rates, and I will get more detailed information, but that's the high rate. For example, if there is an excess of energy produced beyond a set amount, there is a lower rate. There's also a lower rate for summer, if that's used. There are differential rates, but the winter energy rate is 13 and a half cents per kilowatt hour.

The member also asked about what difference the \$50 million makes. I think it's difficult to tease it, because there is also significant federal funding that is already committed to. I will have to check, but I think it's over \$100 million. I will check on the amount that the federal government has committed to.

That, combined with the grant from the Yukon government and the grant from the BC government, collectively brings down the cost of the project, and that, in aggregate, is what leads to the lower and favourable energy purchase agreement rate.

Mr. Kent: So, the minister referenced 13 cents per kilowatt hour as potentially the higher rate. I understand that there are different rates set throughout. So, the question that I had was: That \$50-million grant from the Yukon government — if we weren't in a position to grant that money, what would have been the difference in that high rate? It's 13 cents now with the \$50 million; what would it have been without that \$50 million?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: These are hypotheticals. I can try to investigate it further, but I can say with certainty that the whole package is predicated on how much money the First Nation will be borrowing for this project. They need a certain amount of return. If, for example, they had to borrow an extra \$50 million on top of the money that they're borrowing now, it's fair to think that they would need to increase that energy purchase agreement rate significantly.

So, I don't want to speak in the hypothetical. I know that the strategy all along was to get that rate down and to make sure it came in, if at all possible, below the 20 cents per kilowatt hour for diesel, which is sort of our upset price. It is coming in at two-thirds of that price — 13.5 cents per kilowatt hour versus 20 cents per kilowatt hour. It is significant, but I have not asked for analysis to be done on "what if" scenarios.

Mr. Kent: I can appreciate that, but when answering an earlier question, the minister said that this \$50-million grant was made as a grant rather than an equity share, because it would keep the costs lower. He referenced 13 cents per kilowatt hour, so I will look forward to getting some information from him, hopefully, on what those costs per kilowatt hour would have been without this \$50-million grant that the Yukon government has made.

The minister referenced 20 cents per kilowatt hour as the cost of diesel. Can he tell the House what the current cost of hydro is? How much are we paying right now to generate hydroelectricity on the Whitehorse and Aishihik and up at Mayo?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The cost of hydro is historically under 10 cents a kilowatt hour, but of course, that is, in part, because the dams have been around for many, many decades, but I would have to investigate to get a more detailed number.

Mr. Kent: I look forward to getting that information from the minister.

The \$60-million funding gap with the project, is that affecting — I am sure that it is, but I will just get the minister to confirm what that has done to the project in how delayed it is from the original estimates of when this would come online.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The current projection is for the fall of 2025, which is roughly one year past the original planning timeline.

Mr. Kent: Can the minister remind us how many of the rented diesels this project was designed to take offline? Obviously, we have at least another year of requiring those rental diesels. I just can't find in here how many rented diesels this project would allow us to take offline.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The project will eliminate the need for four rented diesels and generate around 3.4 gigawatt hours

of electricity each year. It is expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by an estimated 30,000 tonnes per year.

Mr. Kent: So, four diesels will have to stay online for at least an extra year now because the project is delayed by that year, as they look for funding.

I think that the minister mentioned at some point that, right now, there are some discussions between the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the Carcross/Tagish First Nation. Obviously, we talked about what was going on with respect to Moon Lake. Are there discussions going on as well about the Atlin project and what is happening with it? Is that something that is ongoing between those two First Nations as well?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I misspoke a second ago. If I said 3.4 gigawatt hours, it's 34 gigawatt hours. So, I was just off there. Thanks for the chance to correct the record.

Yes, I think I have talked about this before. The Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the Carcross/Tagish First Nation have been in direct conversations. They asked us to support them in that through the Executive Council Office, which we have done, and those talks are going very well.

Mr. Kent: So, with respect to the budget that the minister mentioned for this project — it's \$315 million — does that include the transmission line — obviously, the new transmission line — from Atlin to Jakes Corner and then the transmission line upgrades that are required from Jakes Corner to Whitehorse?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The \$315 million is all in — so including transmission.

Mr. Kent: As I mentioned, there will be a new line from Atlin to Jakes Corner, and then that line from Jakes Corner to Whitehorse was built and, I believe, is owned by ATCO. Can the minister give us a breakdown of what the cost requirements are to upgrade that line from Jakes Corner to Whitehorse? Is it fully on as part of this project, or is ATCO going to assume any of those costs?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: My understanding is that the line upgrades in terms of the funding is part of that cost that I listed.

The work will not be carried out by — so that the transmission line from Atlin up to Jakes will be a new transmission line, which is owned by the First Nation. As part of this project, they will tie into the Yukon's grid at Jakes Corner. We need to upgrade the line between Jakes Corner and Whitehorse, or maybe even the Carcross Cut-off, in order to take that higher load. That work is costed, but it will be carried out and funded by the project, but the work will be led by the utility.

Mr. Kent: Of these future potential projects that Yukon Energy identified in their 10-year draft renewable electricity strategy is the Southern Lakes transmission network. Obviously, it has that Atlin to Jakes Corner connection and has upgrades, I believe, from Whitehorse to Teslin along the ATCO line, a proposed upgrade and expansion from Whitehorse to Carcross and on to Moon Lake and then coming down the Tagish Road as well, and then a future sale opportunity potential to Skagway. I am wondering if the minister has any cost estimate and timing numbers for this Southern Lakes transmission network expansion.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The transmission work for upgrades to the Atlin project and for work down to Carcross and Moon Lake — all of that transmission line together would be around \$100 million. If we were to extend the transmission line beyond Moon Lake and get down to Skagway and do a tie-in with Skagway, that would be a further \$60 million. Those are our estimates at the moment.

Mr. Kent: I'm reading the documents, and these upgrades are obviously necessary for the Moon Lake project to be a success. They are necessary for the Atlin hydro project to be a success and to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. It also says that it will enable the connection of future community-based renewable projects in southern Yukon as well as create the opportunity for future sales of surplus renewable electricity to Skagway.

When I look at page 8 of that Yukon Energy document, it says "Keys to success". The first one, of course, is the federal funding requirement. As outlined in this document, every project in this plan is needed. It says: "We cannot pick and choose. The cost of projects in this plan are estimated to cost in excess of \$500 million, our largest investment in the electricity system. Federal funding for the plan will be key to keeping the plan affordable for customers and minimizing risks." So, that is understandable.

But when I look at the numbers that the minister has given me — \$315 million for the Atlin project and then another \$160 million or so for some of the transmission stuff — obviously we are pretty close to that \$500-million estimate without having Moon Lake or any of the other smaller projects in here. Recognizing, of course, that this document is almost three years old, does the minister have an upgraded estimation for the costs of the projects that are identified in here?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: He can ask me in a lot of different ways. I don't have an estimate for the Moon Lake project at the moment. Once we get even early class estimates, I will do my best to share that information.

I can say that there is significant federal funding. I would like to thank the federal government for their investment — and the BC government and the Yukon government, for that matter — and I would like to thank the First Nation governments for their investment and their involvement in this work. I think that this is all important, but I don't have an estimate today for Moon Lake.

Mr. Kent: I guess that leads me to this question: When the Yukon Energy Corporation made this estimate of the costing in excess of \$500 million in January 2020, what they were basing that on? If the minister doesn't have an updated estimate or some sort of a cost estimate for Moon Lake, what was the Yukon Energy Corporation basing this \$500-million estimate on?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will ask the Yukon Energy Corporation about where that figure comes from. I will say that whenever I see a figure rounded to the nearest \$100 million, it is a very rough and crude estimate. I think that we should take it as an indication of significant investment, but not use it as an exact number.

I will ask the Yukon Energy Corporation for an understanding of that number from two years ago.

Mr. Kent: I guess that leads to this question: When the minister first saw this document as he assumed responsibility for the Yukon Development Corporation and the Yukon Energy Corporation — as I said, the costs were estimated to be in excess of \$500 million — did he not have an idea?

I will just move on. I don't think that we're going to get a response. I look forward to getting a better sense of what the Yukon Energy Corporation was basing this on three years ago and if they have any updated numbers today with respect to the costs, given that Atlin has come in at \$315 million and the minister had estimates, I think, for the Southern Lakes transmission at \$160 million, including the expansion to Skagway.

I do want to move on and ask the minister some questions with respect to the potential for tying into the BC power grid. I've had a number of discussions, as I'm sure the minister has recently — and his colleague, the former Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources — with mining companies that obviously want to move to renewable sources and are going to be faced with these mining intensity targets, but they are looking for some sort of a clean energy supply to help them get there. I don't think what we have coming on board with Atlin and others will potentially be able to meet that demand. I'm curious; has there been any resurrection of talks with respect to connecting to the BC grid? — recognizing, of course, that a significant investment was required — but connecting to that grid. I guess that's the first question with respect to this: Is this something that Yukon government is perhaps considering again, or is it something that is completely off the table?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I don't think that it has ever been completely off the table. I think a grid connection to British Columbia is not cheap. When I first started hearing about this, long before I was elected, the number that used to get thrown around was \$1 billion. Several years ago when the previous Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources was talking about it, the number was \$2 billion. Now I think it's more; I don't know what the number is, but I think it's significantly more.

Just going back to the document, the “Keys to success” from Yukon Energy's report, what it says in the report is that the estimated costs are “in excess of \$500 million”. So, it's not \$500 million; it's “in excess of”. The numbers that they were working with at the time for the Atlin project were \$200 million to \$250 million. That has gone up. We are now at \$315 million. So, I'm sure that the estimate for Moon Lake, in even its roughest estimate, will be higher than it was a year ago or two years ago. We know that the Southern Lakes transmission portion of that is \$100 million. Sure, we could talk about the Skagway portion, but that isn't, I think, in the first stage that we're talking about.

With respect to the grid connection, there definitely is a conversation that continues to be considered. I don't have a decision that has been made, but what I have given as direction for the utilities and for us, as a territory, is that, whenever we can enhance, through projects, the stages of connecting to BC — which would include, for example, the upgrade of the

transmission line between Jakes and the Carcross Cut-off — that is a good project because it will help us, as well, with the possibility of making a grid connection to BC. It is still being considered, but not as in having engineering done on it.

Mr. Kent: I am looking at an April 2019 *Whitehorse Star* article, and the title of it is: “YG rules out tying into B.C. power grid.” The minister has mentioned that the cost has incrementally gone up. I think that the number almost four years ago — three and a half years ago — was \$1.7 billion, I think. So, as I said, obviously it is an expensive investment but something that we have been hearing from the mining community about. I just want to be clear: As I understand it from the minister, there are no active discussions with BC or BC Hydro about connecting the Yukon to the BC power grid at this point.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I appreciate that the member is reading an article where it was reported that it was ruled out. Maybe all that meant at the time was that we weren't pursuing it to the point of budgeting it. Do we continue to have dialogue about this possibility? Yes.

For example, the federal government recently announced that the Yukon will be in the next phase of the Regional Energy and Resource Tables, where, I am sure, we will be talking about renewable energy, critical minerals, et cetera. I think that there will be a conversation about the possibility of a grid connection to BC. I think that the Premier has had conversations over time with Premier Horgan. I have had conversations with my counterparts from the British Columbia Cabinet. Again, this is not a conversation as in: Let's do the engineering and costing. Let's think about this concept, as we move forward as a territory. There are a lot of important considerations, and it is an ongoing dialogue.

Mr. Kent: I will look forward to engaging the minister another time with respect to that tying into the BC grid and get a sense for what we are at in present time. As I mentioned, this was a snapshot from April 2019, where it was ruled out, and I think the focus at the time was to take a look at the grid-scale battery instead — but, that said, we can revisit that.

The minister did mention the energy and resources roundtable and that we have joined the agreement. Reading from a *Whitehorse Star* article on October 17, 2022, one of the quotes, I believe, from the federal minister — and I will read from this article — and I quote: “In the case of Yukon, one of those, obviously, is critical minerals...” — one of those economic opportunities is critical minerals — “... which is looking at how we can actually create a structure from a regulatory perspective, how we can use financial tools to help us expedite some of the work that needs to be done to bring more critical minerals on stream.”

I mean, the most recent example that we have of a mine that wants to bring critical minerals on stream is the Kudzu Kayah mine near Ross River. As that project made its way through the environmental assessment phase, the federal government missed timelines — we have talked about it here.

I know the Premier put out a press release, disappointed about some of those timelines and some of the actions of the federal government at the time. So, I'm curious what the

structure, from a regulatory perspective and using financial tools to help expedite some of the work on, I guess, future projects — not so much Kudz Ze Kayah, as it has moved into the licensing phase now, with the quartz mining licence and a water licence, of course. There is also the court action that's being talked about with respect to that as well.

But I guess the question for the minister is: In discussions with Minister Wilkinson, what is this new structure from a regulatory perspective that will help expedite work to get critical minerals on stream?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I will say a few things about this. First and foremost, we have signed on to the critical minerals strategy. We do believe it's important. When I was in St. John's, Newfoundland this year for the ministers of mines conference, we were talking with all of our counterparts across the country about this. One of my comments was: This doesn't mean we should be bypassing any of our regulatory steps, for example, with YESAB or the Water Board — those are important steps — and also our agreements under land claims and our responsibilities in government-to-government conversations. So, that isn't what this about. The member opposite mentioned an example that might be there — for example, facilitating the port or if we were to facilitate energy dialogue, which then could be used to support these mines. So, there are different ways in which we can invest in order to support the activity while respecting the regime of the Yukon.

I'll leave it there and I'll see where we go with this, although I do think this is no longer really about the *Clean Energy Act*, but I appreciate that the member is just trying to gain information — I understand that.

Mr. Kent: With due respect to the minister, I think this is all about the *Clean Energy Act* in expediting — getting critical minerals on stream. Obviously, in the *Clean Energy Act*, there's a goal of net zero by 2050, and ensuring that we have critical minerals to build the infrastructure and the things that we need is going to be extremely important.

Just a quick question on this roundtable: The minister mentioned in this article that he is anticipating the first meeting later on this fall. Does he have any idea of when the timing of that meeting will be?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Critical minerals will be important for getting to net zero for 2050, especially for Canada, but it won't assist us to get to net zero. It will be to assist the world or it will be to assist the country to get there. But I do agree with the principle that critical minerals are important, but we don't have actions, for example, under *Our Clean Future* to invest in critical minerals in order to bring down our emissions; that is not there.

I agree with the member opposite that we need to get to net zero by 2050. I agree with that. I think that where Canada can assist with the country, that is important, too. In terms of timing of the regional tables, I know that our officials are getting together next week to start some of the early conversations. I have not heard directly from Minister Wilkinson yet about when we will be sitting down, so I don't have a date in front of me yet, but I do know that there is dialogue happening as early as next week.

Mr. Kent: I just want to ask the minister a quick question: He said that the mining of critical minerals won't help us get to net zero, but don't we need those critical minerals? It says in this article that I'm reading that mining critical minerals for made-in-Canada electric vehicles and batteries — obviously, there is a number of these critical minerals that are important throughout all of the renewable energy and zero-emission vehicle opportunities and supplies that we need as a territory, as a country, and as globe in order to get there, so I'm just kind of looking for some sort of clarification on the minister's comment that the mining of critical minerals won't help the Yukon get to net zero.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I think what I said was that there isn't an action under *Our Clean Future* where we have identified emissions reductions to get us to 2030 that relates to this.

There is the broader and deeper notion that critical minerals are important for the whole of this transition. In fact, I think that when we put out the joint press release on the regional roundtable, we talked about this as a generational opportunity and responsibility.

This is very important in that overall picture for Canada. What I am also saying is that we don't have specific actions under *Our Clean Future* that will get us to the emissions reductions for 2030 that we are shooting for.

Mr. Kent: Some of the actions that are under *Our Clean Future* include the purchase of electric vehicles and subsidizing those purchases. Obviously, critical minerals are required for that work to be done. I will agree to disagree with the minister on that. He and his colleagues have said that there are supply chain issues that currently exist and challenges that exist. I think critical minerals will play an important part in us getting to 2030, as well as to net zero.

Another part of that article on the roundtable says advancing "... the realization of economic opportunities..." — we have spoken about mining critical minerals. Also in there is "... building small modular reactors..." When I look back at a November 2021 article on CBC, the minister says that he acknowledges that the potential for nuclear power in Yukon is a bit of a long shot, but he says it's one that can't be ignored.

I am wondering if he can give the House an update on what work has gone into the small modular nuclear reactors and if it's still advancing or if that work has been put on the back burner.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: So, with respect to small, modular reactors for the Yukon — it is likely to be ultra small, if it were to come into reality. We have a memorandum of understanding with the federal government, Ontario, and New Brunswick, which are carrying out the bulk of this research work — largely because Ontario and New Brunswick have experience with nuclear, and so we are getting information around that work and are involved with it. I think that we have also engaged with a professional researcher around the Yukon context and expect a report out later this year about how that will look for the Yukon or what the pros and cons are. The work is ongoing with our memorandum of understanding with the federal government

and the other provinces, and we will have some insight shortly for the Yukon context.

Mr. Kent: I appreciate that from the minister and we will look forward to getting further information as we move along.

One of the other opportunities mentioned in this article around the joint energy and resource table agreement is with respect to the use of hydrogen in several regions across the country. We have seen the Prime Minister and the German Chancellor talk about a hydrogen agreement in Newfoundland and Labrador, and we have heard other smaller announcements in the national news about hydrogen opportunities in other areas. I am just curious if the minister is looking at any potential opportunities for hydrogen use in the Yukon.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: It's a similar situation where we are investigating hydrogen. We have hired a professional to do some analysis for us here in the Yukon. I will note for Yukoners that hydrogen is not typically thought of as an energy source; rather, it is an energy storage system, which is an important need for the Yukon. It may become an important piece of the puzzle. There is potential there for long-haul transportation. If that comes to fruition, it likely is important for our mines as well, but we don't usually — some people think of hydrogen as an energy source. I just want Yukoners to know that typically it is more of an energy storage system, and we still need some form of renewable energy to produce the hydrogen.

Mr. Kent: I look forward to hearing some of that as well. Looking at Canada's national hydrogen strategy, there are some potential uses for the north, it says, around transportation and heating, as well as power production and some industry opportunities as well. We will look forward to additional information on hydrogen potential from the minister as we move forward.

I do want to ask the minister a few questions around biomass. A number of weeks ago, the minister admitted to local media that he was feeling nervous about firewood and fuelwood supply for this upcoming winter. Obviously, they have introduced the \$50-per-cord — up to \$500, I think it is — rebate for individuals who are purchasing from some commercial suppliers. I guess the challenge that we still see and that others see — and people we're hearing from on the ground — is around supply. Can the minister give us any indication of where we are at with adding additional supply and what the timing of that will be?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I know that late last week, for our major harvester down in Watson Lake — we learned that there were some issues with their BC permits or areas that they were harvesting at the north of the Stewart-Cassiar Highway. So, the new executive director at the Wood Products Association and the head of the forestry branch went out with that local harvester to identify some areas in the Yukon. We issued a permit, I believe, for just under 1,000 cubic metres that the harvester had identified as a good area.

There are a suite of initiatives that we are working on around supply. I can list off a few of them. They include: working with the Yukon Wood Products Association to provide an online list of suppliers; working on wood-storage areas,

which is important around creating stockpiles because we haven't had those as buffers; as the member noted, we introduced the consumer rebate, which deals not with supply but with inflation, but we are looking at an incentive program around supply; we are working on a fuel break in the Haines Junction area, which will allow us to have harvesting more year-round, which is one of the questions that the members opposite were asking about in the spring; we have been working with First Nations directly at the recent Yukon Forum, and I have just written to all the First Nations and had a few conversations about some follow-up work; we've been working with the Government of British Columbia to explore opportunities to increase timber harvest areas along the north of the Stewart-Cassiar in support of our major harvester in that area; we're working with Wildland Fire Management to explore opportunities to increase the likelihood of wood reaching market from our fuel abatement activities; and we're looking at the possibility of greenwood harvest and storage in conjunction with the wood-storage possibility or even a possibility, I think, around kiln dry. I will say that I have asked the branch to work very — I put a lot of focus on the supply-side issue, and they have been doing a lot of that work this fall.

Mr. Kent: One of the things that the minister mentioned there is developing some incentives around supply. Can he give us an idea of what those are?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: If the member opposite would just indulge me a bit, we should have an announcement sometime this week.

Chair: Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

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

Is there any further general debate?

Mr. Kent: The minister mentioned before the break that there will be an announcement on the supply incentive this week, so we look forward to hearing what that is all about.

In the list of action items that he was going through prior to the break as well, he mentioned something about kiln-dried wood. Can he clarify? Is he talking about drying greenwood to be used as fuel wood or firewood, or is that for something to be used in the milling side of things for some of the smaller mills that we had operating here?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I was talking mostly about storage of greenwood to let it season, but I have had some conversations with industry folk about the possibility of using kilns to dry wood, and it could be for either or both, potentially, of firewood or timber, but the investigation that I heard industry working on was around using biomass waste, or other biomass material, in order to run the kilns themselves. So, I know that there was a conversation around this as a possibility. I think that it included Economic Development. I would have to follow up

further. It is not the main initiative that we're working on; the main initiative is around the storage of greenwood to allow it to season over time.

Mr. Kent: So, back in 2016, the Liberal election campaign platform promised a couple of things around forestry. One of them was to develop a forestry plan for southeast Yukon. That hasn't been done, so I am just wondering if the minister could give us an update on that, because that will certainly help advance the biomass opportunities, not only in southeast Yukon, but other places in the Yukon as well.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I do know that the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes Forest Resources Management Plan was, I believe, finalized, and we are not working on implementation of that plan. We are going to be including in that a notion of — or considering wildfire protection. We have wildfire plans coming for each of our communities; in particular, we have been looking at the south end of the City of Whitehorse. The plan for Whitehorse and Southern Lakes' forest resources will also need to be considering caribou winter habitat.

Mr. Kent: So, my question for the minister was with respect to a 2016 platform commitment made by his government with respect to developing a forestry plan for southeast Yukon, and I'm looking for an update on that.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I thought I was answering that question. I can go back and check with the department and find out if there is any further information about how that plan is developing, but I'm not sure what I'm missing.

Mr. Kent: When the minister was answering the question, he was talking about the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes forestry plan, which has recently been signed off. I do have some questions about that forest resources management plan, but the specific commitment in the 2016 Liberal platform was about southeast Yukon, so in and around the Watson Lake area. Obviously, that work did not get done, and I'm just looking for an update from the minister on where we are at with that work.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: My apologies, Madam Chair. I misheard the member. I have now heard "southeast Yukon". Pardon me.

So, we have quite a few timber harvest plans approved for southeast Yukon with quite a volume of wood available and having undergone environmental assessment. There is about 3,000 cubic metres of timber volume currently available around Watson Lake, but as I've said just earlier today, we were out meeting with the major harvester in the area, who has expressed concerns both about the quality of those stands and access to those stands. So, the branch, along with the Wood Products Association and I think the Liard First Nation, flew the area to identify other possibilities and, just last week, issued a new permit for 1,000 cubic metres.

We are in discussions with the Liard First Nation to establish an agreement between the parties that aims to advance shared sustainable forest management priorities, and my understanding from my last conversation with the forestry branch was that those conversations were going very well.

Mr. Kent: We'll explore that further with the minister another time.

The minister did reference the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes Forest Resources Management Plan and that it is signed off, and in the document that is part of the executive summary, it says that the first priority is to establish an implementation agreement and identify areas for timber harvesting and fuel abatement. I'm just curious if that work — if that agreement — has been established and if those areas have in fact been identified.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: As I said in my previous answer when I got the location wrong, that implementation plan is underway right now.

Mr. Kent: So, do we have any idea when these areas will be identified for timber harvesting and fuel abatement? The work is underway. I'm getting the sense that the agreement has not been established, but I'm looking to be able to give industry a sense of when those areas for timber harvesting and fuel abatement will be made available.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: So, in terms of the wildland fire plan, that planning work has been done and there has been abatement work that has been ongoing. We have been working with Wildland Fire Management and some local harvesters in order to identify opportunities from that for fuel wood and possibly for timber.

With respect to how the implementation planning is going with respect to the Whitehorse and Southern Lakes Forest Resources Management Plan, I will have to talk with the department to see how that work is evolving. I have not inquired about it recently; I will endeavour to do so.

Mr. Kent: I know that we have touched on a number of these action items, but I just want to turn the minister's attention to the *Our Clean Future 2021 annual report*, starting on page 60. It is Appendix A, I believe, which is the "Status of all Government of Yukon actions". I am not, obviously, going to go through all of them. There are quite a few here, but a few of them jumped out at me, and I am just looking for some responses from the minister to see where we are at.

The first one that I did want to ask the minister about is action item T6, which is: "Require new residential buildings to be built with the electrical infrastructure to support Level 2 electric vehicle charging beginning on April 1, 2021". I understand that the status of that is that it has been completed. Does that also apply to off-grid communities? Is that a requirement of residential buildings territory-wide or, like applying to put in electric heat in off-grid communities, is that something that is not required in those communities now?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: The requirement for this came in as of April 1 this year. I will have to inquire about our off-grid communities.

Mr. Kent: I wanted to move over to T13, which is to "Develop Yukon-specific design guidance and a plan for active transportation facilities by 2024 to guide investments in active transportation infrastructure into corridors near communities." HPW is the lead department on that, but the status says it's a change of course, so I am kind of curious what has been changed with respect to that action item.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: So, with respect to the previous question, the new requirements do not apply to off-grid communities out of the code.

For this question on T13, the difference in the change of course was just around — the biggest change is about the guidelines in how we are investing, and it is about providing more robust guidelines for that investment.

Mr. Kent: I am happy that the minister clarified that those new residential building requirements are not in place for off-grid communities like Watson Lake, Old Crow, or the north Alaska Highway. When we get into the Highways and Public Works debate, perhaps we can follow up a little bit more on that active transportation guidance.

I wanted to jump down to T20, which is to develop and implement a system by next year, 2023, to coordinate carpooling for Yukon government staff travelling by vehicle for work within the Yukon. Again, it is a Highways and Public Works lead and a change of course. I am curious about the cost of implementing this system and whether or not it has been developed. Perhaps it is all covered in the change of course that is identified here in the status.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: This is about trying to help people to share a vehicle if they are heading in the same direction, so I don't think it would cost money; I think it would save money. But the change, as I understand it, is that we originally anticipated that we would get this in place earlier. We just had to adjust our timeline on it, but I don't know of costs that would come from this. Maybe the member has some thinking that I'm missing and he could help me understand.

Mr. Kent: I was assuming that there would be some costs for putting in place this system to coordinate carpooling for Yukon government staff. I mean, obviously, I think that there would be some sort of human resource cost or system development cost, but if that's not the case, then we can certainly move on.

A few things around legislation — when I move to page 64, E3, it is to update the *Public Utilities Act* by 2025 to ensure an effective and efficient process for regulating electricity in the Yukon. It shows a Justice and Energy, Mines and Resources lead, and the work is in progress. Are we still on track to meet those timelines for getting the *Public Utilities Act* to the floor of the Legislature in 2025?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Just going back for a second — we are not envisioning a big system around the carpooling. It's more around supporting and facilitating it, so I don't know that we are thinking about hires or anything like that.

I think we originally thought it might come in during 2021 but, of course, we were in the middle of COVID, and at that point, it was trickier for people to be carpooling. I think that was part of what pushed it out a bit.

With respect to the work under E3, which has us looking at the *Public Utilities Act*, I believe that this work is ongoing. My understanding is that it is on track. This is really about trying to align the vision that we have under *Our Clean Future* and the renewable energy strategy to make sure that the *Public Utilities Act* is helping to move us in that same direction.

Mr. Kent: I will jump over to action item E11, which is to develop legislation by next year to regulate and encourage geothermal energy development in the Yukon. Is this on target? I don't believe I have seen any engagement on it. I may be mistaken, but if the minister can give us an update — it says that the status is in progress, but next year will be here quicker than we think.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I know that we have done engagement on it. I spoke this morning with the deputy minister, asking about the status of this action item. He committed to getting back to me shortly about timelines, but we were still discussing 2023 as the timeline. As everyone here in this House will know, legislation is always complicated and always has to go through quite a few steps. But if I hear differently, I will make sure to let colleagues know.

Mr. Kent: I'm going to jump ahead to recommendation I6, which is to include new provisions in quartz mining licences by this year, 2022, that will ensure critical mine infrastructure is planned, designed, and built to withstand current and projected impacts of climate change.

I guess the question that I have around this is: Who will determine whether that critical mine infrastructure meets those projections to withstand the current and projected impacts of climate change? Is that going to be done within EMR? Is there some external source? Again, I shared this action item with some individuals in the mining industry and they had similar questions as to who will set the criteria or who will set the thresholds that are envisioned here.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: So, if the member were to look back to page 51 of the 2021 report, he would see that it says that we've continued to work on the guidelines that will ensure the critical mine infrastructure is planned, designed, and built to withstand current projected impacts of climate change.

The department is letting me know that they believe that this work is on track to finish by the end of this year.

Mr. Kent: I'm looking for one more update on an action item. It's on page 70, L10, which is to support the Government of Canada's work to develop a northern climate hub by 2030 that will support access to climate data and projections for the north. Environment is the lead department and it's in progress.

I'm just curious if the Government of Yukon is working with the Government of Canada on a particular location and, with that in mind, a location within the Yukon for this northern climate hub.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: This is talking about us supporting a federal government initiative, which we are doing. I know that the federal government, in its work around this, is working with each of the territories. So, rather than think of it as one centralized thing, it is likely to be something that lives in each of the territories, but that is still to be determined. They have funded sort of a research position that is helping with the development of this and, yes, that work is ongoing.

Mr. Kent: Thank you. I appreciate that, Madam Chair.

I am just going to switch gears here to one last item, and it is the 2021 Yukon Liberal Party platform. It is on page 18. It is called "The Climate Crisis — Our Clean Future". It says — and I quote: "The Yukon's approach to addressing climate change

needs to be comprehensive and forward-thinking. That's why we released *Our Clean Future*, a plan that contains 131 actions over the next ten years and represents a pan-northern approach to tackling climate change.

"Our plan reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent, ensures Yukoners have access to affordable renewable energy, outlines actions to adapt to climate change and creates opportunities for Yukon companies to be part of the green economy."

Then it mentions that in 2021 and 2022, they will spend \$50 million supporting the Yukon's green economy.

So, this was in March-April 2021 — this 30-percent rule — and then you fast-forward to the confidence and supply agreement with the New Democrats, and that 30 percent went to 45 percent. I am just wondering what evidence or what science was used to increase that amount from 30 percent to 45 percent, because there is a significant gap, I believe, in the documents that we have talked about here over the past number of days and to date here. I can't figure out where the science is or where the evidence is to bump that target from 30 percent to 45 percent, outside of the confidence and supply agreement, which was reached between the NDP and the Liberals to ensure that the Liberals could remain in government until at least the end of January 2023.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Well, I am going to say a few things here. The first one is: Where is the evidence around this? I guess, broadly, it is coming from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which is talking about the need for us collectively to reduce our emissions. I sometimes hear the argument that: Well, we shouldn't have to get there as fast as others — but my perspective is that it is important that we all do this. I will also say that, through the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, they talk about the fact that we have already passed certain tipping points from a climate perspective, and that research work was taken by the United Nations, and in the dialogue under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, that 45-percent reduction by 2030 is really what we need, in the preponderance of cases, to keep the temperature increase globally — or to have a chance to keep it — under 1.5 degrees. I think that there is a lot of scientific evidence out there around this.

We already know here in the north that we have warmed much more than that 1.5 degrees, because the poles — in the Arctic in particular — are warming faster. The north is warming faster than other parts of the world. I also know, through all of that broad body of scientific evidence, that we are all trying to get to net zero by 2050. Here in the Yukon, I hope that we do our part. I will also say all along that *Our Clean Future*, even when it first came out, talked about what we have identified as actions and that there was more that we needed to do. That is why we put into it an adaptive management piece that we would seek to go further.

I will also say that I have heard — I appreciate that the member opposite is looking at the platform from the Yukon Liberal Party. I read his platform, as well, ahead of this meeting. I will say that, within his platform — and I want to

acknowledge it — there is the goal to hit net zero by 2050. I appreciate that.

I also note, within their platform, that they would agree with the 10-year renewable electricity plan by Yukon Energy. I think I have already said this — when I was in the debate talking about the environment in the 2021 election, their colleague, who is someone I have worked with in the past and who has been the director of the Climate Change Secretariat previously and was running in the election, said that they support *Our Clean Future*. I thank them for that.

I disagreed, and I will continue to say this, because as part of their platform, they said we should build a liquefied natural gas plant. No, I don't think we should; I think that's a mistake.

I think we should work to build the renewables that will get us off the rented diesels and get away from fossil fuels. So I disagree with that strategy, and I have been very vocal about it, but I don't see, within their platform, what the plan is to get to 2050. There are a few things in here, but some of them, I think, are not going to get us there, including building an LNG plant, which, by the way, is the thing that pushed our rates up the highest for electricity in the most recent rate application.

The final thing I'm going to say is that the members opposite offered to support the confidence and supply agreement. Their leader said: Yes, we support this; we would work to achieve it with you. So, in that, the members opposite agreed to this interim target of 45 percent. I agree with them. That's a good thing to do.

For the past several days since we have been in Committee of the Whole discussing Bill No. 17, the *Clean Energy Act*, I hope that what the members have heard is that there is a group of people with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, the Department of Environment, the Department of Highways and Public Works, and across many branches who are working extremely diligently to achieve these actions. Every one of them has a strategy around it on how to achieve it, and they adjust. We put out an annual report just to talk about where we're getting to in all of these actions. So, I think there is a sincerity on the part of government to achieve this, and I would like to thank those public servants for all of their hard work.

The point I'm trying to get to here is: I hope that the members opposite continue to live up to their support for the 45-percent target, which I heard through their support for the confidence and supply agreement. I think it's the right thing to do. I think the science is pretty clear on it.

Mr. Kent: Rather than going back and forth on political nuances here and what we support and what our plan was, obviously the minister is correct. We supported *Our Clean Future*. We supported the renewable energy plan. *Our Clean Future* — we essentially are in the same position that the Liberals are with respect to the target for greenhouse gas emission reduction of 30 percent by 2030. So, this was in March and April, as we all went around and talked to constituents and talked to Yukoners about our plans, and that plan was to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent. Then, a month later, the Liberals signed the confidence and supply agreement with the NDP to change that to 45 percent.

Now, again, when that was changed to 45 percent, *Our Clean Future* was still the document we were working with. It had a number of actions — as it says here, the plan contains 131 actions over the next 10 years to get us to that 30-percent target, but no mention in the platform when we talked earlier on in debate about modelling; I don't think the modelling is available yet to get us to 45 percent. The 2021 annual report has a significant gap to get us to where we need to be at that 45 percent.

So, I don't see where there's — unless the minister can convince me, but to be frank, he hasn't done a very good job of convincing me that we'll be able to be there with our discussions around electric vehicles. The goal is 4,800. We have 160, I think, or something on the road right now. The Minister of Highways and Public Works is talking about supply chain issues and other things affecting that. So, it seems like they're kind of hedging their bets on where we get with respect to electric vehicles.

We spent a significant amount of time talking about the 10-year energy plan. In many cases — as with Atlin and Moon Lake — it appears to be behind and overbudget. In the case of Atlin, there is a \$60-million funding gap that needs to be closed. We don't even have any cost estimates at this point for Moon Lake, according to the minister. The biomass and the forestry planning and the fuel wood are in a mess right now on the supply side. The minister talked a lot here earlier today about some of the things that they are trying to do to address it, and I hope that they do get it addressed, because so many Yukoners rely on firewood and firewood delivered by commercial vendors, and they are going to rely on it to stay warm this winter.

So, again, I just do not see in here where there is any evidence or science that occurred in that approximately one month between election day and the signing of the confidence and supply agreement that would mean that we are in a position to confidently say that we can increase this greenhouse gas reduction from 30 percent to 45 percent.

Do I hope we get there? Absolutely. Do I hope that something happens or that we are able to meet some of these targets and exceed 30 percent? Absolutely. But I do not have the confidence to say that we should be passing Bill No. 17 here today, which targets 45 percent, when the minister, quite frankly, hasn't made the case that we can make it to 45 percent.

We have spent a lot of time in here, and I thank him; I thank his officials. I have asked a lot of questions, and I was hoping to get to the point where the minister would be able to give me some confidence that we would get to the 45-percent target that is in this legislation, but unfortunately, he has not made the case to me with respect to providing a plan or a model or anything that would suggest that we can get to 45 percent.

We have *Our Clean Future* and the models there to get us to the 30 percent, and still there was a little bit of a gap, but there is an increasing gap now with the 45-percent goal. Unfortunately, the minister has not made the case to me, and I suspect to some of my colleagues, that 45 percent is attainable. As I said, I hope that we can exceed 30 percent. It is something that we need to focus on and do, but when we're putting

something down in legislation, I think that 30 percent is a more obtainable goal.

With that, I will close off general debate. Obviously, the minister may have a response, but I am willing to move into line-by-line debate at this point.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Of course, 30 percent is more obtainable than 45 percent. Yes, that is true, but what is catching me off guard is that the Yukon Party agreed to support the confidence and supply agreement. I heard them say that. Part of that agreement was this 45-percent target, so now I'm wondering whether they are not supportive of that. That is catching me off guard, because that was clearly part of that agreement.

Can we achieve it? Yes, we can. Is it easy? No, it is not easy. Will it take a lot of work? Absolutely. Now I'm concerned that after we get out of Committee of the Whole and eventually get to third reading on this, when we get to that vote, I will see where the members opposite land. They may vote against it, which will make me believe that they don't think we can get there. That worries me, because I think we need to get there. I think it is important. I worry for the issue of climate change, then, under their leadership.

Look, we are investing \$80 million this year in this budget on *Our Clean Future* and all of the actions. We formed a Climate Leadership Council to work to identify actions that we can implement that will help us bridge that gap. It's not modelling to 45 percent; that's not the way this works. You model each action through an economic model to understand what the potential for reduction is and to treat it fairly and then add that to all the other analyses that we have done. That work is ongoing.

Part of *Our Clean Future* says to make this commitment. The reason that you would make this commitment is in order to set a responsibility that goes beyond any one government and make it move through time. That's what we are trying to do here today. I think it's critically important. I appreciate that there is a different perspective. I appreciate that the members opposite think that 30 percent is easier. I agree with that, but the question is: What should we set as the target?

We have agreed to 45 percent. I thought the members opposite had done so too when they said that they supported the confidence and supply agreement, but now I think the Yukon Party is saying, "No, we didn't really mean that." Okay — no problem.

I hope that we as a Legislature support this, and I look forward to moving it on. I appreciate, certainly, all of the questions that came forward. Again, I would like to thank the departments for their incredibly hard work on this issue.

Thank you.

Chair: Is there any further general debate on Bill No. 17, entitled *Clean Energy Act*?

Seeing none, we will now proceed to clause-by-clause debate.

On Clause 1

Clause 1 agreed to

On Clause 2

Clause 2 agreed to

On Clause 3

Clause 3 agreed to

On Clause 4

Clause 4 agreed to

On Clause 5

Mr. Kent: Of course, this is the clause in the act that sets the emission target at 45 percent. As the minister mentioned and as I mentioned, the Liberal platform had that target at 30 percent. We agreed with that. We agreed with the renewable energy targets, but we feel that legislating 45 percent, given the information presented by the minister over the past number of days of debate — so much of the uncertainty around some of the bigger picture items that we have talked about, and again, I mentioned everything from electric vehicles to Moon Lake and Atlin — that, at this point, we are not willing to support the 45-percent target, so I do have an amendment to the bill.

Amendment proposed

Mr. Kent: I move:

THAT Bill No. 17, entitled *Clean Energy Act*, be amended in clause 5 at page 3 by replacing, in subclause (1), the term “45%” with the term “30%”.

I do have a signed copy and copies for the members who are present.

Chair: The amendment is in order. It has been moved by the Member for Copperbelt South:

THAT Bill No. 17, entitled *Clean Energy Act*, be amended in clause 5 at page 3 by replacing, in subclause (1), the term “45%” with the term “30%”.

Is there any debate on the amendment to clause 5?

Mr. Kent: We have had a significant amount of discussion about this in the past 10 or 15 minutes or so. Again, as I mentioned earlier, the Liberal platform in 2021 said 30 percent. It is part of *Our Clean Future*. The plans are there. We feel confident that we can reach that 30-percent goal and less confident, obviously, that we can reach the 45-percent goal, even more so with the conversations that I have had with the minister over the past few days that we have been in debate on this bill — as I mentioned, on everything from electric vehicles to some of the clean energy projects that are being proposed by the Yukon Energy Corporation, which are looking like they are having either budgetary issues with the funding gap on Atlin, some planning issues with respect to Moon Lake — or, again, trouble with targets. The target is 4,800 electric vehicles by 2030 and we are at 160. I think that there are challenges throughout that we have talked to the minister about.

Quite frankly, he hasn't been able to convince me in any way that we can meet that 45-percent target or that we should legislate that 45-percent target. Do I hope that we exceed that 30-percent target? Absolutely, but am I comfortable legislating that to 45 percent? No, I am comfortable legislating it at 30 percent, which was contemplated in the Liberal platform, contemplated in *Our Clean Future*, and is something that we support going forward.

With that, I am hopeful that the colleagues will agree to change the target from 45 percent to 30 percent, but I guess I will wait to hear from them on this amendment that I have proposed and as we get toward a vote.

Ms. Tredger: I heard a question earlier, during Committee of the Whole, about this 45-percent target. I know that the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes answered it, so I may be repeating part of his answer — I didn't hear all of it. In the *Paris Agreement*, it was said that, in order to keep global warming to more than no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius, emissions needed to be reduced by 45 percent by 2030 and net zero by 2050. That is where this comes from. That is what we have been told needs to be done in order to keep — I am reading directly from the UN climate change website right now: “... in order to avert the worst impacts of climate change and preserve a liveable planet, global temperature increase needs to be limited to 1.5° C...” There is more there, but that is basically it in a nutshell. That is what we need to do.

The Member for Copperbelt South has said that he hopes we get more than that. Hope isn't enough. We need to take action; we need to do it. This isn't optional. If we have any chance, we need to do this. It is going to be hard; of course, it is going to be hard, but it's not optional.

I think it will surprise no one that we will not be supporting this amendment.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I am glad that we are here. I am glad that we are here having this debate; it is an important debate. Where do you stand? So, as we think about this issue, we have agreed, I think, unanimously in this House that it is a climate change emergency. So, we have given it, I would call, our highest level of importance. We understand that every time we go out and talk with Yukoners about things that are happening that are so strange. Just two days ago, three days ago, Southern Lakes hit its peak. Laberge is still going back up right now. I have just never seen this in all the time — and we just hit the peak because basically that dusting of snow that I talked about in the tribute at the beginning of today's session — we got here. We finally got a bit of cold temperature up in our mountains, because what was happening was that precipitation was coming down as rain. It wasn't sticking up in the mountains. It was running down, and as of September 26, we started raising our lake levels again. We hit our peak a few days ago. Normally, the peak is in August. Last year, it was in July, and this year it's at the end of October or near the end of October. It is very unsettling to our citizens to think about all of this change. As a person who hasn't been involved in this science for decades, I know more change is coming, more risk is coming, because if we work hard and get to the 45-percent target, which we absolutely can do, there's still going to be a lot of change that comes.

The member asked what science is out there. It's the biggest amount of science I have ever seen. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is across the globe. All of these researchers from so many different countries putting in — we just had the sixth assessment report come out, in which this was all laid out. Their fourth assessment report was awarded the Nobel Prize in fact, the Nobel Peace Prize, I

think it was. That's how serious the science is. So, I am very confident in that science.

The member opposite has suggested that we can't get there or said that it's harder to get there than it is to 30 percent. That is correct. It is harder to get to 45 percent, but of course, the science tells us that we need to go further.

He talked about Atlin being delayed. Yeah, it's delayed by a year. He talked about our zero-emission vehicle sales not being enough. We're the third-highest in the country — third-highest — not good enough for the members opposite.

The members opposite agreed to support the confidence and supply agreement, which had within it that we would hit a 45-percent target. So, I'm left to decide whether they were sincere about that or whether that was just a political play to gain power. It is disconcerting to think that it was not a sincere commitment.

What the Member for Copperbelt South is saying is that I did not convince him of the ability to reach 45 percent. Do you know what I heard in that four days of debate we have had back and forth? I was so impressed with the departments, because there were 130 — maybe now as many as 140 — actions in *Our Clean Future*, and on every one of them that they asked, we had an update on what is going on, how we are getting there, how we are improving it, if that's the right thing to do.

One of the actions that we had within *Our Clean Future* was to bring together some local expertise to present suggestions on what actions we should take to fill the gap. They have given us that report. I tabled that report — or the Minister of Environment — one of us tabled that report here. We are now doing the diligence on that report. I have asked the departments to give me actions that we can do right away from that and ones that will need a little bit more work to cost out. I called the actions that we should do right away “no regrets” actions. I think that the difference here is in intention.

Years ago, when I was a researcher working on climate change and the Leader of the Yukon Party was the Minister of Environment, there was an update to the then-action plan on climate change. I remember talking to the Climate Change Secretariat when that plan came out. I remember saying, You know this plan is not real; you know that the plan does not get at — I appreciated that there was a plan. I appreciated that it was being updated, but I knew it wasn't real, because it didn't really consider transportation — transportation being roughly half of our emissions.

I knew it wasn't real, and yet I worked hard with the government of the day to try to help them improve that report. Today, I feel concerned that the members opposite are not sincere about their intentions around how we address climate change. I am concerned, because they agreed to the confidence and supply agreement, and within that agreement was the 45-percent target. Today, it sounds to me like, through this proposed amendment, they are working to water that down.

Chair: Is there any further debate on the amendment to clause 5?

Some Hon. Members: Count.

Count

Chair: A count has been called.
The Chair will ring the bells and conduct a count.

Bells

Chair: All those in favour, please rise.

Members rise

Chair: All those opposed, please rise.

Members rise

Chair: The results are eight yea, nine nay.

Amendment to Clause 5 negatived

Chair: Is there any further debate on clause 5?

Clause 5 agreed to

On Clause 6

Ms. White: Clause 6 is “Sector specific interim greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets”. Subsection (1)(a) says, “The Minister may, from time to time and after engaging with representatives of a sector, including the mining sector, recommend to the Commissioner in Executive Council

“(a) the setting, amending or revoking of a reduction target for greenhouse gas emissions for the sector for a year and subsequent years;”

It goes on. So, if the minister can explain to me the intention behind this clause — and I guess my concern always is that the minister talks about intensity-based targets and I talk about firm targets. To know that the minister may change those and there may be another minister in that chair at one point in time who just completely removes all targets — and I want to understand what this is about.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: This is the ability to set a mining intensity target through OIC, but I will just say very plainly and publicly here that my intention would be to bring it back as a part of this act and to debate it here on the floor of this Legislature and make it part of the *Clean Energy Act* so that, if it were to be revoked by some future minister, it would require it to come back to this House.

Ms. White: Just to build on that, what is the mechanism within this that says that an OIC set by government would have to come back to this House for debate?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What this is enabling is to allow for the possibility of an order-in-council to be set where that target could be established.

What I am saying is that, notwithstanding that possibility, the intention that I am giving right now and making very publicly is that we would bring back this act with that mining intensity target so that it goes through this House rather than just through me as minister or through Cabinet as an order-in-council.

Ms. White: I appreciate the minister saying that his intention as minister is to bring back this act for us to set the mining intensity, but what I'm asking for is — at this point in time, I have been in this House with two separate Yukon governments under two separate parties. I think that, at this point, I am at five ministers of Energy, Mines and Resources. So, I guess what I am asking about is assurances. What is built

in that says that we then tie that intensity — that the minister just said — the mining intensity target, for example — into legislation, as opposed to a minister through an order-in-council being able to make those adjustments?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I can say, Madam Chair, is that we intend to make the target very public all along. That is what we're doing right now with the engagement with the sector. That is what we are doing through *Our Clean Future*. So this is an enabling clause. It doesn't mean that we will use it, because I am making the commitment that we come back with that target and put it straight into the legislation or into the act directly. Of course, regulations are part of legislation too. But to be very, very clear, the intention is to put it into the act. It's not here today because I don't have that target as of yet.

Ms. White: The point that I'm trying to make to the minister — and we have used terms like “future proof” in this Assembly now, talking about ensuring that things are protected in the future. My question then is: If governments change, which they do, I want to know that, in the future, another Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources can't walk back a target that has been established or that we can't say to mining: Your intensity target where you're aiming for 25 percent — there is an election, and it comes back and we're down to five percent. So, what I want to know is how this legislation protects what we are trying to do here, which is reducing our greenhouse gas emissions.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: This act protects the 45-percent target that — let's say clause 5 at the moment. We could have, for example, a different sector target some day that is not related to mining — it's related to something else. It could be intensity-based; it could be otherwise. There could be individual targets as we work to get more and more detail in our plan over time, as we use the adaptive management approach. This enables that to happen. However, if we come and make it part of the act, then, in order to change that act, it would need to come back to this House, and I am making the commitment that the mining intensity targets will be brought forward as part of this act. I have been trying to say that all along. The timing is just that the mining intensity target is being worked out right now to the end of this year, and we wanted this act in as quickly as possible. My commitment is to bring it back with an amendment as soon as I have that intensity target in place — or as soon as the government has done its work on the intensity target.

Clause 6 agreed to

On Clause 7

Clause 7 agreed to

On Clause 8

Clause 8 agreed to

On Clause 9

Clause 9 agreed to

On Clause 10

Clause 10 agreed to

On Preamble

Preamble agreed to

On Title

Title agreed to

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Madam Chair, I move that you report Bill No. 17, *Clean Energy Act*, without amendment.

Chair: It has been moved by the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes that the Chair report Bill No. 17, entitled *Clean Energy Act*, without amendment.

Motion agreed to

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Madam Chair, seeing the time, 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 has considered Bill No. 17, entitled *Clean Energy Act*, and directed me to report the bill without amendment.

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

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

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

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

Written notice was given of the following motion October 24, 2022:

Motion No. 498

Re: seeking advice of the Conflict of Interest Commission (Hassard)