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SPEECH FROM THE THRONE SETS YUKON GOVERNMENT DIRECTION

WHITEHORSE – Commissioner Geraldine Van Bibber delivered the Speech from the Throne today to open the first session of the 32nd Yukon Legislature.

“The Speech from the Throne provides an overview of the initiatives that will unfold over the course of our government’s second mandate,” Premier Dennis Fentie said. “We are intent on maintaining the vision and direction that began with the election in 2002 to ensure Yukon’s continued advance on the road to growth and prosperity.”

The Speech from the Throne marked the beginning of the first legislative session of the Yukon Legislative Assembly since the re-election of the Yukon Party government on October 10. Based on four major pillars, it introduced the government's vision of "Building Yukon's Future Together – A Clear Vision for a Bright Future":

- achieving a better quality of life for Yukoners by building healthy, safe communities with skilled and adaptable people;
- protecting Yukon's pristine environment, preserving our wildlife, and studying and mitigating the impacts of climate change;
- promoting a strong, diversified private sector economy by developing Yukon's vast natural resources, wilderness tourism potential, agriculture, arts and culture, information technology, and film and sound, as well as the traditional industries of outfitting and trapping; and
- practising good governance with strong fiscal management and a climate of cooperation, collaboration and partnership with our First Nation governments, our two sister territories, our provincial counterparts and the federal government.

Included in the throne speech were commitments to implement a zero-tolerance approach to drug dealers, the Substance Abuse Action Plan and Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods legislation. The government will also work to: expand homecare and palliative services and elder and senior facilities; deliver a territory-wide childcare and early-learning strategy; and introduce a comprehensive skills and trades training strategy.

“Our first priority is to achieve the highest possible quality of life for Yukoners and their families,” Premier Fentie said. “Our commitment to maintaining a strong economy and practising open, accountable and fiscally responsible government is the cornerstone for a healthy and prosperous future.”

The Speech from the Throne also identified legislation to be debated during this session, including *Bill No. 2, Fourth Appropriation Act 2005-06; Bill No. 3, Second Appropriation Act 2006-07; and Bill No. 31, Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*. Find details of the Speech from the Throne at <http://www.gov.yk.ca/thronespeech.html>.

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