



Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 30th Legislature  
Third Session

Standing Committee  
on  
Public Accounts

Culture and Status of Women

Tuesday, May 10, 2022  
8 a.m.

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**Legislative Assembly of Alberta  
The 30th Legislature  
Third Session**

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

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## **Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

### **Participants**

Ministry of Culture and Status of Women

Melissa Banks, Assistant Deputy Minister, Creative and Community Development

Heather Caltagirone, Deputy Minister

Nilam Jetha, Assistant Deputy Minister, Status of Women and Strategic Integration

David Link, Assistant Deputy Minister, Heritage

Rheal Poirier, Executive Director, Francophone Secretariat

Carmen Vidaurri, Executive Director, Financial Planning



8 a.m.

Tuesday, May 10, 2022

[Ms Phillips in the chair]

**The Chair:** Well, good morning, everyone. I'd like to call this meeting of the Public Accounts Committee to order and welcome everyone in attendance.

My name is Shannon Phillips. I'm the MLA for Lethbridge-West, and I'm the chair of this committee. As we begin this morning, I'll invite those participating in the committee room to introduce themselves. I'll start to my right.

**Mr. Reid:** Good morning. Roger Reid, MLA for Livingstone-Macleod and deputy chair.

**Mr. Rowswell:** Garth Rowswell, MLA, Vermilion-Lloydminster-Wainwright.

**Mr. Turton:** Good morning. Searle Turton, MLA for Spruce Grove-Stony Plain.

**Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk:** Good morning. Jackie Armstrong-Homeniuk, MLA, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville.

**Mr. Walker:** Good morning. Jordan Walker, MLA, Sherwood Park.

**Mr. Singh:** Good morning, everyone. Peter Singh, MLA, Calgary-East.

**Ms Vidaurri:** Good morning. Carmen Vidaurri, executive director of financial services for Culture and Status of Women.

**Ms Banks:** Good morning. Melissa Banks, ADM for creative and community development in the Department of Culture and Status of Women.

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Good morning. Heather Caltagirone, deputy minister.

**Ms Jetha:** Good morning. Nilam Jetha, Assistant Deputy Minister of status of women and strategic integration with Culture and Status of Women.

**Mr. Link:** Good morning. David Link, ADM, heritage division.

**Mr. Driesen:** Good morning. Rob Driesen, Assistant Auditor General.

**Mr. Wylie:** Good morning. Doug Wylie, Auditor General.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Marlin Schmidt, Edmonton-Gold Bar.

**Ms Renaud:** Marie Renaud, St. Albert.

**Ms Pancholi:** Good morning. Rakhi Pancholi, Edmonton-Whitemud.

**Ms Robert:** Good morning. Nancy Robert, clerk of *Journals* and committees.

**Mr. Roth:** Good morning. Aaron Roth, committee clerk.

**The Chair:** All right. We do have one member joining us online today. If you would introduce yourself, please.

**Ms Lovely:** Good morning, everyone. MLA Jackie Lovely for the Camrose constituency.

**The Chair:** Very good. We have a few housekeeping items. The microphones are operated by *Hansard* staff. Committee proceedings are live streamed on the Internet and broadcast on Alberta Assembly TV. Those participating by videoconference are encouraged to please turn on your camera while speaking and mute your microphone when not speaking. Members participating virtually who wish to be placed on a speakers list are asked to e-mail or send a message in the group chat to the committee clerk. Members in the room, just signal to the chair, and please set your cellphones and other devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

Are there any changes or additions to the agenda today? Seeing none, I'll ask that a member move that the agenda for the May 10, 2022, meeting of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be approved as distributed. Moved by Member Singh. Any discussion on the motion? Seeing none, all in favour? Any opposed? That motion is carried.

We have minutes for the May 3 meeting of the committee. Do members have any errors or omissions to note? Seeing none, I'll ask that a member move that the minutes of the May 3 meeting of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be approved as distributed. Moved by Member Rowswell. Is there any discussion on the motion? All in favour? Any opposed? That motion is carried.

Friends, I would like to welcome our guests from the Ministry of Culture and Status of Women who are here to address the ministry's annual report. I invite officials from the ministry to provide opening remarks not exceeding 10 minutes. Please proceed.

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and good morning. I'm pleased to be here to represent the ministry and to present highlights from the 2020-2021 annual report. For the purposes of this meeting I'll be referring to the ministry by its former name, culture, multiculturalism and status of women, as it was referred to during that fiscal year.

As you know, Alberta faced unprecedented challenges during the 2020-21 fiscal year. The COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of the associated public health restrictions ensured that the year was unlike any other we have faced in Alberta. Our department played a fundamental role ensuring that Albertans had access to public health measures, recovery supports, and vaccination information as we supported the translation and distribution materials in French and the 11 other most commonly spoken languages in Alberta. Overall, department staff went above and beyond the call of duty to help Albertans during those uncertain times.

Although circumstances during the '20-21 fiscal year were unique, the department continued its important day-to-day work. Our work helps build vibrant, active communities and increases access to enriching cultural opportunities. A large part of the department's work is devoted to supporting the nonprofit and voluntary sector. Alberta has over 26,000 nonprofit organizations, and \$98.3 million was spent in support of these organizations. It was an increase of more than \$16 million from the previous fiscal year as additional funding was added to bolster the COVID-19 response and to ensure that the province's nonprofits were supported throughout the pandemic.

The stabilize program, one of the COVID-specific initiatives introduced, provided one-time funding to live-experience organizations so they could resume in-person live events when it was safe to do so. Approximately \$19.3 million was awarded under this program, supporting more than 100 organizations. Another COVID-specific support launched by the department was the faith-based and cultural facility relaunch grant. Through the program \$2.1 million was awarded to ensure that cultural and religious communities could safely meet, gather, and celebrate together. The

department provided \$2.7 million in community initiatives program grants to support 76 nonprofit organizations that own or operate overnight camps to help them to survive the loss of revenue due to COVID and to pay ongoing overhead facility costs.

In addition to COVID-specific supports, Madam Chair, the department also provided \$21.9 million through the community facility enhancement program to build or refurbish public-use community facilities. The department also approved more than 273 applications, representing almost \$39.8 million for the community initiatives program. We also funded three large infrastructure programs: Telus World of Science, which received \$4 million; Vivo for Healthier Generations project, which received \$5 million; and Winspear Centre, which received \$4.4 million. These projects helped drive the economy, created jobs for Albertans, and ensured that Alberta's cultural infrastructure is well positioned for long-term success.

Madam Chair, an important part of our department's work includes preserving and sharing Alberta's rich history and heritage. The department spent \$46.2 million to preserve, restore, and grow Alberta's heritage sites. Unfortunately, it was a tough year for our province's heritage sites and museums. As you would expect, revenue and attendance were down largely due to COVID. However, department staff worked diligently to ensure that facilities could reopen safely, following all recommended public health guidelines. In fact, the Royal Alberta Museum and the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology were the first two major museums in Canada to reopen safely to the public. The department staff remain committed to providing Alberta families and visitors with alternative opportunities to explore our province's history. For example, the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology held daily outdoor programs between July and October, welcoming 9,500 guests. The department also continued the heritage preservation partnership program, which helps preserve our past so that it can be enjoyed by future generations.

Madam Chair, the ministry continued to invest in Alberta's cultural industries through grants to businesses and individuals to support economic diversification and job creation; \$33.7 million of the department's budget was spent to support the province's cultural industries. This includes a budget of \$30.9 million to the Alberta media fund, which provided eight separate grant streams for individuals and businesses across Alberta.

To increase our department's support of cultural industries, the Alberta-made production grant was launched to support emerging producers and smaller budget projects. To help musicians through this difficult time, the Alberta government gave \$125,000 towards the implementation of the Alberta Spotlight virtual concert series. The successful series ensured musicians could continue to create and perform during COVID. These investments align with the government's commitment to grow all cultural industries by 25 per cent, or \$1.5 billion, over the next decade.

The department invested \$27.8 million to support the art and artists in Alberta. The department continued recognizing September as Month of the Artist, and Alberta continued to be the only province in Canada to have an artist in residence program. Department staff also spearheaded a successful and safe Alberta Culture Days, the largest celebration of the province's heritage, arts, community spirit, and cultural diversity. The 2020 edition of the Alberta Culture Days saw more than 241,000 people attend small in-person and virtual events across the province.

Sport and recreation are also an important part of Alberta's culture. To support healthy living and to encourage Albertans to be more active, the department spent \$22.3 million. This included \$17.5 million in SPAR grants, which provided operational funding to 120 organizations across Alberta. The department continued

funding high-performance athletes through the Podium Alberta program and led the creation of the ambassador of sport and active living to encourage Albertans to become more physically active. Although Alberta's participation of scheduled multisport games both at a provincial and national level was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the department continued its investment in sport and multisport games during this difficult time.

Alberta is home to a growing and thriving French-speaking population of 268,000 Albertans. In fact, Alberta has the highest francophone population growth in Canada after Quebec. Department staff continue to build a collaborative and respectful relationship with the province's Francophonie. The department spent \$1.1 million to co-ordinate the implementation of Alberta's French policy, aiming to strengthen services for this important group of Albertans.

The Francophone Secretariat played an important role in translating COVID-19 information, providing French-speaking Albertans with news releases, guidelines, and other key resources in French. Over the course of the year 126,387 words related to public health information and the Alberta government's pandemic response were translated into French. This includes 71 public health directives and 99 news releases.

#### 8:10

Alberta's francophone community is just one of the many multicultural groups that the department staff worked with; \$1.5 million was spent on programs, grants, and initiatives designed to foster multiculturalism and to support the Status of Women portfolio. Throughout the year the department hosted a number of important cultural events to celebrate the diversity of our province. Although COVID meant that celebrations were smaller or online, the events were a success and helped build and strengthen relationships, promoted diversity, and connected diverse groups of Albertans as they celebrated their traditions and holidays.

The ministry also continued to support the work of the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council, which supported the elimination of race-based discrimination and promoted intercultural awareness and understanding.

Throughout the year, Madam Chair, the department also continued to work with the 2SLGBTQIA-plus community to identify opportunities and to continue building safe spaces.

A very important part of our department's work involves the support of women in Alberta and the advancement of gender equality initiatives. The Status of Women division played a key role in supporting a crossgovernment implementation of actions responding to the calls for justice in the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, providing secretariat support when Alberta's joint working group was formed in 2020. Working in partnership with the ministries of Indigenous Relations and Justice and Solicitor General, Status of Women participated in monthly meetings with the federal-provincial-territorial working group to inform a national action plan on missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

Raising awareness of sexual and gender-based violence is an important part of the Status of Women portfolio. The department ran important awareness and education campaigns for the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence and for Sexual Violence Awareness Month.

Our department is committed to empowering women in the sector and encourages women and gender-diverse people of all backgrounds to consider a fulfilling career in STEM fields. In 2020-21 the leaders in equality award of distinction, or LEAD, program was launched; \$225,000 was committed to the LEAD program which consisted of two scholarship strains, the Persons Case

scholarship and the women in STEM scholarship. The women in STEM scholarship targets women who are pursuing careers in STEM, where their gender is traditionally underrepresented.

In conclusion, culture, multiculturalism and status of women takes great pride in its many roles to enhance the quality of life for Albertans and to connect them to each other and their communities. The department and its staff are dedicated to these activities.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I'll now turn things over to the office of the Auditor General. Mr. Wylie, you have five minutes.

**Mr. Wylie:** Again, good morning, Chair and members. Thank you. I'm pleased to report that there are no outstanding recommendations for this ministry. We did do one financial statement audit, and that's the Alberta Foundation for the Arts. We issued a clean audit opinion on the financial statements, and the audit opinion and the financial statements are included on page 67 of the report.

Thank you, Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Given that we are in the in-session, two-hour meeting, we'll now go to our first rotation, which is 12 minutes.

However, Mr. Toor has joined us. If you could introduce yourself for the record, please.

**Mr. Toor:** Good morning. Devinder Toor, MLA, Calgary-Falconridge.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We'll go to our first block, which is Member Pancholi, please.

**Ms Pancholi:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, everyone, for being here today to respond to our questions. I'd like to begin by discussing what is key objective 3.2 on page 30 of the annual report, which addresses expanding "the scope of Alberta's Gender-Based Analysis Plus program to reflect a commitment to multiculturalism and diverse perspectives and needs and integrate inclusion and equality into work that informs government policy and decision-making." Broadly speaking, GBA plus is, of course, a critical tool used to evaluate all government policies and programs, anticipated and current, to assess whether or not there are implications both intended or unintended for women, gender-diverse folks. I guess I probably don't need to explain GBA plus to all of you.

What I'm curious about is, you know, that under the previous government every cabinet report that went to Executive Council included a GBA analysis section. In the fiscal year under consideration did all cabinet reports include a GBA plus analysis?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thank you for the question. To better reflect Alberta's diverse population and its multiple dimensions of diversity, in 2020 the ministry began expanding the scope of gender-based analysis plus to include equity, diversity, and inclusion. This includes applying a crossdimensional lens and analysis to incorporate equity, diversity, and inclusion, factors such as gender, Indigenous identity, race and ethnicity, faith, disability, income, sexual orientation, immigration status, and age into the developmental policies and decisions and the delivery of programs and services to Albertans.

It's important to also note that on programs and policies and employment standards such as the Police Act review, codes of conduct for professional associations, we also provided insight and

advice to transportation program manuals and the relaunching of the Alberta economy, among other key pieces of work.

**Ms Pancholi:** Thank you, Deputy. My question was: do all cabinet reports that go to Executive Council include a GBA plus analysis?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Because we've expanded into more of a diversity inclusion lens, that work has carried across all departments, and in fact departments now focus on equity, diversity inclusion. So we've been using GBA plus to inform policy and programs, as you know, for a number of years. That expansion has built out across the government of Alberta, and staff do use . . .

**Ms Pancholi:** So is it your understanding, then, Deputy, that every ministry would then include in their cabinet report a GBA plus or an expanded GBA plus analysis?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** They include looking at reports through the lens of diversity and inclusion.

**Ms Pancholi:** So no longer a dedicated analysis for every cabinet report at Executive Council. I mean, you're hoping that it's infused throughout all the ministries, but there used to be – you know, this was a requirement before, that all policies and programs need to have this assessment, whether done by the ministry or by your ministry. So that's no longer happening in a dedicated fashion?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** The lens has been expanded to diversity inclusion, and all departments have a focus on that.

**Ms Pancholi:** What about submissions to Treasury Board and Finance? Do those include that same analysis and lens?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Again, diversity inclusion is the focus across the government of Alberta, so that lens is applied.

**Ms Pancholi:** So would you be confident in saying, Deputy, that in the fiscal year under consideration every document submitted by any ministry for cabinet review or for Treasury Board review would have had this lens applied? And how would you be certain of that?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** I can't speak on behalf of all ministries, but I can tell you again that diversity inclusion and our focus on ensuring that that lens is applied has been a focus for the Alberta public service.

**Ms Pancholi:** Well, thank you. You know, I appreciate that the hope is there that it's happening, but I think actually in the fiscal year under consideration we saw some pretty good evidence that that lens was not being applied. That brings me to my next set of questions, which is the economic recovery plan that was released in June 2020.

Specifically, was your department involved in reviewing that economic recovery plan? I'll remind for those folks listening, of course, that that year the term "she-cession" was first initiated – right? – because we saw that the economic impact of the pandemic hit women hardest, particularly the sectors that predominantly women are employed in: service industry, hospitality, tourism, educational services, child care workers. Predominantly women sectors. We saw that those sectors were hit the hardest, yet the economic recovery plan that was released by the government of Alberta in June 2020 focused solely on male-dominated sectors. I mean, the bulk of the investment and the economic recovery plan was on construction and infrastructure and capital. Was your ministry involved in reviewing the economic recovery plan that was released in June 2020?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Just a point of clarity, Madam Chair, I'm just wondering where that is focused in the annual report.

**Ms Pancholi:** Thank you. Well, I can answer.

**The Chair:** Please.

**Ms Pancholi:** Key objective 3.2, page 30, of the annual report indicates that "the ministry advises ministry partners on applying a gender and diversity analysis to legislation, policies, programs or initiatives as they are under development or being reviewed." So that would apply to all things that are being developed by ministries, and, of course, as we know, a big initiative in the 2020 fiscal year was the economic recovery plan. Was your ministry involved in advising, as indicated in your annual report, on that economic recovery plan?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** On economic recovery our focus was really twofold on the lead program, which I mentioned as part of my opening remarks, and certainly in terms of supporting the PolicyWise work that took place as well over the course of that year. In terms of the specifics around your question I'm going to turn things over to ADM Nilam Jetha.

8:20

**Ms Jetha:** Thank you, Deputy. We were on the working group when the economic recovery plans were being developed, and our staff provided the equity, gender-diverse lens, ensuring that all the ministries that were in that working group were giving that attention to it.

**Ms Pancholi:** Thank you, ADM Jetha. Then my question is: why did Albertans see an economic recovery plan that did not have the gender and diverse lens applied to it? If you look at that economic recovery plan, the only mention of women was to recognize that, yes, they were affected by increased child care and that child care would somehow be critical to economic recovery, yet there was no investment made in the economic recovery plan to address, for example, child care. There was no recognition that racialized women, gender-diverse individuals, members of the LGBTQ2S-plus community would also be hit hardest. So if part of the working group, how do you measure your results when we had an economic recovery plan that didn't reflect any gender or diversity issues?

**Ms Jetha:** The funding that was provided by all the ministries did take that into account, and although it wasn't very specific to women and girls and the racialized groups, the funding was provided to all Albertans, not just. . .

**Ms Pancholi:** Sorry. Which funding are you referring to?

**Ms Jetha:** From JEI and, you know, Children's Services, CSS, and we provided funding for the STEM program as well.

**Ms Pancholi:** Right. The scholarships.

**Ms Jetha:** Yes.

**Ms Pancholi:** Right. But again I go back to the sectors that were hit hardest. Do you believe that the economic recovery plan met the objectives of a GBA plus analysis?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thanks for the question. The key is that Jobs, Economy and Innovation is the lead on that report, so I'd recommend you direct that question to that department.

**Ms Pancholi:** Let me ask, then: did you advise Jobs, Economy and Innovation?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Well, as ADM Jetha has already explained, we were part of the working group, and that advice was provided as part of our involvement in the working group.

**Ms Pancholi:** Having heard from Jobs, Economy and Innovation before, there was no gender lens applied there as well. I'm curious just from a perspective of looking at key objective 3.2 in this fiscal year, that the job of the ministry – and it used to be part of this ministry's work – is to have a dedicated analysis of GBA plus for all government programs and initiatives that come before cabinet.

What I'm hearing in terms of the response is that during a time when women and diverse folks were hit most and hit hardest, it was not your ministry's responsibility. It was each individual ministry's responsibility, yet when we ask those ministries, they say: talk to Status of Women. I'm wondering: did anybody in the GOA take responsibility for ensuring that gender diversity, racial diversity, racialized groups were reflected in any government policies, particularly the economic recovery plan?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Again, our focus on economic recovery at a ministry level is twofold, focusing on the two scholarships that we talked about in the lead program but also the work of PolicyWise. We played a really strong role in the PolicyWise piece, supporting advice to PolicyWise for a grant application to the federal government, focusing on the effects of COVID-19 and women's economic recovery. A big piece of the work that was done around that – now, you may be aware that that project aims to provide solutions to improve women's and girls' economic security and prosperity throughout the advancement of inclusion policies and practices and by increasing networks in collaboration to accelerate systemic change. The policy project aligns with the pandemic recovery plan and the women's economic recovery recommendations report.

**Ms Pancholi:** Thank you, Deputy, but you're talking about providing advice on something at the federal level. I'm asking your ministry of the government of Alberta: what influence were you having on policies and procedures and programs that are being developed by the government of Alberta to make sure that that GBA plus lens was being applied?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Again, our GBA plus lens has expanded to diversity and inclusion, and that work is across government with every department.

**Ms Pancholi:** So 2020 was also the year that the government of Alberta decided to end the \$25-per-day pilot project for child care. Again, going back to what we knew in the session, that child care would be critical for economic recovery, did your ministry provide advice and a GBA plus analysis on the decision to end the \$25-per-day child care program?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Again, child care is the function of Children's Services, and you'd be best positioned to connect with them on your questions.

**Ms Pancholi:** Thank you, Deputy. I'll read from your annual report again. "The ministry advises ministry partners on applying a gender and diversity analysis to legislation, policies, programs or initiatives as they are under development or being reviewed." Is that not the work of your ministry?



**Dr. Caltagirone:** The work of our ministry is that. Again, as we expand our focus from GBA plus to diversity inclusion and unconscious bias training, another element of the work that we've been doing, that really is applied across the entire Alberta public service, and departments do use that lens as they're reviewing policies, writing reports, you know, working with multiple stakeholders . . .

**Ms Pancholi:** Thank you, Deputy. I only have a few minutes. I just want to say that it sounds like nobody is taking responsibility for this now. Frankly, as somebody who is an expert in GBA plus, you know that that's not the point of the program.

**The Chair:** Okay. We'll go to the second rotation for 12 minutes. Please go ahead.

**Mr. Reid:** Good morning. Thank you, ministry officials, for your time today. It's a pleasure to have you here. We are so thrilled to be able to do this in person again and have the back and forth. I just want to say, representing a riding that is full of much history and heritage: very grateful for all the work that your ministry does to help my small community support those items. I just really appreciate that and appreciate your time.

I also want to take a moment, Chair, just to say thank you to you and your colleagues from the opposition for last week's meeting. Afterwards we were just feeling that good questions were asked of the ministry, and I think we were accomplishing the task of the Public Accounts Committee in terms of seeking those answers. On behalf of my colleagues I just extend that thank you to you for what we felt was a very, very good meeting last week. So thank you.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Point of order.

**The Chair:** Yeah.

**Mr. Schmidt:** These kinds of complimentary remarks from the government side are bound to spark disorder here in the House. I ask that the – you know, I can't go back to my constituents and say that the Member for Livingstone-Macleod praised the work that we were doing.

**Mr. Reid:** I will not apologize.

**The Chair:** All right. I'm not going to find a point of order at this time, but the deputy chair should know that these types of comments do tend to cause disorder for the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar specifically.

Please proceed.

**Mr. Reid:** Thank you. On that, again, I just want – now getting to the work at hand, in your annual report you list a number of initiatives that are related to your ministry's response to COVID-19. Can you please provide this committee and Albertans with an overview of the programs and initiatives that your ministry undertook through the pandemic?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thank you, Chair, for the question. Alberta's nonprofits experienced significant impacts and challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many front-line nonprofit organizations saw a significant increase in demand for their programs – for example, food banks, mental health services, shelters, and supports for seniors – while many others were impacted by emergency public health measures and closures; for example, faith-based, cultural, and live-experience facilities. A key source of revenue for nonprofit organizations is their fundraising activities and events, which were dramatically impacted by capacity restrictions and closures.

From March to June of 2020 the ministry launched four new grant programs in response to this and adapted several existing programs to support the nonprofit sector in Alberta. First, the charitable donation-matching program; next, the overnight camps for children and youth facility overhead funding program; also, the faith-based and cultural facility relaunch program; and, finally, our stabilize program phase 1 and the expansion of the CIP operating.

Some of the initiatives include – and I'll spend a little bit of time just talking about each of them. The charitable donation-matching program encouraged Albertans to donate to the pandemic response efforts, providing \$2 million in matching funds for donations to eight designated Alberta-based charities that had existing COVID-19 charitable campaigns. Albertans donated almost \$5 million during the campaign period.

Eight million dollars was allocated to the CIP operating grant program to help struggling front-line nonprofits maintain their core functions due to health restrictions.

The overnight camps for children and youth facility overhead funding program was launched to support nonprofit organizations that own and operate overnight children and youth camps, providing \$2.7 million to 76 organizations.

Two point one million dollars in funding was provided to faith-based and cultural organizations through the faith-based and cultural facility relaunch program to ensure that gatherings could continue during the pandemic. We received 587 applications that were approved through this program. Launched on April 22, 2020, the Alberta Cares Connector is also a collaboration between the government of Alberta and Propellus, the Volunteer Centre of Calgary; 1.1 million individual Albertans engaged with that platform, conducting over 5 million searches, resulting in 165,000 matches for volunteers to volunteer opportunities.

8:30

Lastly, the stabilize program. Stabilize, of \$12 million, provided one-time grant funding to a maximum of \$1 million or up to 25 per cent of eligible facility overhead and/or operating expenses for a year; 165 applications were received; 104 of those applications were approved, for a total of \$16.25 million. Stabilize also had a donation-matching component, matching dollar for dollar private donations to eligible nonprofits from \$250,000 to a maximum of \$1 million. Four organizations received stabilize donation-matching grants of \$2.75 million, with an additional \$250,000 as flow through.

**Mr. Reid:** Thank you very much.

Usually in this committee we spend a lot of time talking about how wonderful the constituency of Camrose is, but since MLA Lovely is not here today, I'm going to take advantage to brag a little bit about Livingstone-Macleod. The last couple of years we've certainly seen incredible growth in the film and television industry. I'm fortunate to see a lot of those productions take place in my riding, providing jobs and some incredible investment in the local economy. You know, we've been the site of *Unforgiven*, *Brokeback Mountain*, *Legends of the Fall*, and recently *The Last of Us* and *Ghostbusters*. They've been tremendous.

To see that happen and then to see Alberta on the big screen now that we can go back to theatres and actually see it on the big screen and not on TV has been wonderful. But, of course, there have been a lot of challenges for production on location in the province throughout the pandemic. We've seen some tremendous advancements in terms of being able to support the film industry in this province. I wonder if you could speak to the committee this morning about the work that was undertaken by your ministry to help support the film and television industry during the pandemic.

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thank you for the question. The ministry worked very closely with Alberta Health Services and the screen-based industry partners to ensure that robust COVID-19 safety protocols were implemented on productions throughout the province, and a number of them you've mentioned. This allowed film and television productions to continue through the early months of the pandemic, ensuring that these jobs and the economic activity associated with this work could continue. I'm happy to report that during this period of time no COVID-19 outbreaks were reported on film and television sets as a result of this work.

The department also expedited and disbursed \$2.58 million in operational funding through the cultural industry organizations operating and cultural industry support organization operating grant streams for the 2020-21 fiscal year by delivering operational funding to those eligible organizations based on their funding levels of 2019-20. The '20-21 actuals for the expedited funding are as follows: the cultural industry organization operating grant, \$2.195 million was spent; and the cultural industry support organizing operating grant, \$388,000.

**Mr. Reid:** Thank you, Deputy Minister.

I'll cede my time now to MLA Rowswell.

**Mr. Rowswell:** Thank you. Yeah. COVID-19 impacted lots of different industries. Part of the government's response was the Alberta recovery plan. This government has provided additional funds to support various industries. You've talked about it to some degree already, in both the last question and your initial presentation. But on page 55 of the annual report that community initiatives program included the stabilize program. Maybe you could expand a little bit more on information about the stabilize program and how it supported the arts, culture, and nonprofit sector in the face of the COVID pandemic.

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thanks for the question. So the stabilize program was created to support the live-experience organizations and arts venues through two funding streams. Stabilize program phase 1 provided one-time grant funding up to a maximum of \$1 million or up to 25 per cent of eligible facility overhead and/or operating expenses for one year. So we received 164 applications requesting a total funding of \$57.52 million. We granted over \$16 million in funding to 104 applicants. This funding helped to protect and promote Alberta's sport and cultural identity, support tourism, and restore community vibrancy. Organizations were able to use funds to support their ongoing operational costs such as utilities, rent, insurance, and programming to support the reopening.

The other part of stabilize is the stabilize donation-matching program – and that was a substream of the stabilize program – which establishes matched dollar for dollar private donations to eligible nonprofits from \$250,000 to a maximum of \$1 million. As mentioned, four organizations received funding through this stream, with grants totalling \$3 million. This program leveraged Albertans' individual investments in organizations and community venues that are important to them, a really important piece of this work.

**Mr. Rowswell:** You mentioned that 104 of 165 were approved, so the others weren't. What were the requirements in the application in order to be approved?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thank you for the question.

I'm going to turn that over to Melissa Banks to talk a little bit about those requirements.

**Ms Banks:** Thank you for the question. Applicants had to demonstrate alignment with the principal mandate for delivery of live events. They had to provide their intended outcomes. They had to be able to describe the activities they would undertake with that funding in a sport, rodeo, whether they owned or operated dedicated presenting and performing arts facilities. They had to be able to demonstrate a financial need and that they had exhausted other financial supports and resources, and in order to be able to qualify that, we reviewed things like cash-flow statements, both for the current and the prior and future anticipated years. We wanted to know how the organization had been impacted, to demonstrate the exhaustion of the other supports, as mentioned, including utilizing any reserves that they may have had.

They had to also be able to demonstrate that they had minimized operational costs by reducing expenditures; for example, where they weren't actually offering events, that they had reduced their staffing, insurance, marketing-type costs. They had to have a plan in place to ensure recovery and long-term sustainability, and they had to be able to demonstrate the readiness to resume operations in accordance with public health guidelines. They also were requested to explain how they were adapting to long-term opportunities, to the challenges of the pandemic and the economic downturn as well, and how they planned to stabilize and grow their organization in the upcoming years.

The other part of all of our grants is always centred around community, so they had to be able to explain how they are a part of the community, how they are relevant and present in the community, and we also asked them to provide information on any partnerships or collaborations that they had in terms of stabilizing and resuming operations for the live-experience sector.

**Mr. Rowswell:** So would the, like, nonprofit or volunteer organizations – like, if it's unpaid work, they may have been less likely to get money unless their rent was higher or whatever. You know, was there a difference there between staffed kind of organizations and nonstaffed organizations?

**Ms Banks:** We would evaluate every organization based on where they are at. So in terms of providing funding, it would be based on what we would anticipate they need to meet their costs and to be able to reopen.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We'll move to the second rotation of nine minutes. We'll begin with the Official Opposition. Member Schmidt.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Yes. Thank you. So just building on that set of questions on support for live events, in the annual report, of course, it's noted that there's over \$19 million spent on the stabilize program, but yesterday in question period, over two years later after the start of the program, the minister still wasn't 100 per cent sure that all of the funding had been released, so I have a few questions on this topic as well. What was the overall budget line for the stabilize program? I guess, you know, help me look at page 89 and figure out which budget line the stabilize program was spent out of.

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thank you.

I'm going to turn that over to our acting SFO, Carmen Vidaurri.

**Ms Vidaurri:** Thank you, Deputy. In terms of where this budget line is, I think – I'm sorry; what was the page that you were referring to? Page 89?

**Mr. Schmidt:** Yeah. Page 89 of the annual report.

**Ms Vidaurri:** Thank you. This will be included in item 2.3. If you look at the section on community and voluntary support services, 2.3 is the community initiatives program. That included the funding for the stabilize program.

8:40

**Mr. Schmidt:** Okay. There's quite a significant change here. Initially the budget for that line item was set at \$19 million. There was an additional \$19.7 million in supplementary supply and then another \$5 million adjustment, for a total of \$44 million of actual budgeted money. How much of that money was budgeted for the stabilize program versus how much was actually spent? I'm just trying to understand. How much was dedicated to the stabilize program that wasn't spent yet?

**Ms Vidaurri:** The original budget did not include anything for stabilize because they wanted to make it start after the budget had passed. The portion for the stabilize program would be under the supplementary supply. The total amount for that stream for that given year was \$17 million for the stabilize stream on their CIP. From there, at the end we ended up spending \$19.3 million. So, actually, we went over what we originally had allocated for that stream.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Okay. So you had budgeted \$17 million for the stabilize program but actually spent \$19 million.

**Ms Vidaurri:** Yes. That's correct.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Okay. Thank you very much for that.

The ministry notes that 100 live-experience organizations received funds in 2020-2021, but really that statistic needs a little bit of context, I think. When the pandemic began, does the ministry know how many live-experience organizations there were in Alberta? A follow-up question: how many people were employed in those live-experience organizations?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thank you for the question. Again, the stabilize program provided support to the live music industry and live events through the two funding streams that we have already discussed.

I'm going to turn things over to Melissa Banks to talk a little bit about the support to that live industry.

**Ms Banks:** Yes. Thank you. We did have meetings with the sector.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Sorry. Just a reminder of what my question is: how many live organizations were in existence prior to the pandemic, and how many people were employed by those live-experience organizations? Does the ministry know that number? Yes or no?

**Ms Banks:** I do not have that number.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Okay. Do you not have that number because you don't collect that information, or do you have that information somewhere in the bowels of the department and you'd be able to table that to the committee at a later date?

**Ms Banks:** I could look for numbers based on information that we've received. Our challenge is that some of the reporting that we have is dated. We don't actually get updated numbers until future years. If you're asking if I have a specific number to know exactly how many live organizations there are, I don't know that anyone would have that number. During the period of the pandemic there were certainly organizations who left that sector, which would impact, again, the number. So I don't have an exact number for you if that's what you're asking for.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Right. That leads, then, to my next question because the ministry is claiming victory in supporting the live-event industry, yet you don't know how many organizations were actually in this sector. Have you since figured out how big the problem is? Has the government shut down live experiences? You know, my point is that we need to know how big the sector was before the pandemic hit to understand whether or not it has recovered. How many people were working? How many organizations were there in existence beforehand, and how many are there now? I know that's out of the realm of the scope or out of the scope of the report, but in order to understand whether or not the program is effective, we need to know how many programs or how many organizations there are, if I'm making sense.

**Ms Banks:** Thank you for the question. I think that in time we will know that. As a part of any grant reporting that we do and the funding that we would have provided to these live organizations, we will have information that comes back to us to be able to indicate what the impact of the funding was, and that is a component of most of our grant programs. There is a need to come back and to describe what the actual impact was and whether they achieved intended outcomes. For every application that we would have received, we would have received information about that organization. We received information about their expenses, their funding, their staffing, whether that would have been permanent staffing or temporary or wage staffing. Information, again, for those organizations will flow through us. It would be impossible to know specifically for the organizations that did not apply to us for funding what the specifics would be of the components of the build of their organizations in terms of staffing, et cetera.

**Mr. Schmidt:** I understand that you have a sense of the individual applicants' health and financial well-being. That's fine, but, you know, the purpose of Public Accounts is to push government departments to create goals, key indicators, that kind of thing. Did the ministry track or develop any metrics on the overall financial health of the live-events industry?

**Ms Banks:** During the time I would say that we weren't tracking metrics. At that point we were receiving information based on current conditions of the sector. That was achieved through meetings that were held, a survey that was done, and ongoing discussions with our stakeholders. We stayed connected to our stakeholders in the live sector. We utilized information from that sector in order to develop this program. The program did not exist prior to this year, so it was developed very quickly and was intended and, we believe, targeted to respond effectively to the conditions that were shared with us and to respond to the needs that our live organizations were describing. They needed to be able to continue and survive.

**Mr. Schmidt:** I appreciate the speed at which you had to get this program up and running, but during the course of the pandemic did the ministry develop any objective, data-driven understanding of the live-events industry's financial health and create any kind of objective measure of how well the sector is doing? Like, did any of that work occur in the fiscal year that's under consideration?

**Ms Banks:** As described, we attempted to do that, based on the engagement with the sector at the time in the development of the program, by asking targeted questions, requesting information through the application process to be able to ascertain what the condition is of the sector, what their needs were, what their financial scenarios were, and so . . .

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We'll go to, on second rotation, the government for nine minutes. Mr. Rowswell.

**Mr. Rowswell:** Thank you very much. Yeah. Just a little bit more on the community initiatives program. I just wondered what other programs were supported through that. You know, I know you've mentioned a few, but just expand on it a touch.

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Absolutely. The community initiatives program has been supporting the unique needs of Alberta's nonprofit organizations for the last 20 years, and the community initiatives program, or CIP, has four distinct funding streams to address the specific or unique needs of community organizations: there's CIP project-based; there's CIP operating; major cultural and sport events; and multicultural, Indigenous, and inclusion grants; so four pieces of that. In 2020-21 these four programs received over 1,000 applicants, and 275 community organizations and projects were supported across the province.

I'd like to just provide some examples of how that funding was utilized. In the CIP operating funding for the Leftovers Foundation food rescue app, it empowered volunteers to connect vendors, restaurants, grocery stores, and other local producers who have excess fresh food with service agencies providing emergency food for 164,126 vulnerable, disadvantaged, and at-risk individuals, with the help of more than 171 active volunteers.

Another example is the CIP project-based funding to Tacalusa Institute for the multi-use skill-training room, which made a positive impact on the immigrant women and girls for skills and training programming and services as well as well-being and the community at large.

Under the CIP major cultural and sporting event funding we supported the Canadian snowboard federation with event costs for the urban big air world cup in the 2021-22 season.

And, lastly, under their multicultural, Indigenous, and inclusion grant funding we supported the Brenda Strafford Society for the Prevention of Domestic Violence to hire a diversity and inclusion co-ordinator to create inclusive resources and services.

Just a few examples of how those programs were used.

**Mr. Rowswell:** Lots of organizations that benefit from that. Very good.

Now, also, you've mentioned a bit about museums and heritage facilities, you know, and done some of that within this, so I'm just wondering: how did the pandemic affect museums and heritage facilities, and what has your ministry done to promote and support the sustainability of museums so all Albertans can enjoy the shared history of Alberta?

8:50

**Dr. Caltagirone:** The pandemic had a very significant impact on museums, historic sites, and archives around the world, which included facility closures and loss of revenue. Our provincial museums, historic sites, and archives were likewise adversely affected by COVID-19. Now, key factors that impacted our attendance and revenue at our heritage facilities included closures of our provincial heritage facilities in the spring of 2020, closures of our provincial heritage facilities again before Christmas of 2020, limiting visitation and adherence with physical distancing protocols, reduced food service offerings and facility rental options, and the postponement of the Royal Alberta Museum's international feature exhibition. Obviously, several events and program cancellations occurred as a result of that as well.

Revenue shortfalls were managed with reductions to heritage division supplies and services as well as heritage capital and repairs

budgets. Supplies and services reductions included cuts to service contracts, including the heritage friends organizations, maintenance and advertising as well as reductions in programs, exhibition development and research, as mentioned.

When we did reopen after our initial spring 2020 closures, our successful and safe reopening provided the foundation for the government's sector guidance materials on reopening other museums, archives, and historic sites in the province as well as influenced reopening protocols in other provinces. In fact, as mentioned, the Royal Alberta Museum and the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Paleontology were the first two major museums in Canada to reopen safely to the public.

Some of our heritage sites remained temporarily closed throughout this period because of the small size and spaces in these facilities. It's been challenging to have potential visitors physically distance appropriately. The historic nature of these facilities doesn't always accommodate the appropriate cleaning procedures required by pandemic protocols, and some of these heritage facilities included historic Dunvegan, Father Lacombe chapel, Turner Valley gas plant, Victoria settlement, Fort George and Buckingham House, Rutherford House, and Stephansson House as well.

In 2021 the Alberta Museums Association heard from its members on how visitation and revenue generation would be significantly impacted. At the time, the Department of Canadian Heritage's emergency museums assistance program was well accessed by Alberta heritage institutions, and \$3.3 million was distributed across the province to 121 sites. Many Alberta museums have also accessed federal wage and rent subsidies to assist with covering the 2020 shortfalls, and although approximately two-thirds of AMA members reopened at some point during that 2020 season, there is still concern in the museum community regarding full recovery from the pandemic.

Our historic sites, museums, and archives have been an important part of providing engagement and life enrichment, especially during the pandemic.

**Mr. Rowswell:** Were you able to keep all these organizations whole? Were there any whole organizations that, like, folded, or are they still operating? Were they able to be saved? I guess that is my question.

**Dr. Caltagirone:** I'm going to actually refer that question to ADM David Link.

**Mr. Link:** There was a handful of municipal and privately owned museums and archives that did not reopen in that fiscal year, but I don't have the exact numbers.

**Mr. Rowswell:** Okay. Thank you.

I'll cede the rest of my time to MLA Singh.

**Mr. Singh:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, MLA Rowswell. Thank you as well, representatives of the ministry, for the presentation and to the office of the Auditor General for being with us today. As Alberta's population is incredibly diverse and as Alberta keeps growing faster, these diverse groups, organizations, and cultures in our province keep growing as well. In fact, over 1 in 5 Albertans are immigrants. Page 9 of the annual report speaks to this ministry's commitment to create an Alberta where all people and communities have the ability to participate. How do you support the diverse cultural communities during this pandemic?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thank you for the question. During the early days of the pandemic the ministry responded rapidly to the need to support services in languages other than English. The Francophone

Secretariat has a very important mandate to co-ordinate the crossgovernment French policy, which includes providing information to French-speaking Albertans. The Francophone Secretariat played an important role in translating COVID-19 information into French for francophone Albertans over the course of that year.

In addition to supports for French-language services, we provided key media releases, fact sheets, and guidance documents in 12 other languages ranging from Punjabi and Tagalog to Korean, Arabic, Chinese, and Farsi. This is the result of a very strong and ongoing co-ordination partnership with communication and public engagement. The work allowed us to align processes and raise awareness of the importance of communication in multiple languages in crisis situations. It helped address unique community needs, it encourages broader compliance to government guidance, and it ensures that no one is left behind. In addition to our supports for French-language services, we also provided key media releases, fact sheets, and guidance documents in the 12 other languages mentioned.

**Mr. Singh:** Thanks for answering.

During the 2020-2021 period your ministry was responsible . . .

**The Chair:** Thank you, hon. member.

Third rotation. Official Opposition, please.

**Ms Pancholi:** Thank you Madam Chair. I want to ask some questions about the Anti-Racism Advisory Council. It's mentioned, of course, on page 11 of the annual report, and there are references, of course, to the fact that the ministry provided support to the Anti-Racism Advisory Council as they worked on their recommendations to combat racism and discrimination in Alberta. This report was actually submitted to the government in the fiscal year under consideration. However, it was not made public for several months, and in fact several members of the advisory council spoke out about how long it was taking for the report to be made public. And during that time, as we all remember, in 2020, the fiscal year under consideration, there were a number of concerning events that continue to happen across Alberta, including overt acts of racism, anti-Asian racism as well as anti-Muslim racism. This was all occurring while the government also had received this report but had not made it public.

The report was pretty straightforward and direct, and I guess I'm wondering: you know, what reasons were there for delaying the release of the report? Was there some sort of analysis or response that was being considered? Were there concerns about the content of the report? What was the reason for the delay?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thank you for the question. Government's goal is for Alberta to be a place where all people can fully participate in society and contribute to our province's economic recovery. In July 2021 we know that the responsibility for the council was transferred to labour, but in the meantime, speaking to the question that you asked, in January 2021 11 members were appointed to the board, and at their February 2021 meeting new and continuing members unanimously approved a motion to formally submit the council's recommendations to the minister. The following month, March 2021, the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council formally submitted 48 recommendations to the minister. The recommendations were also shared with cabinet. Once the council approved their motion in February, the following month those recommendations were submitted.

**Ms Pancholi:** Thank you, Deputy Minister. Although we have indications from the previous council members that the report was

actually submitted to the ministry in January 2021, it was almost six months later before it was released.

But I want to go back to the recommendations in the report. One of those recommendations was – well, there were at least five targeted recommendations within that report that looked at the importance of race-based data. Theme 6, entitled “Measuring progress and outcomes of anti-racism actions,” makes recommendations around the collection of race-based data in all departments as well as the analysis of this data to track and evaluate the progress being made to identify existing gaps between racialized and nonracialized communities. In your own words, Deputy, can you explain why the collection of race-based data is important for government?

9:00

**Dr. Caltagirone:** I'm going to refer that question to ADM Jetha.

**Ms Jetha:** Thank you.

Thank you for the question. Race-based data is important to inform policy, absolutely. Our systems right now: each ministry does collect data, but we are looking to see how we can consolidate all the data.

**Ms Pancholi:** Thank you. I just want to clarify. You are saying that each ministry already collects race-based data on the work that they do?

**Ms Jetha:** Some of them do, yes.

**Ms Pancholi:** But not all.

**Ms Jetha:** We haven't done that survey yet; we are actually just starting that out.

**Ms Pancholi:** So given the recognition that, you know, collecting race-based data is important for policy, would that have been your advice, to accept that recommendation from the antiracism council, which came in the fiscal year under consideration, to collect race-based data from all government ministries? Is that something that the ministry is working towards?

**Ms Jetha:** The 48 recommendations span multiple ministries, so we have actually developed or put together a crossministry working group to look at those recommendations and look at the work that's already in progress and what can be accepted. Now that the council has moved over to Labour and Immigration, Labour and Immigration has picked up that work, and we continue to support them.

**Ms Pancholi:** So given that the report was received over a year ago and it includes that recommendation to collect race-based data and the UCP government recently rejected legislation that would do just that, do you think that would mandate government ministries to collect race-based data? Given your expertise in this area and given the fact that the Anti-Racism Advisory Council resided within your ministry for many years, how do you think that that will impact diverse communities and racialized people in this province, to not move forward with a recommendation from the council?

**Ms Jetha:** I'll just respond to what would happen that year, and that was getting the report from the council, which was then reviewed and looked at by all the ministries to come up with the responses, which is now handed over to Labour and Immigration.

**Ms Pancholi:** Thank you. So once again we'll go to another ministry, I guess, to find out exactly what the government's responsibility is when it comes to antiracism work.

I want to ask a question as well about – well, actually, before I leave that, there are a number of recommendations in that report. I

understand you're no longer apparently the ministry responsible for the antiracism council, but in the fiscal year under consideration can you table with this committee any analysis that was done of the recommendations that came forward in that report; which ones were accepted, which ones were rejected, and the rationale for why? Can I just get a commitment that we'll undertake to take that back and table that information with this committee?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** As ADM Jetha mentioned, the report was tabled in the fiscal year under question. The response to that was the following fiscal year.

**Ms Pancholi:** So that's a no?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** It does not fall within the parameters of this meeting.

**Ms Pancholi:** Thank you.

I want to actually go back to one of the key objectives set out on page 30 of the annual report, key objective 3.3, as well as looking at key objective 3.5 on page 32 and 3.7 on page 33, which talk about the ministry's work to identify opportunities to build safe communities free from prejudice for LGBTQS communities, to work collaboratively to address recommendations in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, as well as exploring policy and legislative approaches that will lead to a society where all people feel their culture and heritage is valued and respected. Given those key objectives – this was also in fiscal year 2020, in which the draft curriculum was being developed by the Ministry of Education, which, as you'll be aware, received stark criticism from racialized communities, Indigenous groups, LGBTQS communities, who were very concerned that they were not reflected in that draft curriculum. Given, again, the proactive work that your annual report indicates you do to actually work with ministries to advise, was your ministry involved in the draft curriculum development and provided any advice?

**Mr. Turton:** Point of order.

**The Chair:** I have a point of order on the floor.

Hon. member, please go ahead.

**Mr. Turton:** Under 23(b). I appreciate the hon. member has a question, again, that would be better suited for the Ministry of Education or else the minister in question period in about three hours. I don't see the reference or the specific area that this pertains to in terms of policy implementation by the ministry that's before us here today. It doesn't talk about the exact page numbers or reference numbers. I would just maybe ask, again, that the hon. member just maybe bring the question back to the ministry and the amazing administrators and bureaucrats that we have here before us today.

**The Chair:** Please go ahead.

**Mr. Schmidt:** I think it's pretty presumptuous for the member to assume that this is a question better asked of the Ministry of Education. We should maybe wait for the answer from the deputy minister before the member jumps to these kinds of conclusions. I don't think this is a point of order, and I would argue that my colleague has the right to ask the question.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I will not find a point of order at this time, but references to page numbers are always welcome.

Please proceed.

**Ms Pancholi:** As noted at the beginning of my question, I noted pages 30, 32, and 33 as well as the three key objectives that deal with this year, so to the deputy minister: did your ministry advise on the draft curriculum that was developed in the fiscal year under consideration?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** That is a question better suited for Alberta Education, in particular when it relates to the curriculum, but I can tell you this. When it comes to support for multiculturalism, diversity, and inclusion, we supported, as mentioned already, the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council, Alberta Culture Days, multicultural events, and the multiculturalism, Indigenous, and inclusion grant, which all supported activity in that area.

**Ms Pancholi:** Thank you, Deputy. My question, though, was: did your ministry advise on the curriculum? I understand that the curriculum is the responsibility of the Department of Education. I'm asking: did your ministry advise on the curriculum development?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Again, that's a question better placed with Alberta Education when it comes to curriculum.

**Ms Pancholi:** Sorry. Through the chair, I'm unclear as to why the deputy can't answer what your ministry did. You either did or you did not advise on the draft curriculum.

**Dr. Caltagirone:** The development of the curriculum is under the portfolio of Alberta Education.

**Ms Pancholi:** I understand. Thank you, through the chair. My question is: did your department advise?

**The Chair:** All right. I will now go to the government side. Nine minutes, please.

**Mr. Singh:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I will get back to my question. During the 2020-2021 period your ministry was responsible for multiculturalism as well. It is very important to promote and protect the diversity in Alberta's cultural and social fabric. Can the department share with us some of the things you did to support multiculturalism in Alberta?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thank you for the question. A number of things took place. The establishment of the multiculturalism, Indigenous, and inclusion grant, the MIIG grant, revitalized the antiracism community grant to support a broader range of projects. Primarily the grant promotes crosscultural and intercultural understanding and helps create welcoming and inclusive communities. That MIIG grant program provided \$431,000 in funds to 24 community organizations.

The ministry continued to celebrate Black History Month in February of 2021, holding virtual events that brought a broader understanding of historical events and showcased Black students, artists, and performers. And one of the most significant events during Black History Month was the renaming of the Federal Building plaza in Edmonton as Violet King Henry Plaza in honour of the first Black female lawyer in Canada.

**Mr. Singh:** Thanks for answering my questions. I really appreciate the good initiatives and support done by the ministry to cultural communities during the pandemic and supports to multiculturalism in Alberta.

With that, Madam Chair, I will cede my time to MLA Armstrong-Homeniuk.

**Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk:** Good morning, Chair. Through you to the ministry, I'm very grateful for the work your ministry does in my riding of Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville. I'm proud to have the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, a.k.a. the Ukrainian Village. The museum showcases Ukrainian culture and heritage starting from the first Ukrainian settlers coming to Canada. The open-air museum has costumed historical interpreters interacting with the public in original buildings using original props. There are original churches still used for special events, a working blacksmith, shops, grain elevators, a one-room school complete with a strict schoolteacher interacting with visitors. There are many historic homes there like the Hawreliak house; the Stelmach house; the Pylypow house, which happens to be related to me through my baba; and there's an original burdei. And for those that don't know what a burdei is, it's a sod house. The historical interpreters work the land by horse and have many hand-planted gardens. I encourage you all to come visit the Ukrainian Village. I'm just so proud of it.

**9:10**

I'm very interested to speak to outcome 3 on page 28. The Department of Status of Women is part of the ministry, and it is explained in the annual report that this government is committed to "advance gender equality in Alberta." What did your ministry do in 2020-2021 to combat gender-based violence during 2020-2021?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thank you so much for the question. The status of women, multiculturalism, and inclusion branch is responsible for leading and supporting projects and initiatives to end violence against women and girls and creating safe and inclusive communities. This includes a number of different aspects. The COVID-19 pandemic saw an increase in the rates of gender-based violence throughout the province. The ministry worked with crossministry and community partners to address this issue throughout the year.

In 2020-21 more than \$880,000 was allocated to end gender-based violence. The ministry led a number of major social media campaigns and events associated with Sexual Violence Awareness Month in May and the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence from November 25 to December 10. On February 6, 2021, the government proclaimed the Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, cutting, in Alberta. The ministry provided a grant of \$398,000 for the valuable opportunities to inspire change through empowerment, or the VOICE project, which launched in November 2020. This project will shift the culture by engaging professional and student athletes and mentoring conversations with youth on gender equality, consent, and healthy relationships.

VOICE worked with local professional postsecondary and community teams to launch a program to empower athletes as leaders in their local communities. Since the launch of the program, VOICE has provided training to ambassadors from the Edmonton Elks, the Calgary Stampeders, the Calgary Hitmen, the Calgary Roughnecks, the Ottawa Redblacks, the University of Alberta, and the University of Calgary to serve as mentors. The VOICE ambassadors are trained to share their knowledge and lived experience with young people to help youth develop an understanding of how individual beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours can help prevent gender-based violence.

CSW leads the government's commitment to end sexual violence, which includes a sexual violence knowledge exchange committee, involving nine ministries that share information and coordinate actions and responses to sexual violence. The ministry has also provided a grant of \$50,000 to the Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services to enhance the Alberta One Line in

response to the increased number of calls for support resulting from the pandemic.

Working with Indigenous Relations and Justice and Solicitor General, my department also provided secretariat support to the Alberta Joint Working Group on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls to develop recommendations for the Alberta government to address the calls for justice in the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. From March 5 to December 23, 2021, the joint working group engaged with Indigenous communities and community members, agencies, and organizations and developed advice and recommendations to inform government actions. The joint working group submitted their final report to government, and ministers of Indigenous Relations and Justice and Sol Gen and the Associate Minister of Status of Women have received the report.

**Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk:** Thank you.

What is your ministry doing to support women's leadership and economic participation, and what is your ministry doing to ensure that women and girls are included in Alberta's tech sector and economic recovery?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thank you. In 2020-21 the ministry launched the new leaders in equality award of distinction, or the LEAD program, which was designed to attract and support women and students who are studying in fields where their gender is traditionally underrepresented. The women in STEM stream of the LEAD program targets women who are pursuing careers in STEM, where their gender is traditionally underrepresented. Increasing the presence of women in STEM fields is a step towards bridging the gender pay gap and supporting more women to thrive in the STEM industry. This creates an opportunity to be inclusive of all women, expand the scope of the program, and support reskilling and rescaling in response to the economic impact of COVID-19. Investing in women encourages them to pursue high-quality jobs and be part of Alberta's economic recovery diversification.

The Persons Case scholarship supports students of all genders who are pursuing careers in fields where their gender is traditionally underrepresented. This is inclusive of students from the 2SLGBTQIA-plus community and other equity-seeking groups such as women, racialized students, students living with a disability, and Indigenous students. In the 2021 year, 90 students across Alberta received scholarships, for a total of \$225,000. We also celebrated and declared November 19 as Women's Entrepreneurship Day in Alberta.

To answer your second question, on the tech sector and economic recovery, our government is committed to encouraging and empowering women to pursue high-quality jobs and be part of economic recovery diversification, particularly where those genders are underrepresented in the STEM fields, as discussed. We committed to \$225,000 for the leaders in equality awards, which was launched in 2021, and encourage women and gender-diverse people of all backgrounds.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We'll now move to the fourth and final rotation. The Official Opposition, Member Renaud.

**Ms Renaud:** Thank you, Madam Chair. My questions will be about the Francophone Secretariat. On page 10 of the report it notes that the secretariat "coordinates the implementation of the French Policy across government to enhance . . . services in French and support the vitality of the Francophonie in Alberta." My question is about Campus Saint-Jean. Did the Ministry of Advanced Education

seek the secretariat's input before changes were made to Campus Saint-Jean?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Can you tell me where in the annual report you're drawing that question from?

**Ms Renaud:** On page 10. It's a description of the Francophone Secretariat. Just a simple yes or no is fine. Was there any discussion, conversation, request for information, meeting?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** I believe that question is out of scope for the purposes of this annual report.

**Ms Renaud:** Okay. So can you tell me: did the Francophone Secretariat provide any insight, support, advice to Advanced Education during the year in question?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Well, during the year in question, as mentioned earlier, the COVID-19 pandemic was in full swing, and much of the priority of the work of that area was in our French-language services, providing . . .

**Ms Renaud:** Yeah. I understand that there were words translated. That's not my question. My question is: was there a conversation or meeting, memo, requests for information between the secretariat and Advanced Education at all?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** I'm going to refer that question to our executive director, Rheel Poirier, who is in our audience here.

Thank you, Rheel.

Rheel will just make his way to the podium.

**Mr. Poirier:** Hello. Rheel Poirier, executive director of the Francophone Secretariat. There have been a number of conversations with Advanced Education between ministers and also between officials.

**Ms Renaud:** Okay. Would you be able to table a summary of those conversations or any goals or objectives that were established or any exchange of information?

**Mr. Poirier:** There would not be . . .

**Ms Renaud:** There are no minutes, no record of what was discussed?

**Mr. Poirier:** Informal conversations at this point.

**Ms Renaud:** Okay. So no formal discussions about any issues at all.

**Mr. Poirier:** No. In the co-ordination of the French policy, we work with all departments in a way to ensure that community needs are heard and that we are able to address . . .

**Ms Renaud:** Okay. In the description of the Francophone Secretariat, part of the role is to liaise between the community and Alberta government. Clearly, there were concerns from the community during the year in question. We all saw it. We saw it in the news repeatedly. So could you explain to this committee how you took the information back that you were hearing about changes to Campus Saint-Jean, what you took back to the francophone community?

**Mr. Poirier:** To take the – sorry.

**Ms Renaud:** How did you explain these changes to the francophone community?

**Mr. Poirier:** Our work in the co-ordination of the French policy is to work with all departments. It would have been Advanced Education that would be providing information back.

**Ms Renaud:** Okay. And there's nothing, no records at all from the secretariat indicating any work or advice or anything between Advanced Education and the Francophone Secretariat?

**Mr. Poirier:** There is not.

**Ms Renaud:** Okay. Thank you.

My next question. During the fiscal year in question we got the draft of the K to 6 curriculum, and, as you know, none of the francophone school boards agreed to pilot. In the view of the secretariat: who is responsible for French policy in Alberta, and how useless is a curriculum without a pilot in any francophone school district?

**9:20**

**Dr. Caltagirone:** French policy guides the province's work to enhance and develop services in French to support the vitality of the Francophonie in Alberta, and the area is responsible for the co-ordination of Alberta's French policy across government. The Francophone Secretariat identifies concrete and meaningful initiatives towards the development and enhancement of services in French.

**Ms Renaud:** Okay. If I could just summarize, there's no advice given about Campus Saint-Jean. We know the importance of Campus Saint-Jean in western Canada and Alberta. We now know that the francophone school boards refused to pilot the curriculum, so it seems to me that this would be a very large concern for the Francophone Secretariat. If the primary goal is to preserve and protect the francophone community heritage, it seems to me that that would be a concern. No?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** All conversations within the Francophone Secretariat also occur through the Alberta Advisory Council on the Francophonie, which is a really important part of the Francophone Secretariat. That Advisory Council on the Francophonie advises the minister on ongoing implementation and evaluation of the French policy, so the focus is on policy.

**Ms Renaud:** Would you be able to table that advice or that discussion related to curriculum if there is any?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Our focus is on the French policy.

**Ms Renaud:** Okay. Was there any input at all, whatsoever, during this year in question from the secretariat related to the draft curriculum? Just yes or no, just for clarity.

**Dr. Caltagirone:** The Francophone Secretariat, again, focuses on French policy, not on curriculum writing.

**Ms Renaud:** Okay. So there was no advice given, no advice sought from the Francophone Secretariat related to the curriculum?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** The focus is on French policy.

**Ms Renaud:** So was that a yes or a no?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Again, the focus of the secretariat . . .

**Ms Renaud:** I understand that. My question is: was there any advice given or sought related to the curriculum?



**Dr. Caltagirone:** Similar to the questions that were asked earlier, any curriculum-related questions are better directed to Alberta Education.

**Ms Renaud:** It seems to me that this ministry and the secretariat work in complete silos when in fact we heard in your opening statements that the goal is to provide advice and to work with all ministries. Yet you seem unwilling to answer the question about: what was the interaction on these issues that are really important to the francophone community?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Absolutely. The Alberta advisory council is comprised of a number of members from the community.

**Ms Renaud:** Okay. I don't need to know about the membership. Let me ask a different question. You've mentioned a number of times GBA plus; you talked about inclusion and disability. Could you tell me who in your department has the expertise to provide that lens for different ministries?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Our focus on diversity and inclusion comes through our Status of Women division, that does have that expertise.

**Ms Renaud:** Have you ever consulted with the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities or the disability advocate in any way to establish a benchmark for what inclusion should look like in policy?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** I'm going to refer that question to ADM Jetha in terms of that one.

**Ms Jetha:** We've trained over 3,000 staff on GBA plus. It's inherent in their thinking now, and the public commissioner has also mandated unconscious bias training for all staff.

**Ms Renaud:** Okay. My question is very specific: if there was any consultation or communication with the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities or the disability advocate as it relates to inclusion and disability, which seems to me would be important if you really, truly want to apply a lens of inclusion and disability.

**Ms Jetha:** As I said, the unconscious bias training is mandatory for all staff, and it's inherent in the thinking when they look at policy with that lens.

**Ms Renaud:** Okay. During the fiscal year in question the now former MLA for Fort McMurray-Lac La Biche was parliamentary secretary. Did the Premier issue the parliamentary secretary a work plan or mandate letter or any other document describing expectations for the role?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Can you highlight where in the annual report you're referencing, please?

**Ms Renaud:** Well, it's very clear in this report that there is a parliamentary secretary, and it talks about what the role is. My question is: is there a mandate letter?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Just a point of clarification: are you referring to the Parliamentary Secretary for the Francophonie?

**Ms Renaud:** Yeah.

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thank you. The government of Alberta appointed Alberta's first Parliamentary Secretary for the Francophonie . . .

**Ms Renaud:** Yes. So is there a mandate letter?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** . . . in June of 2019.

**Ms Renaud:** Was there a mandate letter?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** At that time the parliamentary secretary met with 18 francophone stakeholders.

**Ms Renaud:** I'm running out of time. I would just like to know: is there a mandate letter? Yes or no?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** What I can tell you is that the parliamentary secretary was tasked with three areas of focus.

**Ms Renaud:** So is there a mandate letter? Yes or no?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** I can highlight for you those three areas of focus.

**Ms Renaud:** Could you table that for me, please, to this committee? Madam Chair, I'm just asking if there's a mandate letter, yes or no. I'm just trying to get an answer.

**The Chair:** Yep.

**Ms Renaud:** That's all.

**Dr. Caltagirone:** I'm going to refer that question to Executive Director Rheel Poirier.

**The Chair:** Okay. Very good.

Just as a point, I did not want to interrupt. However, I will just point out for the deputy that the determination of whether something is in scope or not is the determination of the chair, not the deputy minister.

Proceed.

**Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk:** Thank you, Chair. Through you to the deputy minister, performance indicator 1(d) in your annual report provides information about the percentage of adult Albertans who volunteered with organizations in their community. I noticed that in 2020-2021 the percentage decreased significantly from previous years. Can the department explain this?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thank you for the question. This indicator shows the level of community volunteerism with charitable or nonprofit organizations by adult Albertans over the previous 12 months. In this case volunteerism refers to the concept of contribution of time, resources, energy, or skills given to a nonprofit, voluntary sector organization or causes for public benefit of one's own free will without monetary compensation.

The decrease in the 2020-21 year period of time of 22 per cent over the previous year is primarily due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated restrictions and closures. In 2021 22.8 per cent of Albertans volunteered in fundraising, 21.6 per cent in human services, 15.7 per cent in community development, 12 per cent in recreation, 12 per cent in youth development, 13.1 per cent in sports, 7.6 per cent in arts and culture, and 6.6 per cent in law, advocacy, and politics, so a number of different areas. Now, results show that of those Albertans who volunteer, 25.1 per cent volunteer from six to 10 hours per month. On average volunteers spent 12.6 hours per month.

Now, the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated restrictions and closures contributed to the significant drop in volunteering: 22.8 per cent of those who volunteered supported COVID-19 response or recovery efforts; 6.9 per cent of the respondents

volunteered for the first time in 2021; and of that 6.9 per cent, 15.2 per cent volunteered because of COVID-19.

**Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk:** Thank you.

The Alberta Jubilee Auditoria plays a very important role in promoting the participation of Albertans in technical, visual, and performance arts. I see on page 28 that key objective 2.7 was to expand opportunities for young Albertans to participate in high-quality art experiences through the Jubilee Auditoria. How has the Alberta Jubilee Auditoria responded to closure and loss of revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thank you for the question. Working with the Alberta Jubilee Auditoria Society, there was a focus on reducing expenses in line with the reduction or cancellation of performances. The resulting cost savings accrued to the Jubilee operating budget. The auditoria were closed on March 12, 2020, and closely followed health restrictions as set out by Alberta Health Services. During this time the Jubilee liaised with AHS to develop safety protocols, guidance, and strategies to facilitate the safe reopening for the live performance sector. This included facility evaluation on patron flow, signage, effective use and placement of PPE such as handwashing stations, staff training, and staff training on patron management.

Although the Jubilees were closed for most of the year, they were able to host a handful of events that were adapted to meet health restrictions. The Northern Jubilee Auditorium hosted the Edmonton Opera drive-in events, the University of Alberta's first virtual spring convocation, and the Shumka production rehearsals for their future national tour. Multiple television and film productions used the Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium as a backdrop, including APTN's *Tribal* and CBS's *Guilty Party*.

The closure of the facilities due to the pandemic has allowed the auditoria to proceed with planned capital projects on an accelerated timeline, including improvements, replacing the carpet and flagstone and improving the auditoria accessibility and maintenance to the stage lighting and audio systems to address long-standing concerns.

9:30

**Ms Armstrong-Homeniuk:** Thank you.

I have no further questions. I'm ceding my time to my colleague MLA Walker.

**Mr. Walker:** Well, thank you so much, MLA Armstrong-Homeniuk and Chair. Staff, Deputy Minister: thank you all so much for being here. I've really enjoyed and been quite enlightened by this thoughtful discourse we've had here this morning. I just want to thank you guys all for the amazing work you do, including in the fiscal year in question, really helping Albertans in all the important files that you guys have jurisdiction over: culture, at the time multiculturalism, status of women.

I would also say, quite frankly, that I agree with the deputy chair. I'm not trying to score brownie points, Chair, but Livingstone-Macleod is an unbelievably beautiful riding, first established in 1997. Sherwood Park was first established at the time in 1986. I mean, from Nanton to High River to Claresholm to Fort Macleod: there's some real beauty there, including what the deputy chair was speaking about regarding amazing things happening in cinema and other culture.

Speaking of culture, I would say, Chair, that I'm so excited for Rogers Hometown Hockey in Sherwood Park this Thursday. Go Oilers, go, all the way. I think we have unanimity for the most part here, maybe not with the Calgary people, but that's okay.

My question in the time remaining, Chair, through you, is on page 20 of the annual report under key objective 1.8 regarding the work done with Service Alberta that resulted with the tabling of the Freedom to Care Act on March 23, 2021. My first question is: what groups were consulted in the development of this act, and what responses did you receive from the public and stakeholders?

**Dr. Caltagirone:** Thank you for the question. A jurisdictional analysis of Canadian provinces and territories, United States, and select international jurisdictions was completed prior to the development of the act.

A survey was conducted by Service Alberta from May 27 to June 26 of 2020; 1,042 responses were received from a wide range of groups within the nonprofit sector. Survey respondents noted confusion navigating through the province's legislation and regulations and were unsure where to go or what to do when they needed something. Sixteen per cent of respondents felt that the laws and regulations were a significant barrier. Respondents also noted that regulations are in place to protect the public good and the health and safety of Albertans but that some mechanisms should be in place to help them do good. The organizations, by sector, that responded to the survey included both national and international social services, environment, business professional associations and unions, philanthropic intermediaries and volunteers, development and housing, religion, law advocacy in politics, arts, health, and a variety of others.

Some of the key findings or observations from the survey included red tape reduction, and most of the identified barriers impeding groups from performing social good extend beyond the inability to secure exemptions to regulations. Reducing red tape and streamlining the administrative burden experienced by nonprofits provides a more comprehensive response to these identified barriers. Funding issues were also identified. Policy and pragmatic shifts by government, onerous reporting requirements, and problematic or outdated legislation appear to be the largest sources of the problems experienced by the sector. Very few respondents referenced specific legislative or regulatory barriers.

Now exemption concerns, another area. Many respondents expressed reservations about expanding access to exemptions, noting regulations are in place to protect public good, health, and safety of Albertans. Stakeholders expressed a preference for changes to regulations, noting that good policy should already have exemption provisions. Furthermore, they felt reducing red tape would significantly improve their ability to perform social good.

Lastly, navigating the system . . .

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We now have the Official Opposition for the fifth rotation. Three minutes, please.

**Ms Renaud:** Thanks. Page 31 notes, "the ministry provided diversity and inclusion analysis on programs, policies and legislation, such as the Police Act review, codes of conducts and standards for professional associations, and the relaunching of the Alberta economy." Will the ministry please table the analysis template used, which programs, policies, and legislation were reviewed? Please table a copy of the review of the Police Act. Also, please list all professional associations that were reviewed and any consultation or communication with the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

The ministry launched four new grant programs to support the nonprofit sector. The charitable donation matching program launched in April matched donations up to \$2 million to eight designated charities. Which eight were selected? How much did

each charity receive? What criteria were used to select them, and what were the anticipated outcomes?

The stabilize program provided one-time grant funding to live-experience organizations, and the report notes that more than 100 live-experience organizations received \$19.3 million. Please table the list of the hundred. What criteria were used to assign the funds? What are the anticipated outcomes for the grant recipients?

Page 27 notes that the Francophone Secretariat worked “with relevant ministries to increase the dissemination of information in French beyond the requirements of [the] French Policy.” Please list all ministries that were partnered with. What were those outcomes?

Finally, page 33, objective 3.6 reads: “Support the cross-government implementation of key actions responding to the Calls for Justice in the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.” My question is: how many monthly meetings were held? Please table any minutes. Were there any recommendations for the government of Alberta? Any timelines or measures?

Thank you. That’s it.

**The Chair:** All right. Seeing no more, we have a three-minute block for members of the government caucus to read questions in to the record for written follow-up.

**Mr. Toor:** Thank you, Chair, and thank you to the department. I really enjoyed the conversation, and I thank you for all the great work you have done, especially during COVID. I’ll just read in the questions.

The annual report states that more than 1,400 grants were approved, and on page 59 it is explained that the ministry’s largest expenditure category of \$165 million, or 69 per cent of the total operating expense, was mainly attributed to extra spending to support the government’s COVID-19 response. Can you provide us with an overview of how many grants were received, and how did these grants benefit Albertans?

I’m also interested in key objective 1.1 on page 15 of the annual report. This ministry and the government are committed to support Alberta’s cultural industries and have set a goal to grow the industry by \$1.5 billion over the next decade. How effective has the ministry

been in advancing the goal of growing Alberta’s creative and cultural industries?

I’ll pass on my time to Member Turton.

**Mr. Turton:** Yes. Thank you very much. Just one last question about page 9 of the annual report. It speaks to the government’s commitment to reduce red tape, of course, to make life easier for Albertans, nonprofits, and businesses. I see on page 14 that the ministry achieved a 14.2 per cent net reduction of red tape, which exceeded the government’s commitment to achieve 12 per cent reduction during the period in discussion. So my two questions are: what did the ministry do to reduce regulatory burden and unnecessary processes for nonprofit organizations? What were the main red tape reduction initiatives your department worked on? Number two, what was the impact of this work, and how have Albertans benefited from such work?

Those are my questions, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** All right. Very good. Thank you very much.

Just as a note to the ministry, we ask that outstanding questions be responded to in writing within 30 days and forwarded to the committee clerk.

I’ll note for the committee members that the Department of Education has just forwarded, as we were sitting in the meeting, their answers to our written questions from November. They were posted on the website. That’s five months late, so I am going to underline to all of the departments that, certainly, committee requests for follow-up information are not optional and that we request that that information come to us within 30 days. That is our function as legislative oversight under the fiscal transparency act, and it is important that we not blow our deadlines. With that, I am requesting that within 30 days Culture and Status of Women and all the other ministries forward their answers to our questions.

Are there any other items for discussion under other business?

Seeing none, the date of our next meeting is Tuesday, May 24 with Jobs, Economy and Innovation.

I’ll remind everyone, those at the table, to remove your bottles and cups for the safety of LAO staff.

I’ll call for a motion to adjourn. A motion by Member Rowswell. All in favour? Any opposed? That motion is carried.

[The committee adjourned at 9:40 a.m.]









