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The 27th Legislature
First Session

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The Honourable Kenneth R. Kowalski, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 27th Legislature

First Session

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[Errata, if any, appear inside back cover]

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, November 20, 2008

[The Speaker in the chair]

Prayers

The Speaker: Good afternoon.

Let us pray. As we conclude for this week our work in this Assembly, we renew our energies with thanks so that we may continue our work with the people in the constituencies we represent. Amen.

Please be seated.

Introduction of Visitors

The Speaker: The hon. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Cao: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour to rise and introduce to you and through you a delegation of the Canada-China Legislative Co-operation Project.

Seated in the Speaker's gallery is a group of trainees headed by Mr. He, Deputy Director-General, Budget and Final Account Examination and Supervision Office of the Budget Affairs Commission of the National People's Congress. Mr. He is joined by colleagues Mr. Chen, Mr. Wang, Mr. Sun, Mr. Lu, Mr. Lin, Mr. Li, Mr. Xu, Mr. Zheng, Mr. Wang, Mr. Zhou, Mr. Zhao, Mr. Mao, Ms Wang, and Ms Kong. The delegation is accompanied by Mrs. Amelita Armit, president and CEO of the Parliamentary Centre, and Mr. Ivo Balinov, Ms Naiwen Liu, and Mr. James Zhang, also of the Parliamentary Centre.

Visiting the Alberta Legislature both today and tomorrow, this visit provides an opportunity for dialogue between Alberta and Chinese parliamentarians, officials, and experts on issues, reforms, challenges, and achievements in parliament's role in the budget process and potential areas of mutually beneficial co-operation in this area.

I would like them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome from the House. The Alberta Legislature welcomes the delegation from China. [Remarks in Mandarin]

Introduction of Guests

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly 83 enthusiastic and inquisitive grade 6 students from George P. Nicholson elementary school in the riding of Edmonton-Whitemud. Accompanying the students are their teachers, Ms Antoniuk, Ms Becker, Mrs. Schmitz, and Mrs. Sprague along with parent helpers Ms Oszust, Mr. Sharp, Mrs. Drever, Mrs. Yakimchuk, Mrs. Reimer, Mrs. Rolfson, Ms Oujla, Mr. Krupa, Mrs. Lentz, Ms Homynyk, and Mrs. Dhanji as well as Marvin Melnychuk. They are seated in the members' gallery and the public gallery, and I would ask them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Strathcona.

Mr. Quest: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today and introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly a group of 20 bright and talented grade 6 students from the Fultonvale elementary school who are visiting the Legislature today from the incredible constituency of Strathcona. They are

accompanied by their teacher, Karin Bittner, and parent helpers Lisa Cooper, Joanne Mack, Shelley Chalifoux, Nora Buxton, Larry Skolski, Roswitha Latta, and Deanna Pollard. They are seated in the members' gallery, and I would like to ask that they all rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's with great pleasure that I introduce to you and through you to this Assembly the council officers and members of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians.

The Association of United Ukrainian Canadians was founded 90 years ago. Originally a fraternal order dedicated to promoting culture education and providing economic insurance benefits for workers, the association was known as the Ukrainian Labour Temple Association. Their national newspapers promoted workers' and farmers' rights, and members were active in the foundation of the social democratic movement in Canada. As well as preserving and expanding Ukrainian culture in Canada, their choirs and dancers were some of the first to tour the country, exposing other Canadians to Ukrainian cultural traditions.

Mr. Speaker, I would now ask my guests to rise as I call their names to receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly: Eve Doskoch, Bill Uhryn, Victor Horon, Blyth Nuttall, Jay Smith, and Mike Uhryn. Please give them a warm welcome.

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

Dr. Taft: Well, thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. It's a great privilege for me to rise and introduce to you and to all members of the Assembly some of my constituents: Ed Sperling; his parents, Felix and Janet; and Ed's grandmother Eva Haley.

Now, the Sperlings are with us today because they're concerned about our health care system's reluctance to diagnose Lyme disease, which Ed fell victim to some time ago. Felix and Janet had to jump through quite a few hoops to get treatment for Lyme disease while Ed himself fell into a catatonic state for a month or longer. Eventually, California testing diagnosed Ed with Lyme disease, and proper antibiotics were administered. He has made a full recovery. The Sperlings are hoping their story will bring the changes needed to prevent other families from enduring the ordeal they had to suffer.

I would ask all members of the Assembly to please give the Sperlings a warm welcome. Thank you.

The Speaker: Are there others? The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise in the House today and introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly 25 keen and enthusiastic grade 9 social studies students from Masters Academy and College in Calgary-Currie along with their teachers, Mr. Neil Nystrom and Mr. Byron Thiessen, and parent helper Scott Roddick. My group is not here right now. They arrived for their picture and then went on their tour. They're coming in during question period, and they'll join us then. But I would ask the members of the Assembly to give them the traditional warm welcome of the House at this time.

The Speaker: Are there others?

Would you join with me, then, in congratulating the hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti. He's celebrating an anniversary today.

Members' Statements

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie.

Special Education Consultation

Mr. Bhardwaj: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is no doubt that issues involving children with special needs evoke strong emotional responses from Albertans and that those who work with special-needs students are passionate about ensuring the best opportunities for these children. I'm pleased to tell you about Setting the Direction for Special Education in Alberta, a project that will examine special education in its entirety. I'm honoured to chair a steering committee of 16 passionate Albertans who were appointed by the Minister of Education to lead this important initiative. The group is made up of people with a variety of backgrounds, thus bringing a variety of perspectives. Each perspective is valued, and each member has a unique interest in special education.

Mr. Speaker, Setting the Direction engages Albertans in creating a framework that creates common language and understanding around the vision, principles, policy, accountability, and funding that is based on continuous improvement for education of students with special needs. Our first round of consultation has already begun. It is important for us to hear from the broadest mix of audience through either online consultations or by participating in our live consultations being conducted all over the province. The first phase will result in a discussion paper in 2009 and will be followed by a second phase of consultation in early spring to explore the framework options. A final consultation will be held through a minister's forum in Edmonton next June.

I'm looking forward to hearing what Albertans have to say because each opinion counts, and each piece of background makes a difference. I urge all Albertans to become involved in setting the direction for special education in this province.

Thank you very much.

The Speaker: The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

1:40

Lyme Disease

Dr. Taft: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Lyme disease is a bacterial infection transmitted to humans by a bite from an infected tick. Ed Sperling, a young constituent of mine who I just introduced, has battled not only this disease but the conflicting information about Lyme disease in Alberta's health care system. Ed was tested for Lyme disease, but the diagnosis came back negative under Alberta criteria, and Ed slid into a protracted catatonic state.

Ed's parents persisted in their search for a diagnosis and sent their son's blood to California. Those tests came back positive. But without a positive diagnosis from an Alberta lab, any physician willing to treat the disease risks censure by the Alberta college. Alberta Health reports that Lyme bacteria are not found in Alberta, and our Provincial Lab recommends that patients without a realistic likelihood of Lyme exposure should not be screened. Yet, Mr. Speaker, Capital health reports that Lyme bacteria have been found even in the Edmonton area in ticks in the river valley. Clearly, there are obvious deficits in the available background information, diagnostic criteria, and testing recommendations for Lyme disease in Alberta.

Tomorrow Janet and Felix, Ed's parents, who are both entomologists at the U of A, will join other scientists to discuss Lyme disease at a University of Calgary workshop sponsored by the Canadian Lyme Disease Foundation. I urge this government to work with the Canadian Lyme Disease Foundation, otherwise known as CanLyme,

on a formal public review and work with federal agencies to revise Lyme disease testing. Albertans who catch Lyme disease need proper diagnosis and treatment.

Thank you very much.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Mackay.

Water for Life Strategy

Ms Woo-Paw: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last night Alberta celebrated five years of Water for Life and recognized the many stakeholders and individuals who had a hand in making the Water for Life strategy such a success. Our partnerships are the vehicles, the champions of Water for Life. Without these partnerships we would not be where we are today and would not be able to reach our goals of tomorrow.

After five years of hard work, of learning, of success it is time to say thank you. Thank you to all those who had a role in establishing Water for Life, a comprehensive and forward-thinking framework that remains one of North America's leading water management strategies. The strategies of five years ago set the foundation for improved water management throughout Alberta today.

One of Water for Life's biggest accomplishments is its partners, the 140 watershed stewardship groups who implement on-the-ground measures to increase public awareness and encourage individual action: the watershed planning and advisory councils, who bring together different sectors to do the planning and research necessary for informed decision-making; the Alberta Water Council, who develop consensus-based recommendations to improve provincial policy, including the Water for Life renewal recommendations and the wetlands policy recommendations; the people of Alberta, who demonstrate their concern for Alberta's water challenges by being a part of the solution.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank them again in this House for all they have done for this province in the past five years and all that they will do in the coming years.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake.

U of A Faculty of Native Studies

Ms Calahasen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the University of Alberta, which is my alma mater, celebrates its centenary, the Faculty of Native Studies, the only such faculty in Canada, also celebrates 20 years since granting its first degree in 1988. In fact, 321 graduates have now received their degrees in native studies. The faculty currently has 131 students, about 50 per cent of whom are nonaboriginal.

Many constituents of mine have received their bachelor's, master's, and PhD degrees from this very faculty. Not only were they challenged by the content but indicated that the faculty staff were exemplary.

The Faculty of Native Studies doesn't only serve Albertans and Canadians. They also have international research partnerships with indigenous scholars in New Zealand and Nicaragua. Since inception it has been successful in developing many other partnerships. These include joint degree programs with the Faculty of Agriculture, Life and Environmental Sciences, the Faculty of Education, and a new joint degree in planning with the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation.

Last May the Faculty of Native Studies launched its new program in aboriginal leadership, governance, and partnership and acknowledged the firm support of this government for this new program.

Congratulations to the Faculty of Native Studies and all the people who have graduated from that program, and thank you for your commitment.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Athabasca-Redwater.

National Housing Day

Mr. Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This coming Saturday, November 22, is National Housing Day. The need for affordable housing and supports for homeless people continues to be a significant challenge across Canada, and Alberta is no exception. About 11,000 people in Alberta have no place to call home and rely on shelters for food and a safe bed. Other entry-level workers move to Alberta and end up couch surfing while trying to find a permanent address.

In response the Premier created Canada's only stand-alone ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, a ministry solely dedicated to resolving these challenges. With community and municipal partners Housing and Urban Affairs has supported several key programs, including the homeless and eviction prevention fund, the direct rent supplement program, the rapid exit program in Edmonton, and the Pathways to Housing program in Calgary.

These valuable programs are yielding real progress. Last year over 50,000 Albertans were assisted in keeping their homes or moving to other housing. The government and its partners are on track to achieve a goal of 11,000 affordable housing units by 2012. This year the development of 2,200 affordable housing units was added to the 3,400 supported last year. Alberta cities are already also receiving \$112 million in block funding for additional affordable housing units, and \$142 million in capital funding was allocated for the creation of affordable housing. RFPs were open to non-profits, private developers, and municipalities. In Calgary 60 homeless families were successfully placed in permanent safe houses during the first year of a two-year rapid exit pilot project, and a similar project has been launched in Edmonton.

Mr. Speaker, by continuing to work with Alberta's communities, nonprofits, and private industry, we can end homelessness as we know it today and build a stronger Alberta, a place where all Albertans can feel at home.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

Fiscal Responsibility

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Alberta is riding an economic roller coaster. After a steep climb everyone is wondering how far the next drop will be. Over the past several years the province has brought in temporary foreign workers to accommodate an overheated economy. The government does not worry too much about their rights. These workers are seen as a disposable commodity.

Even now as unemployment begins to rise, the government is going ahead with its plan to export jobs by sending bitumen down new pipelines to upgraders in the United States. This is clearly not in the public interest, but it's a favour to the oil industry that the government is determined to deliver. The favours are piling up, Mr. Speaker.

Before the last election the government announced a small increase in royalties for oil and gas that would still keep Alberta's royalty rates among the lowest in the world. Yesterday the government backtracked by announcing a new five-year royalty holiday which will cut further into the province's declining revenues. The

day before a sweetheart royalty deal was announced with Syncrude.

The cost of such short-sightedness to Alberta's economy will be significant and will only add to the tight fiscal situation the province is facing in the coming years, one that was outlined in the Mintz report released yesterday. Dr. Mintz warned that Alberta is heading towards a deficit if it does not take significant steps to plan for the long term, but the government is heading in the opposite direction and is repeating the mistakes of the past. It gives tax cuts and royalty breaks to its friends in oil and gas, which then forces the government to choose between a large deficit or massive cuts to programs like health and education, which the public depends upon. The government can't seem to break this dysfunctional cycle, and Albertans will again pay the price.

Thank you.

Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Lacombe-Ponoka.

Mr. Prins: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On April 17, 2008, the Assembly passed Government Motion 8, which directed the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing to review and consider the temporary amendments to the standing orders and other issues relating to the proceedings in the Assembly. As chair of this committee I am pleased to rise today to table five copies of the committee's final report on this matter and to have copies of the report distributed to all hon. members of this Assembly. I would like to acknowledge the support provided to the committee by the staff of the Legislative Assembly Office, and I would also like to thank all committee members for their input in the review process, particularly the House leaders for their hard work on this project.

Thank you.

Oral Question Period

The Speaker: First Official Opposition main question. The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

Provincial Fiscal Strategy

Dr. Taft: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government's claim that it is debt free is just not true. Only when this government acknowledges the true scale of the situation will we be able to find appropriate solutions. This government claims the province is debt free, but it isn't. To the President of the Treasury Board: will he admit that the current infrastructure deficit in Alberta is conservatively at least \$12 billion and that this government's financial situation is far more perilous than his earlier bravado would suggest?

1:50

Mr. Snelgrove: Mr. Speaker, I would admit that it takes a lot of money and good planning to maintain a lot of roads and a lot of buildings. There are times when we allocate money to upgrade buildings, to maintain roads. We do that within the total context of what's available from the pool to do. There are many other provinces in Canada that have not had the luxury to be able to budget like that. If you take the nation-wide shortage or infrastructure deficit, his numbers may be true. They're certainly not true here.

The Speaker: The hon. leader.

Dr. Taft: Well, thank you. Actually, Mr. Speaker, when you add

the teachers' pension liability, the infrastructure debt, and P3 liabilities, you get over \$20 billion of provincial debt. Again to the same minister: why won't this government admit it has a huge debt?

Mr. Snelgrove: Mr. Speaker, to confuse the teachers' pension liability with infrastructure liability may be a method that works over there. Let's be clear: there are tremendous pressures on pension funds of every kind right now around the world. We made some very appropriate moves last year to remove the unfunded portion of the teachers' pension to assist the new teachers coming in where they could pay a fair amount to it. If the hon. member doesn't like that part, I'm not sure why. We do have pensions that will need to be topped up, but you also need to wait until the people that administer these pensions can come back to us with the numbers.

The Speaker: The hon. leader.

Dr. Taft: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're simply trying to get this government to admit the facts so that it can appropriately respond to a very challenging situation. The President of the Treasury Board continues to deny some very obvious problems. There was no strategy during our recent years of plenty. We see ourselves staring at a heritage fund that has dramatically lost value and at a large set of provincial liabilities. Again to the same minister: why does this government have no fiscal strategy?

Mr. Snelgrove: You know, I hope they pay for some of this at home.

Have no strategy, Mr. Speaker? We're the only province that's debt free. We have set aside billions of dollars into a sustainability fund in case some of the things outside of our control happen. We have control of our spending, and we have control of the priorities that Albertans have. Addressing those priorities with the available dollars is what we do. It's difficult to understand how this hon. member would think we could control the global economy. I mean, they're very good at hindsight governance. But, you know, looking forward, we have set the financial house in order for this province for many decades down the road.

The Speaker: Second Official Opposition main question. The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

Investment and Savings Strategy

Dr. Taft: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Without any fiscal strategy – and, honestly, people out there don't see that you have one – even after years of plenty Alberta is in a fragile financial situation. This government simply spends without any strategy. The government is refusing to admit it has a problem, and this denial prevents any real change from happening and keeps this province in a position of fiscal peril. Again to the same minister. In last year's budget the government forecast oil prices of \$54 for 2008. How has this government managed to let things get so far out of control when oil revenues . . .

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Snelgrove: Two year ago that's what the experts in the industry thought oil was going to be. We forecast based on information we get. You know, to suggest that somehow Albertans out there don't understand our plan, where I represent, 81 and a half per cent of them understood your plan, and they voted for me. I mean, I find it somewhat surprising that we can be accused of having no plan.

Albertans certainly must have liked something of what they saw from our new Premier and from the history of this government because they have rewarded them and themselves with a good solid government for four more years.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Dr. Taft: Well, thanks, Mr. Speaker. The fact is that the price of oil has consistently been far higher than this government forecasts, bringing in all kinds of extra revenue, which is fine. That's all fine, but will the President of the Treasury Board acknowledge that spending all that excess revenue in recent years simply overheated the economy and set us up for a very harsh correction?

Mr. Snelgrove: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the finance minister laid out very clearly the billions of dollars that Alberta has invested, whether it's in medical research or the heritage fund or the sustainability fund or the capital fund, the infrastructure that we have built to keep Albertans working, the debt that we've eliminated. You know, I don't know exactly what he was trying to prove about us forecasting prudently. When we forecast \$78 and it went up, they said: "What are you doing? How did you not know it's going up?" Well, then it went down. The hon. member is certainly entitled to stand up and tell this House any day what oil is going to be next year at this time. If he thinks that that's how we should plan, good. We have planned prudently.

Dr. Taft: My point, Mr. Speaker, is that billions of dollars in excess revenue came in in the last several years, and it's gone. We did not have a strategy. Without a disciplined savings approach, when the money came in, the government just spent it wherever it wanted. Now we're in for hard times in this province, with the minister of health predicting health care cuts. Will the President of the Treasury Board admit that a savings plan isn't just a rainy-day fund, but it is a moral obligation to the future generations of this province?

Mr. Snelgrove: Mr. Speaker, it is the same as in our lives. It is prudent to put aside for future years in a responsible way. It is also prudent to maintain the roof and the driveway and to keep the furnace working and to get your kids educated. But first off, you do have to feed the kids, and you do have to keep the roof. At the end of the day if they've got their education and the roof is fixed and you've got some money left, you can put that in the bank. I don't know what kind of planning would say: let the kids go hungry, and to hell with the roof; put the money in the bank.

The Speaker: Third Official Opposition main question. The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie.

Water Transfers

Mr. Taylor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Albertans realize that our most precious resource is water and want their government to ensure proper water management. Yesterday's Water for Life renewal was long on talk but kind of short on details. To the Minister of Environment. You've stated that water resources must be managed within the capacity of individual watersheds. Are you, then, committing to enhanced scrutiny when it comes to intrabasin – not interbasin but intra, i-n-t-r-a, basin – transfers such as between the Red Deer River and Bow River basins?

Mr. Renner: Mr. Speaker, I answered this exact question of his colleague a couple days ago, and I indicated at that time that the

Water Council has made some recommendations to us. The recommendations acknowledge that there are intrabasin transfers that are already in place but put a cautionary note on further expansion of intrabasin transfers. Government is taking that recommendation under consideration.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister has indicated that he will explore economic instruments; in other words, put a price on water. Is the minister planning a full water market in Alberta, and has he considered if this will make water a commodity under the North American free trade agreement and put it up for sale?

Mr. Renner: Mr. Speaker, in case the member hasn't noticed, we already do have trading of water that's going on in this province. But I'd point out that it's not water that's the commodity; it's the licences that are being traded. That has gone on for quite some time. Now that we've got a closed basin, the South Saskatchewan River basin, there is no availability of new licences to users, so it only makes sense that the government would facilitate the transfer of existing licences to provide for further economic development and expansion within the region.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Curiously, the renewed strategy again commits to the principle of first in time, first in right for existing water allocations. Now, the minister indicated on Monday in this House that it's time to revisit this 100-year-old principle. Will he commit right now to an immediate and comprehensive review of the FITFIR system?

Mr. Renner: Mr. Speaker, I indicated that the FITFIR system has served us extremely well for a hundred years. The environment that we operate in now is different. I'm not suggesting for a moment – and I want to emphasize that fact – that we should throw the system out. What we are suggesting is that we should have a look at whether or not the first in time, first in right system that has served us so well in the past will continue to do so in the future and whether there needs to be some additional regulations and policies put in place to enhance that existing system.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood, followed by the hon. Member for St. Albert.

2:00 Alberta Health Services Board

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The government's health plans are secretive, careless, and putting Albertans at risk. Syringes were reused in hospitals, so this government decided some people would get tested and some wouldn't. Babies died from syphilis, so this government axed an awareness campaign about the disease. Experts walked away from public health because of ministerial interference, so this government labelled them greedy whiners. The minister today handed over the reins of the health care system to private sector and oil and gas executives. It's unbelievable. The question is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Why are you abdicating the responsibility for Albertans' health to big oil executives?

Mr. Liepert: Mr. Speaker, I think that Albertans should be pleased

that we have 15 individuals from business, from government, from various professions that are prepared to ensure that this system for Albertans is the most effective, most efficient, most accessible, and sustainable into the future.

Mr. Mason: Mr. Speaker, he forgot to say the most privatized.

Board member Tony Franceschini is the CEO of Stantec engineering, a firm that makes money by building hospitals in Alberta, including participating in the Mazankowski and the Grande Prairie health centre and a number of others. Why is the minister ignoring this very obvious conflict of interest?

Mr. Liepert: Well, Mr. Speaker, if he feels there's a conflict of interest, I would suggest he say it outside this House because there is no conflict of interest. Mr. Franceschini is one of the pre-eminent business leaders in this city, and if he doesn't believe that, say so outside, where he doesn't have the protection of this House.

Mr. Mason: Too late, Mr. Speaker. I already have.

The fact of the matter is that he is the CEO of a company that does an enormous amount of work for Alberta health – an enormous amount – and he's going to be in a conflict of interest. Why did you appoint him? Why don't you care about conflict of interest in this government?

Mr. Liepert: Mr. Speaker, I care dearly about conflict of interest in this government. What we have are, as I said, 15 individuals from various parts of this province who are prepared to ensure that we have one of the most efficient, accessible, sustainable health care systems in the world.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for St. Albert, followed by the hon. Member for Lethbridge-East.

Cardiac Treatment Services in Edmonton

Mr. Allred: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Alberta Health Services has recently announced a cardiology fundraising campaign in connection with the C.K. Hui heart centre at the Royal Alexandra hospital in Edmonton. My first question to the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness is: what is the difference between the cardiac treatment services provided at the Royal Alex and the services provided by the Mazankowski cardiac care institute?

Mr. Liepert: Well, Mr. Speaker, that's a good question. When I heard the initiative – I think it was last week – I asked the same question. What was quickly pointed out to me is that Edmonton has a strong cardiac network, including five different facilities. I should say that all of the heart patients in this particular part of the region should be very pleased that Dr. Hui has made such a contribution. The difference is that the Mazankowski will be used for heart surgery and transplants, and the Hui centre is for angioplasty.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Allred: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A supplemental to the same minister. Would it not be more efficient to house both of these facilities under one roof?

Mr. Liepert: Well, again, I guess that's the same sort of question that I was asking, but I was told that, as I said, there are some five facilities, including the Glenrose, Sturgeon, and U of A hospitals, that all provide some facet of cardiac care. I would suspect that

going forward, it will be part of what the Alberta Health Services Board will be looking at to ensure that we are making optimum use of our facilities.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Allred: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My final question is also for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Given that there were 45,000 fixed-wing air ambulance transfers from northern Alberta last year for various medical emergencies and the strategic location of the Royal Alex hospital to the City Centre Airport, how reliant is this facility on the availability of air service?

Mr. Liepert: Well, Mr. Speaker, the City Centre Airport in Edmonton provides a very important location of access to health care, primarily for regions and patients from the north. Now, I am aware that Edmonton city council is currently involved in an assessment of the City Centre Airport. I guess my only ask would be that members of council consider the important role that it plays in health care delivery in this city and the northern part of Alberta.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Lethbridge-East, followed by the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Camrose.

Lacombe Foundation Land Development

Ms Pastoor: Mr. Speaker, a number of citizens from the town of Lacombe are angry about the municipality's approach of discounting land prices for affordable housing. Now instead of creating affordable housing, the town of Lacombe appears to be going ahead with a high-end residential airpark. To the Minister of Municipal Affairs: will the minister meet with the concerned citizens of Lacombe to hear their objections to the municipality's strategy of land development in the name of affordable housing?

Mr. Danyluk: Well, Mr. Speaker, this is a local issue between the council and the citizens of Lacombe. Also, I understand that there have been discussions between the town and the citizens, but there is a process in the MGA that allows for citizens to bring forward their concerns. They can also bring forward a petition. I will say in answer to your question that I really do not have a problem with meeting, and I will meet with them. But I do want to say to you that I believe that . . .

The Speaker: Maybe the next one.
The hon. member.

Ms Pastoor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister. Again to the same minister: how is it that the Lacombe Foundation, a foundation with over \$3 million of liens against it and with almost \$2 million of grants from the Alberta government in the past year alone, is discussing additional funding for a project that is currently \$1.4 million over budget for a still unfinished 28-unit affordable housing project?

Mr. Danyluk: Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to ask the minister of housing to comment because that is in her jurisdiction.

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mrs. Fritz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Lacombe Foundation did receive \$1.4 million, and that was to develop 28 units of affordable housing in Lacombe about two years ago. I understand that that

project is about 90 per cent complete, hon. member and also that the foundation encountered some difficulties with the developer, and it's before the courts.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Ms Pastoor: Thank you for that. I would ask the Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs. Yesterday you stated that you received 145 proposals for \$142 million in grants for affordable housing. What criteria will you use in the coming weeks and months to ensure that the money is being well allocated and that the process is transparent? Clearly, there was a problem with the Lacombe Foundation.

Mrs. Fritz: Mr. Speaker, these projects must be viable, and they must be sustainable, and they must be affordable. I can tell you that no funding is allocated until the department has a signed agreement and until the applicant has an approved development permit and also has title to the land. Having said that, you can see that they must have their ducks in a row; they must be, you know, ready to build. When they are, what we do is that we advance 50 per cent of the funding at the beginning of the project. As the project moves forward, we advance funding along the way. It's a two-year window for the projects to be built.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Camrose, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Drinking Water Quality

Mr. Olson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today relate to drinking water, and they're for the Minister of Environment. One of the key goals of the Water for Life strategy was to ensure safe, secure drinking water, and of course that's a particular concern for all Albertans and certainly for my constituents. I'm just wondering if the minister can provide some specifics as to what the Water for Life strategy has accomplished in terms of drinking water since it was first implemented.

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Renner: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we already heard in a member's statement from the Member for Calgary-Mackay, last night in Calgary we celebrated five years of outstanding success in the Water for Life, and one of the areas that we highlighted and that I highlighted in the remarks that I made was the progress we've made with respect to drinking water. We have a province-wide review of more than 500 municipal water systems that was conducted in 2004 to give us the most current, up-to-date status with where that system is in place. We've encouraged a number of regional water systems to be developed, and above all, we have created a website where Albertans have complete and full access to all of the testing results from any water system in the province.

2:10

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Olson: Thank you. Another question for the same minister. I think small communities probably have some greater challenges in terms of drinking water, and I'm wondering how the Water for Life strategy can help those small communities?

Mr. Renner: Well, Mr. Speaker, Alberta has some of the highest

standards, if not the highest standards, for drinking water in the country, and the way we accomplish that is by working with all of the various communities that are responsible for treating that water. We recognize that there are challenges for some of the smaller communities. To that extent, we are assisting with the development of regional systems. There's less operating that is required. To date there have been 20 such projects that have funding that's approved and 50 more in a planning process. We've got a program in place to assist operators of some of these small operations, and we continue to find solutions for the smaller communities.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Olson: Thank you. A question again for the same minister, a somewhat similar question to the last one but relating to aboriginal communities, First Nations communities. Can you advise as to what steps you're taking to assist them?

Mr. Renner: Well, the member is absolutely right. There are similarities between aboriginal communities, First Nations, and our other partners in the delivery of water. We are working on the same basis. We co-ordinate with First Nations and the government of Canada to provide the same kind of training to operators on First Nations. We share facility designs with First Nations. The difference, Mr. Speaker, is that it's really a three-way partnership. It's not just the government of Alberta and the First Nation, but it's also the government of Canada. We've embarked on a very, I think, promising co-operative agreement between Alberta, First Nations, and the government of Canada to ensure that we can deliver these programs appropriately.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods.

Alberta Health Services Board (continued)

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today the minister of health appointed Jim Clifford to a one-year term on the Alberta Health Services Board. Mr. Clifford was an executive vice-president, director of strategic brand marketing for CommonHealth, based in New Jersey. He also has many years' experience in health care services, marketing, and operations. He has been described as the consummate marketer. My first question is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Why does the government find it necessary to appoint a private health care marketer to the Alberta Health Services Board?

Mr. Liepert: Well, Mr. Speaker, unlike the Liberal opposition we're open to new ideas, new thinking. A new board is going to bring new perspectives, and we want to ensure that we have as many perspectives from across North America as we can get, and we're delighted that someone of his calibre would be prepared to serve on our board.

Mr. MacDonald: Given that your rural caucus is not nearly as enthusiastic about your privatization efforts as they should be, will Mr. Clifford be advising the Public Affairs Bureau on the communication strategy that you're going to use to privatize health care delivery in this province?

Mr. Liepert: Well, Mr. Speaker, my rural colleagues aren't enthusiastic about privatization. I'm not either. So I'm not exactly sure what the hon. member is referring to. You know, this particular

member – and I've said this before – I mean, he looks for a bogeyman behind every door. He's just out there opening doors left, right, and centre, and he's been unable to find any bogeyman, so he's making him up.

Mr. MacDonald: Mr. Speaker, I'm sitting across from one.

Again to the same minister: why are these board members selected by you with your absolute power, and why are they not elected by the citizens of this province?

Mr. Liepert: Well, Mr. Speaker, they weren't selected by me. They were determined – we put forward a list of names before this caucus, which was duly elected by Albertans just a short six months ago, and caucus approved the list that was released today.

Offender Supervision

Mr. Benito: Mr. Speaker, many of my constituents were pleased to hear about the recently announced 183 new police positions in Alberta. However, many of them have rightly pointed out that boots on the streets are only part of the solution to crime reduction. My questions are for the Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security. What is his department doing to help offenders turn their lives around to prevent them from reoffending and revictimizing Albertans upon release?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Lindsay: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the next few years we'll be hiring an extra 110 probation officers to reduce caseloads. This is going to allow our probation officers the opportunity to provide more intensive supervision of offenders in our communities. This will also reduce the chance for the individuals to reoffend and provide the necessary support to help them get their lives back on track, and this is going to help ensure that our communities remain safe for all of us.

Mr. Benito: To the same minister. In his answer he talks about an important point. What is his ministry doing to tackle the serious problem of those repeat offenders who are unwilling or unable to turn their lives around?

Mr. Lindsay: Well, Mr. Speaker, we're sending a very clear message to repeat offenders: either use the supports that are available to them, or they're going to find themselves back behind bars. Earlier this month our Premier announced initiatives that will see law enforcement, the courts, and probation officers targeting 60 serious repeat offenders, who will be monitored very closely to ensure that they do stay on track. Again, they'll be given every opportunity to turn their lives around and contribute to society, but if they don't, as I indicated earlier, they will be back behind bars.

Mr. Benito: Again to the same minister. It seems that so many of the crimes we heard about are gun related. More intensive supervision of offenders in our communities may help those individuals turn their lives around. How is this government going after guns?

Mr. Lindsay: Well, again, Mr. Speaker, we recently announced the establishment of four integrated police enforcement teams that will be operating across the province. They will be targeting organized crime and gangs in this province. They will also be targeting the drug trade and the gangs who profit from them. These teams will complement the great work that is already being done through the

integrated response to organized crime, that targets the upper echelon of organized crime.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona.

Alberta Health Services Board (continued)

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the former Capital health authority has been consistently rated by various organizations, including *Maclean's* magazine, as one of the leading health regions in Canada, the appointments made by the minister of health earlier today raise serious questions. Again to the minister: why was no one from the former Capital health board appointed to the permanent 15-member board of Alberta Health Services considering their stellar record in the past?

Mr. Liepert: Mr. Speaker, no one was appointed from the Calgary health region, the Palliser health region, the Aspen health region, or the David Thompson region.

Mr. MacDonald: I noticed that.

Again to the same minister: why was no one from the Friends of Medicare appointed to the permanent 15-member board of Alberta Health Services? [interjection] Don't laugh.

Mr. Liepert: Mr. Speaker, ironically enough, a former member, who did not win his seat this past spring, who is now involved with Friends of Medicare actually applied to be on the board, and our search firm who did the interviews interviewed him and determined that he was not among the best candidates.

Mr. MacDonald: Again to the same minister: why does the minister need absolute political control over this board? Why is it not elected by the citizens? If David Eggen had run, I'm confident he would have won if he'd had an election to put his name forward and not your fixed process.

Mr. Liepert: Well, Mr. Speaker, this government made a determination some time ago that our health boards would be appointed, and we stand by that. This is just another step in that process.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood, did I see you rise on a point of order?

Mr. Mason: Yes, you did, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: That's to the minister's second response?

Mr. Mason: Yes.

The Speaker: Okay. We'll deal with it later.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, followed by the hon. Member for Strathcona.

New Royalty Framework

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last October the new Stelmach government announced a trivial royalty increase. By April they'd backed down on their pre-election promise, giving a billion dollar break to deep drilling. Now, before the regime finally kicks in, they've announced that shallow drilling is getting a \$2 billion break. They're just looking for ways to back down on their pre-

election promise, and I am not convinced that Albertans will ever get this \$3 billion in royalties back. To the Minister of Energy: why have you broken yet another promise to Albertans?

2:20

Mr. Knight: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I haven't broken any promises to Albertans. I did indicate to Albertans earlier and will stand behind those comments that it's my responsibility to keep Albertans at work. That's exactly what this program will do.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, this agreement ties our hands for five years. Oil and gas prices won't always stay low; they'll rebound. No matter what the price is, we'll be stuck with this bottom-of-the-barrel deal. It will be Albertans who pay the price in higher taxes and reduced public services. To the Minister of Energy: when will you start sticking up for the interests of Albertans and stop padding the pockets of your friends in the oil and gas industry?

Mr. Knight: Well, Mr. Speaker, you know, we're slightly different from our good folks in the opposition across. We are looking after the interests of Albertans.

Let's remember this: on January 1, 2009, almost 200,000 producing wells in the province of Alberta transfer to the new royalty framework, which is very price and production sensitive, and even the transition that is allowed in the new royalty framework is price and production-level sensitive. We will get increased income with increased production or increased prices.

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, if it's price and market sensitive, then presumably we didn't need it this time.

In the last day industry executives have said it themselves: the industry is used to coping with external factors such as volatile oil prices. This five-year royalty holiday won't fix the problem. Instead, it will contribute to the depletion of our savings even further and force the government to cut public services. Again to the Minister of Energy: will you commit, when the price of oil rises again, to raising the royalty rates and scrapping this deal so that Albertans can finally get their fair share?

Mr. Knight: Mr. Speaker, very obviously she doesn't understand the answer that I gave her the first time. I'll just try again. Two hundred thousand wells are producing in the province of Alberta. The transition that we're talking about is only relative to a very few wells, probably 1,300 to 1,500 new wells drilled after 2009, not the whole production system in the province of Alberta. Just take a look at the numbers and be realistic about this thing. It's good for Albertans, good for the people that work, and good for the government.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, you committed a faux pas in your first question. You will study over the weekend to figure out what it was – okay? – and let me know on Monday.

The hon. Member for Strathcona.

Charitable Donations

Mr. Quest: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. November 15 was National Philanthropy Day. Each year this day recognizes those who've made a difference in people's lives and a difference in our communities. To the Minister of Culture and Community Spirit: what have you done to support philanthropy in Alberta?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Blackett: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What we've done to support philanthropy is our day-to-day operations in our government. Alberta has a strong history of philanthropy. We give more per capita than any other Canadian province of our time and our energy to build our strong and safe communities and to make sure that the less fortunate are taken care of. We have the Alberta community spirit tax credit. Our province has one of the highest charitable tax credits in Canada. Through our government's community spirit program charities and nonprofit organizations across Alberta are able to leverage the donations that they receive from individuals to apply for a proportional grant.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Quest: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My next question to the same minister. There's a limit on how much nonprofit organizations can access through the community spirit grant program. What have you done to help donors support larger projects?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Blackett: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member makes a great point. The community spirit program is not attempting to solve all the problems but to help increase charitable donations to these organizations so they continue their important work. For larger projects the grant matching through major community facilities programs – CFEP, CIP, Wild Rose, and others – will help most larger projects and those organizations.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Quest: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My last question to the same minister: moving forward and with the economic uncertainty, what will you do to maintain the spirit of giving in Alberta?

Mr. Blackett: Well, what we can do, Mr. Speaker, is let Albertans know that even though we're experiencing some troubled, uncertain times, we have to remember what made our province so great. That was Albertans' willingness to contribute to our not-for-profit arts organizations and others. If we continue to give even in these troubled times, whether it's the corporate sector or the individual sector, we'll continue to maintain these over 19,000 important organizations.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Varsity, followed by the hon. Member for Livingstone-Macleod.

Child Protection

Mr. Chase: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has been a concern among many of the parents and grandparents who have contacted me that children's services has often acted too quickly based on questionable allegations to remove children from their parents and then restrict the ability of parents and grandparents to have any meaningful, sustained contact with their children. Can the minister explain how beyond the obvious threats of violence or deprivation the determination is made to remove a child?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Tarchuk: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can tell you that

we're always focused on the best interests of the child. I would suggest that if the hon. member has a specific situation he wants me to look into, I welcome that information.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Chase: Thank you very much. The minister must agree that keeping families together is the most desirable result to come from children's services investigating complaints and accusations. Can the minister provide Alberta's families some explanation as to how long caseworkers give family enhancement services the opportunity to intervene before children are removed from the home?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Tarchuk: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, the circumstances will always be different for different children, different families, but I can assure you that we will always stay focused on what is in the best interests of the child.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Chase: Thank you. Does the minister plan to expand supervised visits and make safe visitation sites permanent throughout the province based on the highly successful pilot projects so that families are provided with every supported opportunity to remain together?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Ms Tarchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Personally, I would like to see that. I think that you're right in that the pilot projects that we have had have been successful, and recently, in the past year, we've added more sites. Based on the success of those, I do see us moving forward.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Livingstone-Macleod, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary-Buffer.

Assembly of First Nations General Assembly

Mr. Berger: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was announced yesterday that for the first time in the city's history the city of Calgary will host the 30th annual general assembly of the Assembly of First Nations in July 2009. To the Minister of Aboriginal Relations: what role did your ministry play in securing this bid for the historic event in Calgary?

Mr. Zwodzesky: Mr. Speaker, that was truly a historic announcement yesterday. Our government was very proud to have supported the Treaty 7 bid that went forward and won out over two or three other Canadian cities to host the 30th anniversary of the Assembly of First Nations' major conference next year in Calgary and area. We provided support in the form of \$100,000. Specifically, \$50,000 will be provided by my Ministry of Aboriginal Relations, and \$50,000 will be provided by the Ministry of Culture and Community Spirit. So we're there as a helping partner, if you will.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Berger: Thank you. My first supplemental to the same minister: the chiefs of the Treaty 7 were instrumental in organizing and promoting this event. What is the further role of the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations in the upcoming assembly?

Mr. Zwozdesky: Well, Mr. Speaker, I expect our role will be one of being a supportive partner, if you will, and also one that entails our going to those parts of the conference and assembly that we are invited to, help facilitate some discussions, if you will, and then to anxiously anticipate the outcomes of their resolutions because it is largely a policy conference for First Nations. I might add that it's the first time that it's being hosted by Treaty 7 in the Calgary area, which is a very big plus for that city and for those First Nations involved.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Berger: Thank you. My second supplemental to the same minister. More than 3,000 delegates are expected to attend, including 633 chiefs from across Canada as well as proxy voters. Can the minister elaborate on the economic benefits expected for the city and the province?

Mr. Zwozdesky: Well, Mr. Speaker, the economic impact, if you will, is only one of many important impacts that will be coming out of this major policy conference, the largest assembly that they hold every couple of years. There will also be an election of their new national chief or the re-election; we'll wait and see. Specifically, there will also be in-depth discussions, which we'll all be involved in, at least those that we're invited to. I'm hoping that the issues of housing and infrastructure and roadways and especially education and other important issues like that will be the centre of attention. In terms of direct economic impact it'll be in the neighbourhood of \$2 million plus.

2:30 VLTs and Slot Machines

Mr. Hehr: Mr. Speaker, in 1995, when Alberta capped the number of VLTs at 6,000, the reason behind the measures was clear, to mitigate the social impact of government-sanctioned gaming. Everyone knows that the odds on gaming in the province are stacked in the house's favour, and the only thing worse than lemons, because you can make lemonade, are two lemons and a cherry. My question is for the Solicitor General. Given that slot machines operate in the same manner and produce the same harm as VLTs, by having roughly 12,000 slot machines currently operating, has this government essentially ignored the reasons for the cap on VLTs?

The Speaker: The hon. Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security.

Mr. Lindsay: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member is right with his numbers. For the last 13 years, I guess, we have limited to 6,000 VLTs in the province. We have no intention to increase that number. The numbers regarding slot machines are similar, at 12,000, as he has indicated. I will say that we have one of the best social responsibility programs in Canada and probably across the United States, so we are looking after the small number of players who do get addicted to gaming.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Hehr: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since 2005 more than a thousand slot machines per year have hit the floors of gaming facilities. As indicated, there are roughly 12,000 of them. Will the minister at least commit to capping the number at and around that number?

Mr. Lindsay: Mr. Speaker, I guess the simple answer is no. We're not looking at capping slot machines. However, we will be conducting a review of all of our casinos across the province to ensure that we have the right balance and that those who use casinos for a matter of recreation have that opportunity. But at the present time we're not considering putting a cap on slot machines.

Mr. Hehr: Experts, including Albertans facing gaming addictions, refer to VLTs and slot machines as the crack cocaine of gambling. Will this government address the cumulative effects caused by the increased availability of these machines, or is the addiction to gaming revenue so severe that they are wilfully blind to the suffering of vulnerable Albertans?

Mr. Lindsay: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, first of all, certainly this government is not addicted to gaming and gaming revenues. The majority of those funds go back to the communities and are very well utilized through Alberta lotteries. As I indicated, there certainly is a small percentage of Albertans who have trouble with addiction regarding gaming, and we have a number of programs in place to look after their needs.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Athabasca-Redwater, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

SCAN Investigative Teams

Mr. Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all know the devastating effects that drug and prostitution houses can have on neighbourhoods in our communities. I know; I live beside one. I commend this government for announcing the new sheriff's investigative unit to shut down properties where illegal activities take place. All my questions are for the Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security. How effective have the safe communities and neighbourhoods investigative units been in getting some of these properties shut down?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Lindsay: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to say that since being launched in October, our SCAN investigators have investigated more than 140 complaints from Albertans concerning community safety, and 49 of those complaints have been resolved. Again, those places are now safe, and the communities around them are also being looked after.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Because these units are based in Edmonton and Calgary, the perception from many of my constituents is that they only work in urban areas. Can the minister tell us: are they also operating in rural areas?

Mr. Lindsay: Mr. Speaker, for the first year we have two SCAN units who are operating in northern and southern Alberta based out of Edmonton and Calgary. These SCAN units will begin accepting and investigating complaints very quickly from the city of Camrose and the town of Lacombe as we have agreements in place with those policing agencies. They also do take complaints from rural Albertans and are addressing those.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Landlords in my constituency are not able to find out if local police had to respond to complaints arising from their rental properties. If the goal is to have safer communities, why do our police not make this information available to landlords so that they're better informed to police their own properties?

Mr. Lindsay: Mr. Speaker, all of the complaints that are received by SCAN investigators are confidential. After receiving a complaint, however, their first step is to contact the landlord or the owner and attempt to resolve the complaint informally. Any criminal activity discovered is turned over to the local police, but police may not be able to share information for a number of reasons, including confidentiality, privacy, or issues surrounding an ongoing investigation.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie.

Climate Change Initiatives

Ms Blakeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The \$4 billion allocated for the government's carbon capture and Green TRIP initiatives was based on surplus projections, chickens that were counted but not hatched. Now, as the province's surplus has dwindled from \$8.5 billion to \$2 billion, the Green TRIP plan has been scaled back, and as the finance minister stated, the economic future of Alberta can only get worse. My question is to the President of the Treasury Board. If the government was going to dig in the sofa cushions for change to keep the Premier's green plan alive, couldn't it have come up with enough extra to inflation-proof the heritage fund?

Mr. Snelgrove: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. members know, the commitment to carbon capture and storage and the Green TRIP and at that time to savings and to the capital fund were on projected income. Now, I don't think there's anybody in this House that doesn't realize that we are facing enormous financial pressures from circumstances that we really have no control over. It's probably not the time to start to tell Albertans that we have to dig in the couch to do this or do that. It's time to reflect on what's absolutely essential to Albertans, what projects are needed, what ones need to be funded to ensure that we maintain our health care and our education, as our Premier has indicated. While it's a job that this whole Assembly is involved in as we go through budgeting processes, that's a process that will probably be far more difficult than anyone in this House has faced before, but we'll do it.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Ms Blakeman: Thank you. Again to the President of the Treasury Board: well, given that the fiscal update does not include the months of October and November, which saw the worst of the financial downturn, has cabinet discussed what it is willing to cut to keep the green initiatives alive?

Mr. Snelgrove: Mr. Speaker, in a short word, no, we haven't discussed what we have to do to keep it alive, but what we have talked about is a progressive policy that allows Alberta to maintain a very strong position on the environmental front with our global competitors around the world. While the dollars can come and go, the government has made huge commitments to the different environmental projects. For us to be able to continue to provide our

energy as a source for the globe, we are going to have to do all we can with what we've got to make sure that we maintain that leading-edge environmental responsibility.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Ms Blakeman: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Environment: given the very real possibility that the surplus needed to pay the almost \$4 billion in green initiatives may not happen, what backup plans does the minister have to protect our environment when the surplus is not available to us?

Mr. Renner: Well, Mr. Speaker, as you know, I recently was speaking in London, and I was asked a very similar question. My answer at that time is the same answer as I'll give today. We base our environmental standards in this province on the science, on what is good for the environment, not on the economy.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie.

Skilled Workforce Training Programs

Mr. Bhardwaj: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Tradespeople and skilled workers are essential to ensuring the continued success of the Alberta economy. My questions are to the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology. How is your ministry encouraging individuals to enrol in skilled-trade postsecondary programs?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Horner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government has a long-term commitment to developing the labour force strategy. We're working with the employers. We're encouraging them to hire apprentices and supporting WorldSkills 2009 in Calgary, which will be a great program, career and technology studies, CTS, in the schools, learning cliques, recognizing prior learning and work experience. There is a whole raft of ways that we are programming for getting kids into the apprenticeship program.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Bhardwaj: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My first supplemental to the same minister: are there specific academic requirements for the registered apprenticeship program scholarship such as in the case of the Rutherford scholarship?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Horner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This month we awarded 385 registered apprenticeship program scholarships. To be eligible, the students must have completed the requirements for high school graduation, a minimum of 250 hours of on-the-job training, and work experience in that trade. They must also be registered as an Alberta apprentice in the trade while still attending high school, and they have to plan to continue in an approved apprenticeship program. For the past 17 years the RAP program has played a very key role in building Alberta's apprenticeship training program and our skilled workforce by encouraging students to train for those careers.

2:40

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Bhardwaj: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My final supplemental to the same minister: what are the projected enrolment numbers for the registered apprenticeship program, and are their numbers expected to increase?

Mr. Horner: Mr. Speaker, this year there are more than 1,500 high school students enrolled in the RAP program. That number is up, and it is succeeding. We are increasing. We're continuing to work with our partners like Careers: the Next Generation Foundation, a very successful program that is another opportunity for our youth.

The Speaker: Hon. members, that was 108 questions and responses today.

Notices of Motions

The Speaker: The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

Mr. Renner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise pursuant to Standing Order 34(3.1) to advise the House that on Monday, November 24, 2008, written questions appearing on the Order Paper shall stand and retain their places.

I also wish to give notice that motions for returns appearing on the Order Paper will also stand and retain their places.

Introduction of Bills

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Little Bow.

Bill 212 Agricultural Operation Practices (Confined Feeding Operations Approvals) Amendment Act, 2008

Mr. McFarland: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 212, the Agricultural Operation Practices (Confined Feeding Operations Approvals) Amendment Act, 2008.

The goal of the bill is to ensure due consideration to local water and land resources in the application process for confined feeding operations and to reinforce adherence to and enforcement of regulations on the part of the operators.

Thank you.

[Motion carried; Bill 212 read a first time]

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake.

Bill 213 Environmental Protection and Enhancement (Fines for Littering on Public Lands and Highways) Amendment Act, 2008

Ms Calahasen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 213, the Environmental Protection and Enhancement (Fines for Littering on Public Lands and Highways) Amendment Act, 2008.

The goal of Bill 213 seeks to keep our public lands and highways clean of litter and garbage by increasing the littering fine for individuals and corporations. This bill mirrors the resolution taken to the AAMD and C by my MD of Lesser Slave River No. 124 and was ratified by that Assembly. As my MD stated, we live in a beautiful province, and to keep it that way, some people, unfortunately, require some motivation.

My hope is that all colleagues will support this bill.

[Motion carried; Bill 213 read a first time]

Tabling Returns and Reports

The Speaker: The hon. Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security.

Mr. Lindsay: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table the appropriate number of copies of the Law Enforcement Review Board's annual report for the years 2006 and 2007. The Law Enforcement Review Board is a quasi-judicial tribunal and is the appeal body for public complaints concerning police officer conduct.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Manning.

Mr. Sandhu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to table two different documents. First, I have five copies of the program from a very moving ceremony for Remembrance Day. It was held on November 10 in the Calder area of my riding, Edmonton-Manning.

Second, I have five copies of the program from the Edmonton public teachers local No. 37 teacher induction ceremony. This was held on November 17 and was put on by the Alberta Teachers' Association. I was honoured to be there to share in their special day.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have two tablings today. The first is information that I would like to provide to the Assembly regarding my first question in question period today, and it is the details of Mr. Jim Clifford's work with CommonHealth in New Jersey.

The second tabling I have is a result of a discussion we had in the Assembly last night. This tabling provides the details of the leaky Abbotsford school that was built in British Columbia as a public-private partnership by the New Democrat government in 1999.

Thank you.

Projected Government Business

The Speaker: The Official Opposition House Leader.

Ms Blakeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would respectfully request that the Government House Leader share with us the projected government House business for the week commencing November 24.

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Monday, November 24, I would anticipate that immediately after Orders of the Day are called, I would request unanimous consent of the House to revert to government business briefly to allow for the introduction of letters from His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, a message for supplementary supply, for the purpose of getting it on the table so the House can see it. That would be a very short-term thing, and I have spoken with the House leaders of both opposition parties on that. Failing that, those messages would be introduced at 8:30 p.m. At 8:30 p.m., continuing on with government business, for second reading Bill 40, the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Amendment Act, 2008. In Committee of the Whole Bill 41, the Municipal Government Amendment Act, 2008; Bill 47, Mines and Minerals (New Royalty Framework) Amendment Act, 2008; Bill 48, the Alberta Corporate Tax Amendment Act, 2008; Bill 49, Traffic

Safety Amendment Act, 2008; Bill 50, Victims Restitution and Compensation Payment Amendment Act, 2008. For third reading Bill 44, Pharmacy and Drug Amendment Act, 2008; Bill 45, Statistics Bureau Amendment Act, 2008; Bill 46, Health Professions Amendment Act, 2008.

Tuesday, November 25, in the afternoon we would anticipate second reading for Bill 52. Members might note that Bill 52, the Health Information Amendment Act, 2008, has been put on notice, so we'd anticipate it being introduced for first reading on Monday and being available for second reading on Tuesday. For the information of the House I would just indicate that it would be our intention, should it receive second reading from the House, to bring forward a motion to refer it to the appropriate policy field committee. But it would have second reading on Tuesday, November 25, as would continuation of second reading on the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Amendment Act, 2008, if that had not been completed. In Committee of the Whole Bill 50 and Bill 41 if they had not been previously completed. For third reading we would anticipate bills 47, 48, and 49, the same bills, depending on progress, being dealt with in the evening on Tuesday.

On Wednesday afternoon we would anticipate, if the motions have been passed, that Committee of Supply would meet to deal with the supply introduced on Monday. In the evening Bill 52, Health Information Amendment Act, 2008, in second reading; bills 40 and 41 in committee; Bill 50 in third reading.

On Thursday for second reading Bill 52, Health Information Amendment Act, 2008; and third reading of bills 40 and 41. Of course, it's all depending on the Order Paper.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I would indicate that in addition to the supply motion next week and supplementary supply we would anticipate a motion going on notice on Monday pursuant to the report that was tabled today from Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing with respect to the amendments to the standing orders.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood on a purported point of order.

Point of Order

Referring to a Nonmember

Mr. Mason: Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rose on a point of order during question period in response to an answer from the Minister of Health and Wellness to a question that was put by, I believe, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar. At that time the member asked the minister why there was no person appointed from the Friends of Medicare to the health authority board. The minister's response was that a former member of this House had applied, had been found to be not qualified, and therefore had not been appointed.

2:50

Mr. Speaker, I think that this is a very serious matter, something which, frankly, outside the House would have been completely illegal. To breach the personal confidentiality of someone who has made application to sit on a board and to at the same time dismiss them as unqualified would in fact be considered a very grave offence outside the House, and I believe it should be considered a very grave event in the House. In fact, there are instances, which we're still trying to get quotations for, where ministers who have breached a confidentiality and personal information of someone outside the House have been forced to resign their seats.

I'd just like to indicate that section 493(4) of *Beauchesne's* says that the Speaker has cautioned members to exercise great care in making statements about persons who are outside the House and unable to defend themselves.

Then section 511 of *Beauchesne's* says:

The freedom of speech accorded to Members of Parliament is a fundamental right without which they would be hampered in the performance of their duties. The Speaker should interfere with that freedom of speech only in exceptional cases where it is clear that to do otherwise could be harmful to specific individuals.

I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that in this case that is certainly the situation.

I consider the minister's revealing of this personal and confidential information about a former member of this Assembly to be a very, very serious matter which requires, in my view, careful deliberation on the part of the chair and appropriate action being initiated from the chair.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Clearly, there is not a point of order or a point of privilege being raised by the hon. member. He didn't cite it as either, and I would take from that that he's not intending this to be considered as either a point of order or a point of privilege. In the event that he did intend to refer to it as a point of privilege, it's clear that it does not in fact deal with the privileges of any of the members of the House and, therefore, cannot be a point of privilege.

In terms of the argument that the hon. member has raised, in his own questions he raised issues with respect to a member who is not in the House and can't defend himself in the House, so I'm not sure exactly what that point was. He referenced a leading businessperson in the city of Edmonton and raised issues with respect to him. So raising the issue of a person who is not in the House and who can't defend himself: while I agree that that ought not to be done, the hon. member can hardly come to the Speaker for some comfort on that when he is doing it himself.

Now, as to the issue of whether or not there was personal information released, I think that may be an issue that the hon. minister will have to look into and determine. It's clear that there have been in the public record indications from the Friends of Medicare encouraging people to apply, and there may well be, in my recollections at least, some indication that certain individuals were going to apply. If that's the case, it's a matter of public record in any event.

The long and short of it, Mr. Speaker, is that if there's an issue, it's not an issue of privilege for the House. It's not a standing orders issue. There may be an issue that the minister himself will deal with, but that's a question for the minister, and I think it needs to be left there.

Clearly, in the public news around the question of appointment of the health board, there has been a lot of public indication from the Friends of Medicare and from individuals encouraging people to apply, and I believe that I would go so far as to say even indicating certain individuals were going to apply.

The Speaker: Others? Does the Minister of Health and Wellness choose to comment?

What was said in the House was the following:

Mr. Speaker, ironically enough, the former member, who did not win his seat this . . . spring, who is now involved with Friends of Medicare, actually applied to be on the board, and our search firm who did the interviews interviewed him and determined that he was not among the best candidates.

Clearly, the argument put forward by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood has considerable merit, as does the argument put forward by the Government House Leader. *Beau-*

chesne says that the Speaker must caution members “to exercise great care in making statements about persons who are outside the House and unable to reply.” Now, I suspect everybody knows who the individual is although the individual was not named. It’s also very true that the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood did use the name of a person outside of the House and then went on to make that name very public. In the second case no name was made public, but it certainly gets us to the very point.

Caution is to be the rule in dealing with an individual whose name is used in this Assembly who is unable to defend himself or herself. The chair does not know, sitting here or standing here today, whether or not the advertisements that went out to hire people for this particular board in question basically said to apply in confidence. I don’t know if that was one of the rules, if that was advertised in the document. If that was the rule, then the minister will have to do some soul-searching this weekend to basically determine that because there would be a protocol then, presumably a breach of some confidentiality.

But I’m going to leave this matter not as a point of anything other than to ask the minister to review this file over the weekend, find out whether or not there was a confidentiality clause associated with it, and then the minister will, I’m sure, take appropriate action when we return to the Assembly on Monday.

Orders of the Day

Government Bills and Orders Committee of the Whole

[Mr. Cao in the chair]

The Chair: I’d like to call the committee to order.

Bill 41

Municipal Government Amendment Act, 2008 (No. 2)

The Chair: Are there any comments, questions, or amendments to be offered with respect to this bill? The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Danyluk: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It is a pleasure for me to make a few comments on Bill 41 in committee today. I would like to thank all members who participated in second reading for their remarks. This legislation will give municipalities an additional means to address local needs for housing and community facilities, and I am pleased that all parties have indicated their support.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to begin by responding to a few questions raised by members opposite during second reading. The Member for Lethbridge-East asked for confirmation that the community services reserve would be for public use, and I can assure you and the member that this is the case and that the types of community facilities allowed on these sites are not-for-profit. In addition, the municipality must maintain the unencumbered title to any site designated as a community services reserve.

3:00

Mr. Chairman, the Member for Edmonton-Centre asked whether municipalities would be able to acquire these surplus school sites for a nominal fee. I believe that the Minister of Health and Wellness addressed this issue thoroughly during the second reading debate, particularly the distinction between reserve and nonreserve sites. I would only like to add that any compensation to the school boards for the declared reserved land surplus for their needs will be based on the agreements between the municipality and the school sites. If

costs are attributed to transfer, it’ll be dependent on what, if any, development has taken place at the school, and my ministry would certainly be willing to use its mediation group to assist in the process should there be a dispute between a school board and a municipality over the value of that site.

Mr. Chairman, the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona posed a question about how the community services reserve designation will actually work. What we will be asking school boards to do is to provide the Minister of Education with an inventory of their surplus sites. The minister will then assess whether those lands can be used by other school boards or charter schools. If not, the land can be designated a community services reserve if the local municipality has a public use in mind, and I think that’s key. As I previously mentioned, any public use or development of a surplus school site will be restricted to the portion of the reserve site that was intended for the school buildings and the adjacent parking area. I need to stress as well that it will not be at the expense of the existing green space, playing fields, or parks.

The Member for Edmonton-Strathcona also asked about the community consultation process. The community reserve designation is intended to allow a municipality to move quickly to fulfill its community-based needs, and given that such sites have already been set aside for community uses such as schools and recreation, a municipality will not have to go through a further subdivision approval process in order to designate the building sites.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to move a minor amendment, if I can, that is intended to clarify this legislation. If you’d like, I can just wait till it’s passed out, or I can continue.

The Chair: Wait until the amendment is distributed.

Mr. Danyluk: Okay.

The Chair: This amendment will be known as amendment A1.

The hon. minister.

Mr. Danyluk: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. This House amendment will clarify that if a municipality tries to dispose of community services reserve land in the future, the proceeds of that sale can only be used for CSR purposes, such as affordable housing, libraries, emergency services, et cetera. However, if municipality reserve lands are disposed of, the proceeds can only be used for the original municipal reserve purposes – and that is parks and recreation – not for the support of the broader range of uses permitted under the community services review. It is just a clarification of wording.

The Chair: Does any hon. member want to debate on the amendment?

Hon. Members: Question.

[Motion on amendment A1 carried]

The Chair: Now we get to the bill. The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. It’s my pleasure to join in the debate at committee stage of Bill 41, Municipal Government Amendment Act, 2008 (No. 2), now as amended, I guess. I’d like to thank the minister, first of all, on behalf of my colleagues for the answers to those questions that were raised. I think that does add some clarity to the debate and provides some good answers to some

of our questions. We are largely in favour of this bill, as the minister knows and as the House knows. You know, looking at it broken down into its three component parts, we have no problem with the first part or the second part, the linear assessment or the machinery and equipment tax amendments. They're self-evident, and I think they're good moves. I'm especially pleased with the fact that this amendment allows for the use of surplus school sites for some very, very worthwhile purposes, one of those purposes, of course, being affordable housing.

I just want to put this on record. It's not something that I would go so far as to propose an amendment on or anything like that but just to put on record that, of course, if the community services reserve is used for the purpose of creating affordable housing, that's pretty much going to be an affordable housing project on that piece of land. While affordable housing is very, very much needed in the province of Alberta, especially in the cities of Edmonton and Calgary, it brings me back to the notion that rather than creating entire developments of affordable housing, there is a better way to do this, and that's to mix in below-market housing, affordable housing of various types, with market-priced housing. Although, I'll grant you that these days it's a little tough to know from one day to the next what the market price of housing is going to be with the volatility in the economy.

I would simply recommend to the minister that he consider perhaps a municipal government amendment act No. 3 or a municipal government amendment act in the spring sitting of the Legislature that clarifies in the act the notion of inclusionary zoning.

Now, the minister and I have been around this maypole a couple of times. Let me see if I can remember the name of the policy field committee that we had in the last session of the Legislature. It was managing growth pressures. There was some discussion of amending the Municipal Government Act to specifically include inclusionary zoning in there. I know that it's the government's view that inclusionary zoning kind of exists in potential within the MGA as it reads now, if a municipality wants to take advantage of it. It's our contention on this side of the House that any municipality that tries to impose inclusionary zoning based on the provisions in the Municipal Government Act as it reads today does so at its own risk and peril because it might very possibly incur the wrath of a developer who says: "Hey, you didn't do this to any of my competitors when they were building. Now suddenly you want me to set aside, you know, 1 out of every 10 or 1 out of every 5 or 1 out of every 4 units in my development for below-market housing and cut into my profit. I think I'll take you to court and sue."

You know, then it would start, certainly, a month-long, if not a year-long, process of working its way through the court system, I would suggest, quite possibly as far as the Supreme Court of Canada. I'm not going to stand here and pretend to guess how the Supreme Court would rule on that. But if the Supreme Court ruled in favour of the municipality, then even in that case with all the time that had lapsed, there would be many hundreds, if not thousands, of missed opportunities to build affordable housing and integrate it into a diverse and mixed-use neighbourhood.

3:10

I think we should take that under consideration. It's generally agreed, it seems to me, by those who make it their business to know how best to create affordable housing and how best to design and plan municipalities, that diverse neighbourhoods with diverse demographics, diverse income levels are the most desirable neighbourhoods to have. Inclusionary zoning is not in this bill, of course, Mr. Chairman, and since I'm supposed to be speaking to the sections and the provisions of this bill, I will get off that topic now because I think I've made my point.

There is one thing that I'm a bit puzzled about, if you'll give me just a second to consult back to the bill. It is section 5, subsections (5) through (8). It's a question around school board purposes. The provisions as we understand them seem to allow the Minister of Education to determine what school board purposes are. Perhaps either the Minister of Education or the Minister of Municipal Affairs can shed some light on this for me. Under the new subsection (6) it allows the minister to determine what school board purposes are. It says, "the Minister of Education may, by order, determine school board purposes for the purposes of subsection (5)."

It seems to me that this allows the Minister of Education to decide, you know, what the school board or school authority purposes are, not the school boards themselves. The question, of course, is: is this being taken out of locally elected, locally representative school boards, and if so, why? Why does the minister get to have the authority, if in fact he does, to decide what school board purposes are? It would seem to me that the locally elected trustees would know that and would be better positioned and rightly expected to make those decisions on behalf of the taxpayers and the ratepayers and the parents that they serve. So I would like some explanation if I could. Am I interpreting this right, that it consolidates authority by the minister, and if so, why? Is it an attempt to take authority away from the school boards? What justification is seen here?

With that, Mr. Chairman, I'll take my seat and allow either minister to respond to that. Thank you.

Mr. Danyluk: Let me just respond maybe in a reverse focus. The school board, first of all, has to put that land up as a surplus school site. In essence, they are giving up that type of, let's say, authority over that piece of land. They are saying it is not needed. Then it needs to go through the Department of Education and the process to see if there is a necessity for that piece of land to be used for a different school purpose other than by the school board that gave up that land. Okay?

Mr. Taylor: A different board or a charter school.

Mr. Danyluk: Yes. A different board or a charter school but for education purposes.

Mr. Taylor: Okay.

Mr. Danyluk: The Minister of Education can supplement.

I will also say in regard to your inclusionary zoning that there's no doubt that we don't want this to go to the courts. We would like to see as much affordable housing as we possibly can, but there needs to be that discussion with municipalities and developers prior to, not something that is put as legislation for inclusionary zoning. We can talk about that later.

The Chair: The hon. Member for Calgary-*Buffalo*.

Mr. Hehr: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chair. It is an honour to rise and join the debate on Bill 41, the Municipal Government Amendment Act, 2008 (No. 2). I, like my colleague from Calgary-*Currie*, speak in favour of this bill and, in particular, the three segments.

The first two, as indicated, are fairly clear. Bringing linear assessments by providing a set date on which the Alberta Utilities Commission and the Energy Resources Conservation Board can be assessed: this brings more clarity to the process. It was not entirely clear under the MGA before. The second thing, having the machinery and equipment taxes paid by the people utilizing the section of

land that is being leased: that, too, seems like a no-brainer and a good move and provides the clarity needed in the act for this to happen. I'm of the understanding that many people leasing the land were already doing this as a matter of course. Nevertheless, it just eliminates this as being debatable between parties who are doing various negotiations and adds some clarity to what the business-people actually want.

The third item, which is really, it looks like, an excellent move, is allowing surplus school sites to be designated for municipal uses. That is really the most important thing in the bill. It allows excess school sites to be used for community-based projects and affordable housing if the school board declares the reserve land to be surplus.

Although my colleague from Calgary-Currie spoke about inclusionary zoning, I too would like to say that I am in favour of inclusionary zoning. In fact, one of the organizations that I was loosely affiliated with prior to my becoming a member of this House is the Calgary Housing Action Initiative, CHAI, on affordable housing. I worked with people like Grant Neufeld and David Wilson, who are strong supporters of inclusionary zoning and believe it is a principle that needs to be clarified in the Municipal Government Act.

I think cities have an appetite for it, and I think they would appreciate it, actually, if we clarified it at this level. I believe that cities, where they saw it as an opportunity for them, would utilize it if they wanted to bring that into their zoning principles, and they wouldn't use it if they deemed it nonconductive to their developing community. It just adds another sort of carrot-and-stick approach to getting the type of neighbourhood you want.

For instance, in my neighbourhood, in downtown west Calgary, we seem to all be going to a certain type of development as certain communities all seem to be one type of housing. There's always the trouble of whether we're designating one area, you know, for this type of housing and another area for that type of housing when it seems to be more reasonable and rational to have a mixed balance of various housing options in all our areas of the city that are being developed. It leads to a more, I think, productive use of land as well. It has people living and working and collectively taking care of their community together, and the city develops better.

Those are my comments on inclusionary zoning, sort of a piling on, should we say, to what the Member for Calgary-Currie also said.

I'd also like to point out that this act allows for much of the surplus land to be used to help with urban sprawl, which is becoming more of a problem than we'd like to admit here in Alberta. Calgary, for instance, a city of 1 million people, sits on an area of land that is as large or larger than New York City, which houses 10 times the people. Now, we know that the economies of scale and what happens in New York and the availability of land are totally different; nonetheless, I use it as an example of how we've sort of developed our cities, and they've developed that way primarily because of the use of the car.

3:20

We know our cities sort of developed that way with the Alberta landscape at one time being expansive and the ability for us simply to carve up the area as we saw fit or as we saw the need. However, I believe our knowledge of the use of environmental space, the direction of walkable communities, and how people and neighbourhoods eventually – maybe it's a long time coming, but with the end of the petroleum age around the corner, and hopefully it's a hundred years or whatever – are going to have to start looking at how they're going to have to be more sustainable, more closely affiliated to where they work, where they operate, where they walk, and what they do because until such time as we get a handle on that, there will

continue to be, maybe, a waste of resources. If we can design our cities better, that is something we should do.

Nevertheless, these are pretty good amendments that have been coming forward, and I commend the minister for moving on them, with just maybe an eye to those other two things: inclusionary zoning as well as – I don't know – possibly some more learning for all of us on how we keep our communities living and working in a more productive manner, which is always something that I'm sure he is striving for as well as this House should strive for.

Thank you for allowing me to speak on this bill.

The Chair: The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Danyluk: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I just want to make a couple of comments. The phrase "inclusionary zoning" is very much, I would consider, a modern phrase, one that is being used and maybe brought out and emphasized because of the need for affordable housing. I want to first of all thank you for your support of this amendment but also to say that this amendment does deal with some of that issue and the importance of that issue about affordable housing, so I think it is very much a positive direction. Your second point, talking about learning: that is exactly right. We need to look at different ways; we need to learn on a continuing basis. So thank you very much for your comments.

The Chair: The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

Dr. Taft: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. My colleagues have raised all kinds of very good issues, which I don't need to repeat. I appreciate the minister's engagement here. Thank you very much. I'm just going to put one issue on the record and then ask a question, raise an issue that maybe the minister could respond to.

The one to put on the record for me is that while I fully understand and we will support this legislation in terms of allowing land designated for schools to be used for other purposes, there's a bit of me that's a little concerned about that. You know, our cities are going to be here for hundreds of years or thousands of years maybe, and once we turn over that land that's been set aside, it probably will never ever be available for use as a school if I understand the process correctly, or at least it's very unlikely that it would ever be available again for a school.

While this year or this decade or even in our lifetime that makes perfect sense – you know, we've had even in Edmonton alone I think 40 different sites where land that was set aside for schools isn't being developed. If we think ahead two or three lifetimes – and I reflect on some of the comments my colleague from Calgary-Buffalo just made about changing patterns of urban use, of potentially less reliance on automobiles, of higher density – I just can't help wondering if, you know, the next generation or two of MLAs are going to be looking back at this decision and saying, "Gee, you know, it's too bad those people in 2008 decided to give up so much land designated for schools" because in their time in the future there'll be much higher density cities and neighbourhoods, and the demand for school space could be completely different.

I understand why we're doing this, and there's no way of telling the future, but there's something in the back of my mind that just feels that I'm not convinced we should be transferring all this land. On the other hand, who knows? We do all kinds of things that the future might judge us by. I just wanted to get that unease on the record.

My question to the minister, my other point, is that just having been here in this Assembly now for three terms, I think that easily the most frequently amended act is the Municipal Government Act.

I see it coming back every year, it seems to me, for some amendments. After a while it raises a question for me about the fundamentals of the Municipal Government Act. When I see a bill coming back every year or two for an amendment here and an amendment there, I question whether the original piece of legislation maybe needs to be rethought. Maybe it's too complex a bill or too big a bill, or maybe it's trying to deal with too many things in one act. I see the Municipal Government Act coming back – I haven't counted – far more frequently than any other piece of legislation. That raises a question for me about whether there isn't something in its fundamental design that we need to rethink.

Maybe at some point we really need to split it into multiple acts or to question why it's coming back so often, because it really does. I'm sure that the very idea of going back to the drawing board for the Municipal Government Act gives MLAs and municipal councilors heart failure, but it just strikes me as an act that's starting to send off signals that it's maybe trying to do too much in one act or that it needs to be rethought somehow because of the unrelenting flow of amendments that we're making. I just raise that thought for the minister and other people to think about.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Danyluk: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. If I could try to address some of the comments that were made before the question, I want to very much reiterate that this land is zoned for not-for-profits. Also, you know, we talk about the future. The land is left unused at the present time and in some ways, I want to say, uncared-for because it is land – it could be buildings – that is not being utilized by the present school board.

When we look at our society and we look at the demographics of our communities and we look at individuals and families that need a place to stay, that need to be educated, or the opportunity of having libraries, I think that, yes, we do need to look into the future and remember that the footprint we are looking at that we would allow on the development is only the footprint that is there already, and that's the building and the parking lot. The green area is still there. If there is development or a change in development or the need for change in development, there is still probably opportunity with minimal distress to change the purpose.

3:30

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that I'm very much impressed with, maybe, an observation by the Leader of the Opposition because the Municipal Government Act does come before this House on a regular basis. Now, that is for two reasons. It is a big act – there is no doubt that it is a big act – but that act needs to be responsive to the individuals and the municipalities of the day. It has a lot of diverse implications on municipalities, in turn, on the lives of individuals, on taxation, on affordability, the ability of municipalities to survive.

I say to you that there was a complete – I use the word “overhaul,” but a work over in 1995, and we are continuing to look at the act to see if it addresses the needs of the people. I will say to you – and this is where I come to your astuteness – that we are going to look at this act from one end to the other and at how we can do things differently that best simply and maybe more responsively address the needs of the people. That's what it's about.

The Chair: Do any other hon. members wish to speak on the bill?

[The clauses of Bill 41 as amended agreed to]

[Title and preamble agreed to]

The Chair: Shall the bill be reported? Are you agreed?

Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Chair: Opposed? Carried.

Bill 47

Mines and Minerals (New Royalty Framework)

Amendment Act, 2008

The Chair: Are there any comments, questions, or amendments to be offered with respect to this bill? The hon. Minister of Energy.

Mr. Knight: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm pleased to move Bill 47, Mines and Minerals (New Royalty Framework) Amendment Act, 2008, in Committee of the Whole. It's an important act that gives legislative authority to the new royalty framework announced by our Premier just over a year ago.

Mr. Chairman, some of the most important work the Department of Energy has done this year is to create a blueprint for the future that will enable us to address challenges and embrace opportunities. This work will culminate in the provincial energy strategy, which also will be released soon. Once complete, the energy strategy will help Alberta manage its natural resources, promote the industry's success, and ensure sustainability. Implementing the new royalty framework gives us tools to reach these goals.

Because the framework is about much, much more than royalty rates, during second reading the Assembly heard questions from members regarding certain clauses and issues on the bill. For instance, part of the new royalty framework includes collecting oil sands royalty in the form of bitumen barrels in lieu of cash royalties. The government is developing the bitumen royalty in kind policy to promote the use of bitumen feedstock and increase further value-maximizing activity in Alberta. Government will use its share of bitumen royalty to encourage value-added production by supplying bitumen at the market price to projects that would process the product into higher valued product for global markets. This was not envisioned when the Mines and Minerals Act came before this House in 1997. Section 15(a), (b), and (c) of the Mines and Minerals (New Royalty Framework) Amendment Act, 2008, will provide government with the authority, the mechanism to accept bitumen or products from bitumen in lieu of cash royalty.

The act also clarifies that the definition of royalty includes not only royalty quantities but also royalty proceeds. That is an important distinction because, as I have mentioned, the province may choose to take its royalty as product from bitumen rather than raw bitumen. This gives the province maximum flexibility depending on what sorts of value-added opportunities present themselves or need to be encouraged. As well, I think the flexibility that government needs to act quickly when circumstances warrant was very much in evidence yesterday when we moved to provide our small- and mid-cap exploration firms with additional cash flow so that they can expand their drilling programs in all areas of Alberta, an important point in light of a world economic situation that changes very quickly these days.

In order to strengthen the investment security of Alberta's energy climate, section 10 will amend the FOIP paramouncy provisions of the Mines and Minerals Act to clarify, Mr. Chairman – only to clarify – their scope and ensure that they apply to all aspects of royalty collection equally.

I would also like to highlight that sections 13 and 14 of the amending legislation also include provisions for shallow rights

reversion. This involves identifying the shallowest zones in continued leases and licences which are productive and reverting the petroleum and natural gas rights above the productive zone back to the Crown in certain circumstances. Mr. Chairman, the resale of these rights increases productivity. Furthermore, industry will be given ample notice before any rights are reverted, and they will be afforded the opportunity to challenge the assessments of their productive zones.

Mr. Chairman, I would say that given the volatility in the marketplace and our determination to expand Alberta's role as an energy leader, the provisions of the framework could not be more timely. With that, I would welcome comments from the hon. members of this Assembly.

Thank you.

The Chair: The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

Dr. Taft: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is, as the minister says, one of the most important pieces of legislation we'll see before this Assembly this year, I'm sure. Perhaps to the relief of all of us here it starts to bring to a close what's been a pretty tumultuous period in the energy sector here and in the political process here. I think we're all looking forward to some closure on this particular file.

The reason this bill is so important, of course, is that Alberta has this unbelievable treasure; I think per capita, given the small population in Alberta, perhaps the biggest treasure on the planet. That is our incredible petroleum resources, both oil based and natural gas based. In fact, there are other ones as well.

An Hon. Member: Is that treasure or treasurer?

Dr. Taft: No, not treasurer, just treasure.

We have here legislation that addresses how much value the citizens of Alberta through its government will get when it sells that treasure. One of the important lessons – I know the minister understands this really well; we're probably both constantly explaining to people the difference between a royalty and a tax. Royalties are what we collect as the owners of a resource for selling that resource, which is very different from a tax. In particular, in this case this is something we only sell once. There's no renewal on this product. It's not like royalties that an author might get on a book. You know, you can reprint the book, and you get more royalties. Well, once a barrel of oil is sold, it's gone forever.

3:40

People have so often said to me – and I think there are even people around who have deliberately fuelled the misconception – that, well, this is just a tax increase. It's not a tax increase. Royalties are not taxes. Taxes are something we collect as a Legislative Assembly and as a government on an economic activity or on an income, and we take a cut of that. A royalty is about selling a product. Really, just like we wouldn't have the government sell surplus land or surplus buildings or you wouldn't expect a business to sell its product for less than it's worth, we shouldn't be selling our great treasure for less than it's worth. We determine what it's worth through this royalty process. I think it's really important for every member of this Assembly to know and be able to explain to people maybe even more clearly than I have that this is not a tax; this is a royalty.

Given the scale of the product we have to sell, royalties are our chance to do something really historic in Alberta, to do something for generations and generations to come. We've collected since the

late 1940s literally hundreds of billions of dollars in royalties. If you were to adjust for inflation and think in 2008 dollars, it would be many hundreds of billions of dollars. We can debate how well those monies have been used and whether some of them should be saved or not, but it is the collection of royalties that separates Alberta and our government from what's happened in Manitoba or Ontario or anywhere else in this country.

An Hon. Member: They don't have oil.

Dr. Taft: That's right. That's the point. We have a treasure here that nobody else has, so we need to manage it wisely and carefully. If we do that, manage it wisely and carefully, collect our fair share of royalties, and then subsequently save some, we can set Alberta society up for an unbelievable future. We could endow the universities permanently so that a day comes when the University of Calgary or University of Alberta rivals Yale and Cambridge and so on. We could ensure that the current benefits we have of high expenditures and low taxes are there permanently. I want to emphasize for the record that this is extremely important and that how we manage that wealth begins with how well we collect our royalties.

Now, when he first became Premier, the Premier made a commitment to review the royalty process, and he lived up to that commitment. He launched the Royalty Review Panel, which did its work, and the process for that, you know, produced a rather remarkable document that stirred up a huge controversy and probably caused a few sleepless nights for a number of MLAs in this Assembly. That was immediately followed a very few short weeks later by the report of the Auditor General on royalties. What both of those reports indicated is that the existing royalty framework was badly out of date and in need of an overhaul, and they each proposed different ways of doing it. They raised a range of issues, from how much we are collecting in royalties, how the royalty system is managed, whether the Department of Energy could actually fulfill both the function of promoting the industry and the function of collecting maximum value for the taxpayer because there's a conflict of interest there. It raised issues around audits and accuracy of information, all kinds of things which I'm not going to enumerate here.

There is one point that troubled me as much or more than any other, however, and I do want to just mention that because it's important to this Assembly. That was the information that was in the Auditor General's report that the annual reports of the Department of Energy were actually – I'm paraphrasing here – quite misleading and that they were reporting for a number of years to us as MLAs that everything was fine in terms of royalties and the royalty collection system when, in fact, the internal documents of that department suggested that everything wasn't fine, that the fair share wasn't being collected. What troubles me as an MLA about that is that an annual report, perhaps through the efforts of the Public Affairs Bureau or somebody else, was getting torqued, was getting twisted to present information to us as the legislators of this province that everything is fine when the internal information in the department indicated otherwise.

I want to draw attention to what would occur in a publicly traded corporation if an annual report was misleading to shareholders. There would be rapid action quite possibly leading to court cases, police investigations, and jail for a corporation that filed misleading annual reports to its shareholders, yet that's very much what appeared to happen through the Department of Energy to this Assembly. It's deeply, deeply troubling to me.

Now, this piece of legislation, Bill 47, is somewhat difficult to judge because an awful lot of the real action is going to occur in the

regulations. We don't have the regulations here, so we have to keep our comments general, and they're limited in that. I do acknowledge and I support the strategic direction of collecting bitumen royalties in kind. I think that there is tremendous opportunity – and I'm sure the minister thinks there is tremendous opportunity as well – for this government to take royalties on bitumen in kind. I don't know what's going to happen, but I hope the government is seriously looking at turning around and doing a deal with a merchant upgrader to have that bitumen upgraded here in Alberta.

I think we would see a few benefits from that. One would be that we could do, in effect, a kind of a utility financing arrangement so that that upgrader, with an ironclad customer for upgrading in hand, would go to the markets and raise the necessary \$2 billion or \$3 billion or \$4 billion to finance an upgrader like maybe North West upgraders or something like that. We would be able to kick-start what's become a very stalled upgrading industry, and of course we'd get the wealth from that and the job generation from that, but we also then end up as the owners of a wonderful flow of synthetic crude oil, which is really valuable and often actually sells at a premium over west Texas. It's a big, big stream of gravy for this government. It's the kind of wealth generation that I think is a good idea. I hope – and maybe the minister will be able to comment on this – that that's the kind of strategy that might be in mind by passing this legislation. I don't know if the minister will be prepared to comment on that or not.

Anyway, I also think that from what I understand of the shallow rights reversion, that also seems to make sense to me. I think it's probably good management, good stewarding of a resource that's not getting utilized or getting underutilized. I just look to the minister: would you be prepared to comment on the strategic use of the bitumen royalty in kind? Okay. Terrific.

Section 10 of the legislation, which addresses information collection, caused us a flurry of concern because it continues a procedure that has historically been in place that exempts information collected under this act from FOIP. It makes it paramount to FOIP, and we are always reluctant on this side of the House to do an end run around freedom of information legislation. The FOIP commissioner also raised his concerns on this. I think that we always, always as legislators have to be careful about keeping information secret from the people of this province, particularly when it comes to a resource that they own.

3:50

We have considered an amendment on this to just delete section 10, and in fact we have an amendment prepared. I know, without going through the exercise, that that amendment would be voted down, so I probably will not proceed with it, Mr. Chairman.

I also want to get on record that our understanding is that under this legislation, Bill 47, the limits on the paramouncy to FOIP and the secrecy are five years. I look to the minister, and maybe he can address that or not. If that's the case, then in some ways that's a fair trade-off to the FOIP deal, which keeps information private or secret for an indefinite period of time. Perhaps the minister would be able to address that as well.

Finally, or at least for the moment finally, I'm concerned that this legislation does not address anything around auditing of the collection of royalties and all the information that has to underlie the collection of royalties such as how much oil and gas is being produced at what wells. There have been over the years serious concerns raised around the auditing capacity of this department, and at one time I think there were a mere two or three or four people working auditing what are literally 200,000 wells or more in this province. So, clearly, you can see that that's inadequate. Now, I

think there's been an increase in the number of auditors, but I don't know if it's enough. I don't know if the recommendations of the Auditor General on that issue have been taken seriously, but they should be.

To be honest, I'm going to reflect briefly, without giving any sources away, a conversation I had about a year ago with a leading oil person in Calgary who said: you know, all of this revamping of the royalty system could have been avoided if the government had just made darn sure they collected everything that was already their due. His implication was that there was so much slippage through the system, and he was saying this as a company operator, a guy who has made a fortune out of the sector. He was saying this as an operator, saying, "All the government had to do was tighten up their existing controls, do better audits, follow through, and they could have increased their royalties as much as they ever will increase by bringing in a new royalty framework," which I thought was a revealing and deeply troubling comment coming from somebody in the industry.

The audit provisions recommended by the Auditor General and elsewhere are crucial to the future of this province, and I would like the minister to address that issue and to answer, frankly, why there's nothing about that in this new framework.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to the comments from the minister. Thank you.

The Chair: The hon. Minister of Energy.

Mr. Knight: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and to the Leader of the Opposition, thank you very much for the comments. I'd like to first of all correct a few statements. He got off to a very good start there and then for some reason or another continues to want to dig a hole and get negative about these situations, particularly, I think, you know, relative to the fact that we're not in fact handling this thing properly. I got some comments, and I think I've got some answers to some of the questions that were raised.

First of all, this legislation doesn't actually adjust the value that we get, and I think that you made that clear later in your comments. You started off by saying that it adjusts the value we get. It doesn't. What it does do is it allows us to establish the framework, and in the framework there is an opportunity for us to set the rates that we may be able to receive depending on certain levels of production and commodity pricing that are relative at the time.

I think it might be a good thing here if we could just kind of concentrate for a moment on the different types of systems that are available, to address the situation of getting the value of the resource for the owner of the resource. The basis for the system that we use is an economic rent system. It's generally agreed that the economic rent system is really a system that allows for the accounting of the cost of doing business and the proceeds of that business. So we might take a revenue minus cost sort of look at this thing if we could simplify it to that. Then there's a remaining amount of money at the end of that accounting procedure.

Economic rent systems basically would establish that somewhere in between 65 and 75 per cent of the available economic rent that's left at the end of this calculation should belong to the owner of the resource, and that's a generally accepted practice. The remaining amount, of course, is left with the risk taker. You know, it's an opportunity for them to receive some compensation for the risk that they take. We use that system in Alberta.

We also use Crown agreements. Crown agreements are slightly different, of course, than the economic rent system. Crown agreements, generally speaking, are put in place. Of course, the two large ones that we know about in the province of Alberta would be

Syncrude's and Suncor's Crown agreements, and they are put in place in certain circumstances to help the development of an otherwise marginal or perhaps uneconomic endeavour. We use both of those systems.

There's another one, that's relatively common and actually gaining some traction around the world, called the net profit share. The net profit share simply comes down to the fact that you allow someone to do a piece of business, and you just account for everything. At the end of the day, as the hon. member said, you don't have a royalty. What you actually have is a tax. So with net profit share there's a profit at the end of doing this piece of business. We'll take 50 per cent of it, say, for example. I mean, I think that's really the way since about 1992 that the UK has managed that business.

Again, it looks really good on the front end of the thing. It does allow for companies to employ capital and not be negatively affected by the employment of that capital because it does allow for that capital to be accounted for in that system. However, we don't have any actual net profit share operating in Alberta although I understand that our neighbours in British Columbia are about set to do something like that. What they'll allow is a generic system not dissimilar to what we do in the oil sands, where there'll be some allowance for capital return and then a net profit share after that. What they do, then, of course, is allow for this recycle of your cash flow and so on and put it into the business on the front end.

However, what I want to point out and something that I think is missed by many people with respect to this and the discussion around this piece of business is that you also must recognize, particularly in the economic rent system, the wealth generation piece of the business. People get the impression that the companies sell the product, take the money, and run away someplace with it.

Alberta is a bit unique with respect to this. Our junior and mid-cap companies that operate in the province of Alberta – and they are, by the way, the ones that do most of the exploratory and infill drilling in the province – take that money that they've taken from their rent share, go out and get into the marketplace, and recycle it. In most cases they take all of the cash flow, lay that on the table, and attract additional money with that cash flow. The number is, actually, depending on the corporation – they vary – about two to two and a quarter times cash flow that's injected back into the province, and that money is actually wealth generation money. That's where you get, you know, the jobs, the houses, the car dealerships, the restaurants, the full motels, and general business taking place around the province.

4:00

I think it's very important for us to understand that when you go into that economic rent system and begin to discourage that activity, there's a very fine balance there that you need to be aware of, that the economic wealth that's generated from the system has to be taken into consideration. You can't do it just on straight: this is a numbers game; this looks economic, so they can get 5 per cent; they're good, fine. It needs to be competitive, and you need to understand or at least take into account that part of the situation.

There was some comment made – and I don't know that it's relevant to what we're doing here – around the situation in a place like Manitoba. I just have a comment with respect to that. You know, we have a great resource in the province of Alberta. Manitoba, by the way, has a huge resource. Manitoba has a huge hydro resource. My comment with respect to Manitoba's resources is that, quite simply, they have been mismanaged. Manitoba, in fact, has a policy of tax and spend, and it does not incent investment in that

province. You know, we can say that they're not as fortunate as we are. I have no argument. I wouldn't disagree with that. Nevertheless, it would be my comment that they perhaps need to take a look at how they manage their policy around the money that they get. They could have an awful lot more opportunity for investment in that province in their energy industry.

The Auditor General's report and the recommendations in the Auditor General's report, particularly his recommendations around collections and the fact that we're not taking proper account of collections. I think that the member opposite knows that I have on a number of occasions now indicated both, you know, in my department and very publicly that the Auditor General's recommendations will be complied with. We're working very hard inside the department now. I think that it's fair to say that if you've had an opportunity to look at what we've done there – you can go on the website. There's a new structure in our department. There are new job allocations for ADMs. We are very serious about this and are working on that, and we will comply.

Bitumen royalty in kind, an explanation around this and some clarification perhaps. I'll do the best I can with the knowledge that I have today. We've got three or four different, very, very good opportunities that we've been presented with with respect to bitumen royalty in kind. Under the economic circumstances we now face and given the fact that this is still preliminary and will take place over the next six or eight months or a couple of years, you know, before people actually start receiving the bitumen, there are possibilities here that we could get additional refining capacity in the province of Alberta.

Are we talking to those people? Absolutely. There are a couple of folks, of course, working with merchant upgrading. We know and we understand and recognize the fact that people are disappointed now because some of those projects are either staged or in some cases look to be in serious trouble economically. We understand that. But part of what we can do that will help is that if we can give them some stability with respect to feedstock, it gives the financial community a much better feeling about putting money into those sorts of things, so that's what we're working towards.

Another thing that's interesting to note in there: in the bitumen royalty in kind piece we also state that we can take hydrocarbon or products derived from, and the opportunity then for us to go out and maximize the value for Albertans becomes a much, much broader picture. If we can take products, you know, that means you might take off-gas, hydrogen, different fuel streams. You might be able to direct things then into the petrochemical industry. You may even be able to take petrochemical product at the end of the day to make a deal. So we think that this is going to give us a tremendous opportunity to push up the maximum value of those products for Albertans.

Shallow rights reversion. Don't need much of a comment there. I think it may be a bit misunderstood by people what it actually is, but basically I know that you understand it. Today if you get a lease to drill for a mineral and you're successful at a certain level, you have an ability as long as you produce from a lower level to retain the opportunity to explore up the hole, and we agree with that. We agree that it's a good piece of business, but you can't do it forever. There needs to be some time when Albertans have an opportunity to say: look, either get the work done, or we'll see if someone else is interested. That's all that is.

The situation around FOIP. The five-year length, that's correct. I think I could probably relate that a bit to what we've done when the province uses public money to incent development and research and technology and innovation. It's like intellectual property. If we

go and put Albertans' money into some of these projects – and they can be, you know, based in academia, or they may be based in the industry someplace – we give them a time frame for the intellectual property that they might gain from partnering with us and putting that money forward. They've got a period of time where they can hold the intellectual property. It might be two years, 30 months, five years. But we make that arrangement up front, and at the end of that period of time that becomes public knowledge.

Now, I think that that's as good a way as I can explain the situation with FOIP because it's kind of similar. What these corporations would have, particularly in the royalty arrangement – we are telling them: give us this information. The information is very sensitive, and it's very crucial to the management of their business and crucial because the industry is extremely competitive. All we're saying is that that information should remain private for that period of time. If somebody wants to FOIP it after five years, I mean, really, the competitive edge on most of that would certainly disappear by that period of time. I think it's fair, and I think it's balanced.

You made a comment about auditing. I just want to make a remark with respect to that, and then I'll conclude here. You now, there are a couple of things, I think, that people would be well served to understand about this business of auditing the production. We do in the department audit and most certainly take account of the production levels of all of the receipts that we get. But remember that also the ERCB have regulatory authority over production and product accounting and reporting. There's another whole group of people, a lot more than we have, in ERCB that makes sure that people are actually reporting what they're producing and producing what they're reporting from the point of view of not only the product but the breakdown of the product, how much water is included, what the gas ratios are, and so on. All of that is being done.

The other thing: if an individual might have said to you that Alberta is not getting their share in a lot of circumstances, I'd take them to task just a little bit. At the end of the day what happens to these things in a field system out here: you'll reach a point where there's a custody transfer meter – right? – and the custody transfer meters are actually meters that are regulated and calibrated according to Canadian federal standards. They're a very accurate metering tool. When these custody transfers take place, we have a very good opportunity then to understand what the bulk movement is. So there may be some opportunity for people to, you know, play little games about what oil was produced when and so on, and the ERCB works to maintain control of that. But on custody transfer you can generally get, you know, pretty accurate results of who's moving what where.

I think those were, I believe, most of the questions. There are very stringent rules around custody transfer meters, and the field level measurement is most certainly improving. You know, as we get new technologies and new measurement equipment, these things get better and better. A lot of that now is done in real time, and the metering is calibrated on a regular basis, reporting done in real time. It makes a helluva difference to what we used to do by hand for years. There were lags and mistakes and so on, but it's getting an awful lot better.

Thank you.

4:10

The Chair: The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo

Mr. Hehr: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I, too, will make a few comments in committee on this. Many of them will be

redundant after what the Leader of the Opposition has said, but nevertheless I'll get my two cents' worth out at this time, and I'll sleep much better about it this evening. If I could be indulged, that would be a great honour.

I, too, agree with the Leader of the Opposition's comments that Alberta truly has been blessed. As an Albertan citizen I have been blessed as a result of our sort of landing on this land that dinosaurs or whatever lay down and died on eons ago, that has blessed us with these hydrocarbons, which in this day and age, at my time being alive, have enabled me to go, when I went to school, to some of the finest public education schools and things of that nature that other jurisdictions simply have not had the ability to do. That is all due to our blessing of having landed on this place at this time in the galaxy, I guess.

I guess the other thing that leads into that as our great blessing is that we also have to ensure that this is managed to its utmost effectiveness. Of course, I was not in this House at the time of the Our Fair Share report or at the time when this was even more contentious than it even is today, where we learned that, you know, some of the reports from inside the Energy department may not have been what was actually reported in this House. We learned as early as 2000 that we could have been tweaking the system to gradually go upward to ensure that we were maximizing our take. As former Premier Lougheed has said, you know: think like an owner of a house. We've got to do that when we're selling our resources. If that information would have been made public at least to this side of the House, I think it maybe would have spurred that side of the House to do a little more tweaking at the appropriate time.

I know there's been much said that there has been a loss of billions since 2000. There's been some denial of whether that is, in fact, true. Needless to say, that information has to come to light, and we should have full and fair debate of whether our royalty system is working. I believe now that that information is out, we've gone through this process, and we've reached this day. I think we will be collecting more revenues, which is a good thing. I know, sir, that you're in a difficult position. You've got people on all sides of the fence telling you that they're going to go broke, some people telling you that the province isn't getting our fair share, and some people who just want to go to work in the day. You have to balance all these things out, and I understand it is a very difficult process to get this thing right. I'm hopeful that we have.

Now we've done that, I think, to ensure that we continue to make sure that our energy royalty system is working to collect, to maximize the return for the shareholder, which every individual in Alberta is, and it's fair to every individual, not only those Albertans who are shareholders in Suncor Energy or Petro-Canada or whatever, but to the Alberta citizens who also take part in what the largesse of this government does, I guess, in terms of saving for the future or maybe people on AISH, if they deserve a little more of a fair share. All that depends on whether we're collecting or maximizing our resources. So you see, everything flows from what we do on this front.

On that point, I would like to sort of turn to where we go from here, and that's essentially what I would like to see. It seems like although you touched on it briefly in your comments to the Leader of the Opposition, there were many recommendations coming out of the Auditor General's report and Our Fair Share report. At the time you guys named, I think it was, the six or seven members, all with experience in either oil and gas or private industry. I kind of chuckled at that time. We look back and look at the comments – as I said, I wasn't in the House – but our side actually criticized them as being a bunch of industry hacks, but it looked at the end of the

day like what report came out was not bad. So I think our side got it wrong. They went out, and they analyzed the industry, and did their level best.

But I would like to point out that it seems like there were many recommendations in there as to whatever decision you guys made – whether it was 20 per cent or what we’re going to get now under the royalty system, whatever you guys implemented – that there had to be some oversight put in and some auditing, whatever you want to call it, and a review every two years. I’d just like to sort of for the record point out some of these recommendations, and maybe you can comment as to whether some of these recommendations would be put forward because, you know, it seems like the people at the time – you guys actually named the committee. I assume you believed they were experts in the field. It looks to me like they came up with some good recommendations. I’ll just name them off, and maybe you can tell me whether these are going to be in this legislation or forthcoming at some other time.

Here we go. They were looking that “oversight, effectiveness assessment, auditing & public reporting roles envisioned above” should include:

- A sister organization to the Auditor General, but with the above characteristics and mandate, and/or
- A system of two independent, rotating oversight firms similar to that to which Schedule 1 banks must submit, and/or
- Some other international calibre, independent and un-conflicted entity that has deep industry expertise in all the required disciplines, and/or
- A Super Ministry for Non-renewable Resources.

The panel then goes on to say:

The accountability framework would require, at a minimum, that the following reports be submitted to the Legislature and not merely filed internally to the Minister of Energy:

- Effectiveness audits every two years, and
- Annual reports to the owners . . .

That’s us here in Alberta, every taxpayer.

. . . comprising professional and comprehensive technical, economic and business data, and

- Quarterly statistics on production, prices, developer operating and capital costs (since Albertans allow costs to be deducted before calculating Royalties), collection amounts and forecasts. One starting point for the standards such reporting ought to meet could be the Revenue Source Book of Alaska.

I was just wondering whether you could comment on whether some of these have been followed through on, whether they’ll be coming forward in the future, or whether this act does have some of these principles. Maybe I just missed them, or maybe they’re too confusing for me to understand, and maybe you could help me with that.

Those are my questions, comments, or otherwise, and I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak this afternoon.

The Chair: The hon. Minister of Energy.

Mr. Knight: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I enjoyed your earlier comments with respect to dinosaurs. As a matter of fact, they played a role, but not much of a role. As you know, the western Canadian sedimentary basin is called just that for a reason: it is a sedimentary basin. Of course, a lot of material sort of fell to the bottom of what was the sea here and made a huge and very thick sediment at the bottom of the water. What we actually see today, interestingly enough, just on that topic, is solar energy that has been stored in the earth for something like 200 million to 300 million years, and we’re just now figuring out how to release it again. There’s nothing all that magic about it when you look at it from that point of view. You know, it’s an interesting observation.

4:20

I think we’ll tie these together: the tail end of your comments and some earlier with respect to the reports of the Auditor General. We have a couple of reports, in fact. You didn’t mention, of course, the one that has been done by Mr. Valentine, the Valentine Report. We did that, you know, knowing that, of course, the Auditor General needs to continue to assess what we do and audit what we do, but we wanted to find out as well for our own purposes how good we were actually doing in the department. You mention a few of the recommendations. As I have indicated before, we have said that we would comply with all the recommendations of the Auditor General. We’re meeting with them regularly now, working our way through those recommendations, and we will comply. This thing will get much better. We’re working with recommendations from the Auditor and from Valentine.

You also made mention of the Our Fair Share report and the recommendations there. I think that if you go back and take a look at how we arrived at the new royalty framework, NRF was derived directly from the Our Fair Share report. It took us something in the neighbourhood of six or eight weeks after the delivery of that report to develop the new royalty framework. Now, as with many reports, the government did not agree with every recommendation in that report, and that’s not unusual. What we did is that we dismissed some of them, we accepted a lot of them at face value and incorporated them in the new royalty framework, and we incorporated others with adjustment. So that’s what you’ll see in the new royalty framework. It’s based on the work that was done by the committee, and indeed it shows up in the new royalty framework.

The comments that you had around the effectiveness of the system and the ongoing job that we’re doing. Again, we took those comments that were made by the Auditor General and others very seriously. This is, in fact, as has been previously stated by the Leader of the Opposition, a very serious piece of business for the province of Alberta. This accounts for about 50 per cent of the GDP of this province. You know, it’s very important to Albertans, and it’s important for us to be sure that we are getting the value from the resource for Albertans and are able to use that money to provide goods and services that individuals in the province want, provide programming, provide infrastructure, and kind of continue to develop Alberta as a place and a province that people will be proud to call home.

Another thing that I’d like to mention relative to that is that it’s an extremely difficult situation to train staff and personnel to do the kinds of work that we need to do in these particularly very sensitive and technical areas, and our department and my deputy are very, very busy at work to make sure that we’re able to attract the types of people that we need to bring up our level of response to those recommendations, as we have said we would do and as is required.

I hope that helps answer the questions that you had. Thank you very much for that.

The Chair: Any other hon. member who wishes to speak on the bill?

Seeing none, the chair shall now call the question.

[The clauses of Bill 47 agreed to]

[Title and preamble agreed to]

The Chair: Shall the bill be reported? Are you agreed?

Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Chair: Opposed? Carried.

Bill 48**Alberta Corporate Tax Amendment Act, 2008**

The Chair: Are there any comments, questions, or amendments to be offered with respect to this bill? The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

Mr. Hehr: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Again, it gives me great pleasure to rise and discuss Bill 48, the Alberta Corporate Tax Amendment Act, 2008. In particular, I'm pleased to see the introduction of a 10 per cent refundable scientific research and experimental development tax credit for corporations, to become effective as of January 1, 2009. If we really look at this in terms of the direction that the province needs to go, I think this is the type of, I guess, shaping of the marketplace that governments can do with instruments of tax incentives, like it is in this case, to get people and corporations doing things that are inherently going to move Alberta forward and in a better direction than it is today.

This program will allow for things, it says, like experimental development in order to achieve technological advancements to create new materials, devices, products, or processes to improve existing ones. It'll allow applied research to advance scientific knowledge with specific practical applications, basic research to advance scientific knowledge without a specific practical application in view, and also support work in engineering, design, operations, research, mathematical analysis, computer programming, data collection, testing, and psychological research. But that is limited to only if the work is commensurate with and directly supports the eligible experimental development or applied basic research.

These look like they're good things. In particular, if these companies that are utilizing this tax relief are putting this money towards bettering their companies, bettering their products, maybe furthering their research into the development of wind, solar, and that kind of initiative, it can go some way to improving Alberta's prospects in the future. We all know that eventually where we're going to have to go in this province is to a greener province, one that is more reliant on solar and wind and other renewable fuels.

If you look, you can see some of the competitive advantages that are happening in Europe where they've been more actively involved in, I guess, greening their economy, for no better word. They may be further ahead on this. In fact, they are further ahead of us on this curve. They will be able to then lead both right now and into the future on what kind of products they're selling, what kind of products they're creating. There's no doubt that the world we live in right now is one that primarily runs on oil and gas.

4:30

You know, some of the largesse that we have in bountiful supply here in Alberta will not be utilized in the future, and getting a handle on where we're going to go and where we're going to position ourselves in the global economy is going to be very important. If not today, at least tomorrow. Maybe not tomorrow, but definitely sometime in the very near future.

One of the things that is not eligible for benefits on the program looks like social science and humanities research. Now, I know this often gets a bit of a steer as being useless information or not worth funding because it has no practical results, yet if we look at this type of research, some of it is to make human beings happier. In essence, that is one of the roles of government: not only to make people more educated, more wealthy, more healthy, but it's also to some extent to make life more enjoyable and, hopefully, to make our existence here on the planet, you know, better. That is one of our roles here. I realize it can't be granted for, like, just wasted-time grants, but it's just a nonstarter even before it gets going.

Those are my comments on at least the incenting the marketplace portion of this bill. It's a positive move.

I would also like to comment briefly on the general avoidance rule. Simply put, that is also tightening up the tax leakage that was happening here in Alberta given that Alberta had written their rules differently than the federal government and there is an ability for tax leakage, I guess, for no better term to be used, for escape. It appears that some individuals were only having to pay a 3 per cent flat tax instead of 10 per cent. Clearly, that is money that, you know, is due and owing to the government, or render to Caesar that which is Caesar's, and it could be put to use to do other good things that governments do at this time.

Those are my comments on this bill, and I will say no more this afternoon on this. Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak.

The Chair: The hon. Minister of Advanced Education and Technology.

Mr. Horner: Well, thank you, Chair. First of all, to the hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo, we appreciate the support for the intent of this bill, and we appreciate the fact that you understand the vision and where we're going with this in our next generation economy. This credit really is part of a nine-point plan that we have for technology commercialization in the province. It's part of a package, so it's integrated with all of the other programming that we're doing under our Connects program.

I just wanted to make mention that in terms of social sciences research or the basic research in the humanities, the reality is that the people that are doing that for the most part aren't looking for a tax credit. They're not looking for the economic tax credit for social sciences and humanities research, which is why when you look at the nine-point plan that we've put together, there are other ways to incent and to encourage that type of research. There are societal goods that can come out of it that can also have an economic impact, and we recognize that, which is why we're putting other programs in place for that. I would simply note that, you know, a lot of the government and the not-for-profit research that is done is not actually looking for a tax credit, so why would you put it in there? We will continue to support those sciences and that research in a very big way in this province.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

Dr. Taft: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a couple of fairly brief questions and comments here. I'm wondering what the cost to the treasury will be of passing this particular bill. I mean, we've supported this kind of idea, so I'm not saying we're going to oppose it. I'm just wondering what thinking through has gone into that. In effect, this is a tax expenditure.

My second question I guess I'll just leave on the record. Perhaps the minister of finance can take this under advisement, or maybe somebody can respond to it. I'm wondering if the government has given any consideration to a tax change that would complement this in some ways. It would require working with the federal government, but it would be some kind of return to an accelerated capital cost allowance for equipment in the mining or manufacturing sector. It's something that I think could have a number of benefits, and in particular it would be a boost for capital investment and might well take some steps towards improving the productivity of Alberta's and Canada's economy.

If there's any information that we can be given on the accelerated

capital cost allowance possibility, a restoring of that benefit, that would be helpful. Anything on the cost of this particular bill to the treasury in terms of tax expenditure would be helpful. It might take a day or two to get that information, but I'll appreciate it when I get it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: Any other hon. member wish to speak on this bill?

Hon. Members: Question.

[The clauses of Bill 48 agreed to]

[Title and preamble agreed to]

The Chair: Shall the bill be reported? Are you agreed?

Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Chair: Opposed? Carried.

Bill 49 Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2008

The Chair: Are there any comments, questions, or amendments to be offered with respect to this bill? The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

Mr. Hehr: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Again, it is a privilege to rise and speak on this amendment and possibly get a few questions asked in the interim. The questions will be primarily based upon the member from the third party, whom I listened to with great interest in second reading of this bill.

My initial thoughts were that this is an excellent bill that elevates the use of marijuana equal to that of alcohol. I know in jest in second reading that the old saying was that it was okay to drive when you're high because you'd be under the speed limit, but never drink and drive because you'd be over the speed limit. We all know now that that was sort of one of those adolescent sayings that may have gotten more play than it was actually worth, but I'm sure that some people out there may have taken that old adage to heart. This is one of the ways that governments act to eradicate those myths and legends that are actually out there in some sectors of society.

4:40

Now, if we look at that, I did have some questions. This opens up a whole kettle of fish here in terms of when we usually do our breathalyzers for instance. You know, there has been a standard method where a breathalyzer has been given. You then take that result to court. You go to court. If individuals then would like to hire a lawyer to defend them, the police officer or, I guess, now the sheriff takes the results to the courthouse. The defence lawyer hires their expert and does a whole bunch of stuff. They hash it out as to really whether the person was impaired under the laws of the day.

What now is going to happen under this act is that we are apparently, I think, going to take a vial of blood. If a person has been pulled over and they're suspected of being impaired, that vial of blood will go to a lab. That lab will look and do a screen for toxicology on all sorts of different kinds of things: THC, cocaine, whatever you may have. Either the person is going to say, "All right; I'm guilty; I was indulging in illegal drugs, and I was impaired," or they're going to say, "This is bull; I don't think I was over the legal limit or whether I was even under the impairment of drugs." That's when we'll have this young man or young woman go

see a lawyer, and that lawyer will then take these results of this drug testing and go before our courts.

I'm just sort of wondering, you know: is this going to open up a nightmare for our court system. Is the science good enough to say: yes, this person was smoking drugs two hours before he was behind the wheel of a car, and yes, the drugs he had taken were negatively affecting his driving? It opens up those type of, I guess, pragmatic questions that I wasn't initially thinking about at the first stage of debate, where I had initially just thought: yeah, this makes perfect sense. Now I have a few more questions. I'm hoping that we just haven't opened up a whole other kettle of fish that will be unenforceable and a nightmare for our courts to handle.

If possible, if someone could get back to me on that, whether they do have the science and the ability to narrow down the toxicology reports that allow for our Crown prosecutors to proceed in an orderly fashion, where we're not setting up these prosecutors to fail any time someone stands up and says, "That wasn't me" – like Shaggy says in the song, I guess, *It Wasn't Me* – and you can go from there. I'm just still worried that may in fact be the case. If the minister or someone from the department could get back to me and outline the process of how this is actually happening, that would be wonderful. If that process is able to be done, I think: hey, great. Let's just not set our prosecutors and our court system up for failure on something that they're never going to be able to enforce, never be able to get a conviction on, and let's not cause an undue backlog.

Those are my comments. If someone could get back to me on those questions, it would be greatly appreciated, and we'll go from there. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

Dr. Taft: Well, thank you. It's a pleasure to speak to this bill, Mr. Chairman. This is one of those bills that will quietly go through the Legislature, I expect, but for particular individuals, unknown at this point, could have a tremendous effect on their lives. That's because it's in some ways literally a life-or-death issue we're talking about here.

All of us probably know people who have been killed in car accidents caused by impaired drivers, and all of us have probably lived through the tragedy that follows: the incredible sorrow, the disruption of lives, the heartbreak, and of course there's all the economic loss. You know, society invests in our young people: the education, the health care, and so on. In a flash that's all gone. That's all lost. All that potential will never be realized because of an impaired driver. So this is a bill that will really matter if it has the effect of reducing impaired driving.

I use the term "impaired," Mr. Chairman, to include, as this bill indicates it will include, not just alcohol but drugs. I think this is a piece of legislation that's overdue. It's a piece of legislation that addresses an issue that's been a real issue and a serious concern for many, many years, and that is the risks of people driving under the influence of drugs as well as alcohol. In fact, in my mind, alcohol is just a drug. We call it something different, but alcohol by any real measure is a drug, so it's a bit of an artificial distinction.

This bill is pretty straightforward. In effect, what the bill does is add the clause "drug-related driving of a motor vehicle" after the existing clause in the legislation which reads "alcohol-related driving of a motor vehicle." In other words, we're just being more specific in law here that we are including both alcohol-related driving and drug-related driving of a motor vehicle when we talk about motor vehicle and traffic safety.

The rest of the bill is really just an elaboration of that process, and as I say, it's pretty straightforward. It acknowledges that in society

we have a problem with people driving under the influence of drugs. One of the things that's interesting in here – and it must turn up somewhere or perhaps in a related piece of legislation – is how drug is defined. As I was reading through this bill and some of the briefing notes, I found myself wondering: “Well, does that include prescription drugs? Does it include inadvertent side effects from taking too much insulin by mistake or perhaps some innocent mistakes or side effects that are not realized but are actually taking an effect from a prescription drug?” I can imagine there might be some grey areas in there. I know that it's presumably intended to capture the use of illegal drugs, whether it's marijuana or crystal meth or cocaine or whatever else it might be.

I was listening to the comments from the Member for Calgary-Buffalo, which are always worth while, and given his legal background I thought he was raising interesting questions. Are we going to create new challenges for our court system in dealing with these kinds of cases? Perhaps we are. I would urge the Justice minister to try to facilitate the enactment of this in such a way that the courts don't get further bogged down. I understand, in fact, that a significant amount of court time is taken up by people fighting impaired driving charges, and anything we can do, as the minister well understands, to speed up the courts would be welcome as long as we don't do it at the price of justice being properly administered. So I think that the comments from the Member for Calgary-Buffalo should be taken seriously.

I think this is intended and probably will be a step in the right direction, so it will certainly get the support from this side of the House, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much.

The Chair: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona.

Ms Notley: Thank you. It's a pleasure to be able to rise to speak again to this bill. I made a decision to do it because I see that there are members on the other side who may be able to respond to a couple of my questions. I just sort of want to go a bit further on some of the points that were made previously and that were just made by the last couple of speakers.

4:50

Again, at the outset, we agree with the objectives that are being pursued by this bill. Absolutely no question there. The only concern, ultimately, that I have is what impact this under its current construction might have on the court system. Basically, we've got the clause in here that says, you know, that you will be subject to the penalties under this act if a person's blood alcohol exceeds 80 milligrams of alcohol in a hundred millilitres of blood or – and now we're adding this new thing – if that person is deemed to be impaired by either drugs or alcohol or drugs and alcohol.

I was just having a conversation with another member, and I'm just going to talk about a little anecdote, my own personal little war story. It's not about hunting; it's about articling. As an articling student I had a client who had been convicted of driving over the limit of .08, and in fact I think he'd been measured as blowing about .15 or something like that, so quite a significant excess over the limit. He'd been in an accident, and he'd just driven off the road. His insurance company, though, would not pay the damages arising from his accident if he was impaired due to alcohol. Of course, the insurance company said: well, we're not going to pay this because you blew over .08.

He was our client, and we said: “Well, you know what? Blowing over .08 doesn't mean impaired due to alcohol.” So we went to small claims, and we told the insurance company to prove to us that he was impaired due to alcohol notwithstanding the fact that he had

blown well over .08. The insurance company called the arresting officer, and the arresting officer described how the guy had driven off the road and how he'd clearly been speeding and how his eyes had been red and his speech was slurred.

We came back and said: “Well, you know, the guy works in the trades, and in fact people in these trades typically have red eyes. He had pulled a double shift. He was coming home after 16 hours, so he was very tired, and the roads were slippery” and blah, blah, blah. At the end of the day the insurance company had to pay out.

Well, we took, I think, about three hours of court time running that case and, in fact, were successful because, in fact, the issue of who's impaired versus who blows over .08 are two different ones and a very different standard of proof.

Mr. Hehr: If you would have done that at QB, it would have taken you three days.

Ms Notley: If I'd been at QB, it would have taken me three days, I'm told, and this was just small claims, so there you go.

Nonetheless, that's sort of the example that can arise and that's the problem that can arise if this is not managed in a better way. Of course, the penalties here result in people losing their licence and losing their vehicles, and because often people's licences and vehicles are related to their ability to earn a living, even though, you know, they might not at first glance choose to challenge it, if it means that they may or may not get to keep their job, they will feel compelled to challenge it.

My concern is simply that at this point we have no other scientific way of assessing that someone is impaired due to drugs. The other issue, of course, with drugs, that gives you a whole other two or three hours of trial time depending on what forum you're working in, is: okay; you have proved that the person is impaired. They didn't blow over .08, but we think it was because of drugs. Really? Well, these drugs are still in their system two weeks after they've ingested the drugs. How do you know it's due to drugs? How are you going to prove that, and how many hours of court time are you going to take up proving that?

That's the question that we have about this. I'm just wondering. You know, I mean, there are different ways it can be approached. Ultimately, the act cannot be enforced. Alternatively, I'd be interested in hearing if anybody over there who knows much about the court system has any way to respond to us on this: what plans are afoot with respect to how you might address what might be an increase in trials and legal court time as a result of this act actually being enforced by members of the law enforcement agencies?

Thank you.

The Chair: The hon. Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Ms Redford: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be quick. I won't take too much time. I appreciate the comment. It is something that we continually have to look at. We do need to resource the court system well. My point will be to everyone in this House, and it will be my approach into the future, that we cannot stop ourselves from passing legislation that needs to be passed only because we may anticipate problems like this in the future. We've certainly consulted widely on this in terms of stakeholders that need to be consulted as part of the justice system. We certainly will have challenges. We do have to let judges make some of these decisions. There will be some time. This is judge-made law. But it's important for us to push ahead on this because I believe that it's the right thing. I believe in my heart it is the right thing to determine what community standards are and to make sure that they are enforced.

The Chair: Any other hon. member who wishes to join the debate?
Seeing none, now the chair shall call the question.

[The clauses of Bill 49 agreed to]

[Title and preamble agreed to]

The Chair: Shall the bill be reported? Are you agreed?

Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Chair: Opposed? Carried.

Bill 50
Victims Restitution and Compensation Payment
Amendment Act, 2008

The Chair: Are there any comments, questions, or amendments to be offered with respect to this bill? The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

Mr. Hehr: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It, again, pleases me to be able to speak to this bill, which is, in fact, a very good bill, the Victims Restitution and Compensation Payment Amendment Act, 2008. Essentially, what this is doing is it's allowing the government to not let criminals get away with profiting from their activities. I think this bill goes a long way to allowing our law enforcement community get a handle on some of the people who say that crime does pay.

It's based on the simple rationale that gains from unlawful activity should not accrue and accumulate in the hands of those who commit unlawful activity. That is evidently true, and we've known it since children, yet some of us at a later date who choose to get into this type of crime, in fact, do make the decision. They'll say: "All right. I'll run six grow operations, and by the time they catch me, I'll have a million and a half dollars. I'll go do my couple of years wherever, and everything will be all right."

This type of legislation ensures that in the proper cases the proceeds from this sort of activity will be disgorged and given back to victims of crime, which leads me on a little bit of a tangent although not too far a one. Right now we do have a significant surplus in that victims of crime fund, approximately \$56 million, and I would suggest that given this tumultuous time and turmoil in our communities in terms of gang and gun violence, maybe more should be done with that victims of crime fund. It looks like this bill may add to the coffers in that fund, and that money should be put to use in helping organizations like the John Howard Society. I think I heard a question today in question period regarding what was being done to ensure that repeat offenders weren't offending anymore, and this is the type of thing that can be put to use, the money going back into the community and investing it in ensuring that people are given not only a second chance at life but an ability to, you know, prosper.

5:00

Other than that, I just think this is the type of legislation that can go forward. It's much along the same line as the prostitution bill of the former Member for Calgary-Buffalo prior to me, where he was able to seize cars of johns who were using prostitutes. This bill is along the same line.

I think that in the future we may get an opportunity to get more guns off the street. The word on the street is that a private member's bill may be forthcoming that allows us to seize vehicles of gang members or criminals who are carrying around guns in their vehicles. I think that at that time, when this alleged private mem-

ber's bill comes forward, this House should consider it and maybe move forward on that type of legislation.

I believe that a question was also asked today by a member from the government ranks as to what we were doing on getting rid of guns in our society. I think this act would maybe not get rid of guns but would allow for us to deal with seizing vehicles of people who are driving around with guns unsafely and who are transporting them for use in crime. This type of legislation would ensure that guns and gangs are kept in their place.

Other than that, I'd just like to commend the government for putting this legislation in place. It goes a long way in, again, making sure that crime doesn't pay. I would like to commend the Minister of Justice for putting forward such an excellent and thoughtful bill.

Those are my comments on this bill today. Thank you.

The Chair: The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

Dr. Taft: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. This bill is, I think, a bill that most Albertans would see as overdue. It makes common sense. It's one that they would get behind all of us in supporting. It's a bill that, you know, helps the sort of course of justice to be fully played out. I mean, I think we would all agree that somebody who acquires property and wealth through the proceeds of crime should not be allowed to keep that, and this bill primarily, as I'm looking at it and reading the brief on it, just allows that to happen. It puts in place a process for that to happen in a managed and lawful manner, and I think that's a good idea. I can't imagine anyone in Alberta except criminals being opposed to this. I think the people of Alberta would cheer us all on for putting a piece of legislation like this through the Assembly, so it'll get our backing. I was glad that our shadow minister for Justice got behind it as well.

Thank you. That's the full extent of my comments. I thought those tough-on-crime backbenchers here on the government side might get up and jump in, too, but maybe they won't. It's all taken for granted. I'll be quiet and sit down before I get heckled by the bogeymen over there.

The Chair: Seeing no other member who wishes to speak on the bill, the chair shall now call the question.

[The clauses of Bill 50 agreed to]

[Title and preamble agreed to]

The Chair: Shall the bill be reported? Are you agreed?

Hon. Members: Agreed.

The Chair: Opposed? Carried.

The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

Mr. Zwodzesky: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would move that the committee rise immediately and report Bill 41, the Municipal Government Amendment Act, 2008 (No. 2); Bill 47, Mines and Minerals (New Royalty Framework) Amendment Act, 2008; Bill 48, Alberta Corporate Tax Amendment Act, 2008; Bill 49, Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2008; and Bill 50, Victims Restitution and Compensation Payment Amendment Act, 2008.

Thank you.

[Motion carried]

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

Dr. Brown: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has had under consideration certain bills. The committee reports the following bills: Bill 47, Bill 48, Bill 49, Bill 50. The committee reports the following bill with some amendments: Bill 41. I wish to table copies of all amendments considered by the Committee of the Whole on this date for the official records of the Assembly.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the Assembly concur in the report?

Hon. Members: Concur.

The Deputy Speaker: Opposed? So ordered.

Government Bills and Orders Third Reading

Bill 44 Pharmacy and Drug Amendment Act, 2008

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Egmont.

Mr. Denis: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just a few comments as we go into third here. First, I want to just thank the Member for Edmonton-Riverview for referring to me yesterday as a minister. I wasn't aware of such an appointment, but thank you very much.

The amendments in this bill to the Pharmacy and Drug Act clarify the scope of pharmacy licences . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. member, I recommend that you move the bill.

Mr. Denis: Okay. I move third reading of this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: Continue.

Mr. Denis: Thank you very much. I'm still a little wet behind the ears, Mr. Speaker.

The amendments to the Pharmacy and Drug Act clarify the scope of pharmacy licences. These amendments also set up, more specifically, the responsibilities of licensees and the pharmacy proprietors and the oversight of the authority of the College of Pharmacists. Like in many of the other areas in health care there are changes in the professional scope of practice, new technology, and consumer interests that impact how health services are provided. As the delivery of health services responds to these changes, it is important that patient interests are furthered and, in this case, that the drug distribution system is protected. Mr. Speaker, the amendments in Bill 44 clarify and strengthen the ability of the Alberta College of Pharmacists to properly govern pharmacy operations.

The Pharmacy and Drug Act has been in force since 2007. When the act came into force, four licensed categories replaced the former pharmacy licence. Mr. Speaker, these new categories are community pharmacy, compounding and repackaging pharmacy, mail-order pharmacy, and satellite pharmacy. The mail-order pharmacy category has not yet been brought into effect. Mail-order pharmacies, of course, provide pharmacy services at a distance, and work has been ongoing with the college to ensure that proper oversight and enforcement provisions are in the act. This, of course, is very important to people in rural or remote areas as well as to seniors who have difficulty getting to traditional pharmacy services. While the need for amendments to the legislation was initiated by a requirement to address mail-order pharmacies, the amendments, in fact, work across the board to provide fair and effective rules for all pharmacies.

Let me summarize. These amendments clarify that no person may provide a pharmacy service unless the services are provided from a pharmacy that has the appropriate pharmacy licence. The laws of Alberta always apply. Contrary to what was said yesterday, Mr. Speaker, this doesn't apply to the PATRIOT Act or what have you. The laws of Alberta always apply. If you go and get a drug from another province or another country, again, our laws in this province apply.

5:10

Further, pharmacy services must be provided in accordance with any conditions imposed by the registrar of the Alberta College of Pharmacists. The college through its registrar may impose conditions on a licence when the licence is issued or at another time if required to protect a patient's safety, quality of care, or the integrity of drug distribution. Specific provisions require licensees to ensure that patients are properly counselled about the drug being dispensed, have easy access to a pharmacist in the pharmacy, and that the pharmacy services are provided by qualified professionals.

The inspection authority of the college has also been strengthened so that the college can inspect pharmacies and access the information required to ensure the proper oversight. Inspections by the college are carried out to ensure that drugs are handled and dispensed in accordance with the laws of Canada and Alberta as well as to ensure that licensees are meeting their obligations to patients.

Contrary to popular belief, some backbenchers do pay attention to what the opposition has to say. In spirit thereof, in her comments in second reading the Member for Edmonton-Centre emphasized the importance of maintaining patient privacy. Pharmacists must maintain the privacy of a patient's health in accordance with the requirements of the Health Information Act. The proposed amendments do not alter this requirement, Mr. Speaker. The amendments do, however, include information-sharing provisions which will enable the College of Pharmacists to share information with other bodies that regulate pharmacists, not by ambush but just by regulation, or other health profession bodies such as the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, given that drugs may be dispensed across borders and that the dispensing function is so closely linked to the prescribing function, it is critical for the college to fully respond to complaints about pharmacy operations or noncompliance with the act. At times this may require co-ordination with the work of other regulatory bodies, in the case of some drug distribution matters with federal regulatory bodies. What must be noted here, however, is that in the specification of the amendments information can only be shared for the purpose of protecting or enhancing patient safety, the quality of patient care, or the integrity of the drug distribution system.

Mr. Speaker, as I noted in the past, it is critical for Alberta pharmacies to operate within the laws of Canada and Alberta and in accordance with professional ethics and standards. This is about choice. The amendments reinforce these principles and will better ensure patient safety and the integrity of the drug distribution system, clarify due diligence requirements for pharmacies, and reinforce the oversight and authority of the Alberta College of Pharmacists.

I thank all members for their comments on this bill and ask all members to support this bill to move it to the final stage. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have not had the opportu-

nity to speak to this bill in previous stages of debate [interjection] – did anybody in here hear a bogeyman? – so I will speak to it at third reading.

I want to thank the Member for Calgary-Egmont for his remarks in moving third reading of Bill 44. I think that clarifies a number of the concerns that some of my colleagues had around the privacy issues inherent in this bill. I know that I'm convinced that the privacy of individual consumers is being respected here and that there are good and sound reasons for doing what has been done in the bill here. I just wanted to say that I certainly do not have any particular problem with this bill, and I will be supporting it in third reading.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Seeing no other member who wishes to speak on this bill, the chair shall now call the question.

[Motion carried; Bill 44 read a third time]

Bill 45

Statistics Bureau Amendment Act, 2008

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Employment and Immigration.

Mr. Goudreau: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move third reading of Bill 45, the Statistics Bureau Amendment Act, 2008.

I appreciate my colleagues' support of Bill 45, the Statistics Bureau Amendment Act, 2008. Very briefly, to recap, this act establishes the Office of Statistics and Information. The purpose of the office is to consolidate and develop official statistics and other key government data. The proposed changes will better reflect the role of the Office of Statistics and Information as Alberta's official statistical agency.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the proposed amendments will update the act, making it more consistent with other provincial jurisdictions. Included in such change is the authority for the office to enter into data collection agreements with the government of Canada, other provincial departments, municipalities, and organizations. The amendments to this act will ensure that the best information is available when making policy decisions.

Mr. Speaker, there were a number of questions that were asked, and I could respond in writing to some of those as well. With that, I thank you for the ability to speak.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be brief again. I know everybody is getting anxious to go home. Bill 45, the Statistics Bureau Amendment Act, 2008. We had some very real concerns with this bill around issues of the act prevailing over the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. We're in possession of a letter written by the Privacy Commissioner to my colleague from Edmonton-Gold Bar in which he spells out in some detail the protections that exist under section 11 of Bill 45 to amend section 8. I think I am satisfied, as is the Privacy Commissioner himself, that, in fact, people's privacy is rather well protected.

I'm still a little bit concerned that there's nothing that I can find specific in the amendment act that sets out rules around the selling of information required by the office. I guess we have to rely on the good graces and good intentions of the office. Beyond that, I see no particular problems with this bill, so those are my comments.

Thank you.

Hon. Members: Question.

[Motion carried; Bill 45 read a third time]

Bill 46

Health Professions Amendment Act, 2008

Mr. Liepert: On behalf of the Member for Airdrie-Chestermere, I would move Bill 46, the Health Professions Amendment Act, 2008, for third reading.

The Deputy Speaker: Does any hon. member wish to speak on this bill?

Hon. Members: Question.

[Motion carried; Bill 46 read a third time]

Government Bills and Orders Second Reading

Bill 40

Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Amendment Act, 2008

[Adjourned debate November 19: Ms Redford]

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona.

Ms Notley: Thank you. It's a pleasure for me to be able to rise to speak to this bill for the first time in the House on second reading. This is an interesting act. Of course, it is an amendment to the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act. I think that whatever changes we make to this act are very, very important. It might almost seem a bit trite to say that the sort of measure of any society is how well it protects those within it that are most vulnerable. I believe very passionately that that is the case, and I believe that there are a number of members in this House who would agree with me with respect to that sentiment. This act is one of the key pieces of legislation that circumscribes the way in which we approach that task; i.e., taking care of those within our society who are most vulnerable and in need of our support.

5:20

In addressing this act, I'd like to sort of focus in and try to get into the time of my comments four particular areas, at this point anyway, that the act deals with. The first one, in fact, is an area that the act is moving to change, which I think deserves commendation, which I think is a good move on the part of the ministry. That's the part of the act that deals with the need to establish the cultural connection plans in association with adoption or custody or permanency with respect to children with an aboriginal background. I think that the introduction of that concept into the administration of the adoption process is a really valuable one. I think that everybody who works in this area struggles with a conflict that exists in the situation where they become aware of a child who is at risk, and the first response is to want to remove that child. Unfortunately, as we know, we have a problem, not only in Alberta but throughout the country, where a disproportionate number of children that receive that kind of attention are members of the aboriginal community.

Through our own good intentions we run the risk of simply creating another sort of residential school kind of scenario, where we're taking children away from their family and in many cases putting them into somewhat better situations and not always better situations. That's a real difficult problem, and you don't want to

replicate that. Of course, on the other hand, you also have what is a clearly understood need to provide permanency to these children, to find them a place where they can re-establish connections and have some kind of permanency. So there's that kind of difficulty. Part of that conflict exists because there's a concern that those children will lose the connection that they have with their heritage, in many cases with their band, but also, in any case, with any type of cultural background from which they come that is different from where it is that the ministry would ultimately have them go.

So the notion of establishing these cultural plans is a good one. As I say, I support that. There are some other elements of the bill that cause more concern, and I think that I'm going to focus on three of them. In each of those cases I think it may be arguable that part of the intention that underlies the introduction of the elements of the act to deal with them may have been valid and worthwhile, but we seem to have sort of a situation where we're hammering in a carpet tack with a very, very large sledgehammer. We are not approaching the problem in a way that is best for the children and best for the people of Alberta.

The first example of that is with respect to the problems that I know some people within the system have identified with respect to the remedial authority of the appeal board. Within the system I know that there has been frustration expressed that sometimes what will happen is a matter will be decided by staff within the ministry, social workers in consultation with their managers, with respect to the appropriateness of a foster home or the appropriateness of a child staying in a certain place, a whole range of issues, and an interested party will file an appeal about that. It will go to the appeal panel, and then many people think that the appeal panel makes a decision which they're not qualified to make. So they're making clinical decisions, and it really messes up the clinical best interests of the party in the opinion of officials from the ministry.

While that may be the case, though, I think that there's a better answer to it than the one that's being proposed within this act. The answer being proposed within this act is to simply gut the authority and jurisdiction of the appeal panel. Now, presumably the appeal panel was put in place for a good reason, and that was to give people an opportunity to have these major decisions reviewed. If all you do is say to the appeal panel, "You can review it" and then send it back to the people who made the original decision so they can take another look at it, then you're only going to create this almost sort of Kafkaesque revolving door that only serves to frustrate everybody involved in the system, and it will not bring about any kind of positive outcome.

I can tell you that with great certainty because I have as a lawyer, unfortunately, been subjected to other administrative processes that are constructed in exactly the same way. What happens is that the so-called appeal panel identifies that the original decision made was not made well, was not a good decision. All they can do is send it back for them to review it. The person that reviews it comes to exactly the same conclusion but writes a different set of reasons for

how they got there, and then the person has to appeal again. It just goes around and around and around and around. It is extremely damaging, time consuming, and, frankly, soul killing for those people who are caught within this *Nineteen Eighty-four*-esque sort of bureaucratic maze which is being set up.

Unfortunately, that's what Bill 40 is going to do to the appeal panel. What I would rather see is that if there are concerns about the quality of decisions coming from the appeal panel, what should happen is that the appointment process with respect to the appeal panel should be amended. People appointed to that appeal panel should have clinical expertise. Alternatively, you can appoint registrars or supports to the appeal panel who have clinical expertise and who are objective and who can advise the appeal panel on the clinical best practices to ensure that the quality of their decisions and their orders are maintained. By doing that, you maintain the original objective of ensuring that you provide an objective mechanism through which people can have decisions that affect their lives very deeply reviewed. That's the first concern.

I'm afraid I'm going to run out of time here. The second concern relates, again, to the much-discussed section – I believe it's section 61 of this bill – which relates to the issue of privileged information. Again, I have heard people and representatives of the government talk about what the objective was behind including this section in the bill. Unfortunately, my concern is that the way it's structured, we're getting a lot more than what it originally intended.

We had some lovely examples given to us when the bill was first introduced about what this clause is intended to achieve. I absolutely agree with the need to achieve those outcomes. There's no question that personally identifying information should not be disclosed and that, absolutely, in the kinds of situations that were discussed, particularly as it relates to legal actions and appeal actions where there are numerous parties, there should be some limits on the degree to which that information is shared. Alternatively, it can be the courts that ultimately decide what's in the best interests of the parties vis-à-vis disclosure. So that's fine.

Unfortunately, what this section does is a lot more than that. What this section does is that instead of saying that for the purposes of appeal panels and litigation this information is privileged, what it says is that this information is privileged and blah, blah, blah, blah with respect to appeal panels and all that kind of stuff. What that means is that if you then look at the freedom of information act, you will see that that act exempts any kind of privileged information from being disclosed. My concern is that the way this clause is constructed, any information between the child advocate and the child will be exempt from disclosure under FOIP. We'll talk more about it.

The Deputy Speaker: I hate to interrupt the hon. member, but it's 5:30. The House stands adjourned until Monday afternoon at 1:30.

[At 5:30 p.m. the Assembly adjourned to Monday at 1:30 p.m.]

Bill Status Report for the 27th Legislature - 1st Session (2008)

Activity to November 20, 2008

The Bill sponsor's name is in brackets following the Bill title. If it is a money Bill, (\$) will appear between the title and the sponsor's name. Numbers following each Reading refer to Hansard pages where the text of debates is found; dates for each Reading are in brackets following the page numbers. Bills numbered 200 or higher are Private Members' Public Bills. Bills with lower numbers are Government Bills. Bills numbered Pr1, etc., are Private Bills.

The date a Bill comes into force is indicated in square brackets after the date of Royal Assent. If it comes into force "on proclamation," "with exceptions," or "on various dates," please contact Legislative Counsel for details at (780) 427-2217. The chapter number assigned to the Bill is entered immediately following the date the Bill comes into force. SA indicates Statutes of Alberta; this is followed by the year in which it is included in the statutes, and its chapter number. Please note, Private Bills are not assigned a chapter number until the conclusion of the fall sittings.

1 Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement Implementation Statutes Amendment Act, 2008 (Stelmach)

First Reading -- 9 (Apr. 15 aft.)

Second Reading -- 47-48 (Apr. 16 eve.), 203-08 (Apr. 23 eve.), 464 (May 5 eve.), 517-18 (May 6 eve.), 572-73 (May 7 eve.), 653-54 (May 12 eve.), 702-03 (May 13 eve.), 833 (May 20 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 916-19 (May 22 aft.), 962-67 (May 26 eve.), 988-90 (May 27 aft.), 1005-11 (May 27 eve., passed)

Third Reading -- 1025-30 (May 28 aft., passed on division)

Royal Assent -- (Jun. 3 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force June 3, 2008; SA 2008 c7]

2 Travel Alberta Act (Ady)

First Reading -- 215 (Apr. 24 aft.)

Second Reading -- 464-65 (May 5 eve.), 518-19 (May 6 eve.), 703 (May 13 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 754 (May 14 eve., passed)

Third Reading -- 834-35 (May 20 eve., passed)

Royal Assent -- (Jun. 3 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2008 cT-6.5]

3 Fiscal Responsibility Amendment Act, 2008 (Snelgrove)

First Reading -- 216 (Apr. 24 aft.)

Second Reading -- 654 (May 12 eve.), 703-06 (May 13 eve.), 755 (May 14 eve.), 834 (May 20 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 912-16 (May 22 aft., passed)

Third Reading -- 960-62 (May 26 eve., passed)

Royal Assent -- (Jun. 3 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force June 3, 2008; SA 2008 c5]

4 Alberta Enterprise Corporation Act (Horner)

First Reading -- 224 (Apr. 24 aft.)

Second Reading -- 654 (May 12 eve.), 834 (May 20 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 891 (May 21 eve., passed)

Third Reading -- 959-60 (May 26 eve., passed)

Royal Assent -- (Jun. 3 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2008 cA-17.5]

5 Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2008 (\$) (Snelgrove)

First Reading -- 125 (Apr. 21 eve.)

Second Reading -- 143 (Apr. 22 eve.), 158-60 (Apr. 22 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 208-10 (Apr. 23 eve., passed)

Third Reading -- 386-87 (Apr. 30 eve., passed)

Royal Assent -- (May 15 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force May 15, 2008; SA 2008 c2]

6 Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2008 (\$) (Snelgrove)

First Reading -- 165-66 (Apr. 23 aft.)

Second Reading -- 387 (Apr. 30 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 463 (May 5 eve., passed)

Third Reading -- 516 (May 6 eve., passed)

Royal Assent -- (May 15 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force May 15, 2008; SA 2008 c1]

7 Post-secondary Learning Amendment Act, 2008 (Bhullar)

First Reading -- 348 (Apr. 30 aft.)

Second Reading -- 958 (May 26 eve.), 1037-40 (May 28 aft.), 1121-22 (Jun. 2 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 1128-34 (Jun. 2 eve., passed)

Third Reading -- 1445-49 (Oct. 21 aft.), 1451 (Oct. 21 eve., passed)

Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2008 c25]

- 8 Climate Change and Emissions Management Amendment Act, 2008 (Renner)**
First Reading -- 348 (Apr. 30 aft.)
Second Reading -- 958 (May 26 eve.), 1051-54 (May 28 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1134-39 (Jun. 2 eve.), 1344-47 (Oct. 15 eve.), 1372-75 (Oct. 16 aft.), 1412-17 (Oct. 20 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1451-53 (Oct. 21 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2008 c12]
- 9 Land Agents Licensing Amendment Act, 2008 (Mitzel)**
First Reading -- 479 (May 6 aft.)
Second Reading -- 967 (May 26 eve.), 995-96 (May 27 eve.), 1042-44 (May 28 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1336-38, 1339-41 (Oct. 15 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1496-99 (Oct. 22 eve.), 1607-09 (Oct. 28 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2008 c21]
- 10* Security Services and Investigators Act (Anderson)**
First Reading -- 586-87 (May 8 aft.)
Second Reading -- 889-90 (May 21 eve., referred to Standing Committee on Public Safety and Services), 1478 (Oct. 22 aft., reported to Assembly), 1600-03 (Oct. 28 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1637-46 (Oct. 29 aft.), 1655 (Oct. 29 eve.), 1752-56, 1763-69 (Nov. 4 eve., passed with amendments)
Third Reading -- 1799-1800 (Nov. 5 aft., passed)
- 11* Insurance Amendment Act, 2008 (Evans)**
First Reading -- 348 (Apr. 30 aft.)
Second Reading -- 990-91 (May 27 aft.), 1296-1302 (Oct. 14 aft.), 1325-29 (Oct. 15 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1341 (Oct. 15 eve.), 1362-70 (Oct. 16 aft., passed with amendments)
Third Reading -- 1499-1502 (Oct. 22 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2008 c19]
- 12 Teachers' Pension Plans Amendment Act, 2008 (Evans)**
First Reading -- 348 (Apr. 30 aft.)
Second Reading -- 834 (May 20 eve.), 886-87 (May 21 eve.), 909-11 (May 22 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 958-59 (May 26 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 986-87 (May 27 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Jun. 3 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force September 1, 2007, with exception; SA 2008 c6]
- 13 Financial Institutions Statutes Amendment Act, 2008 (Fawcett)**
First Reading -- 533 (May 7 aft.)
Second Reading -- 834 (May 20 eve.), 887 (May 21 eve.), 911-12 (May 22 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 959 (May 26 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 987 (May 27 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Jun. 3 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force June 3, 2008; SA 2008 c4]
- 14 Court of Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2008 (Redford)**
First Reading -- 770 (May 15 aft.)
Second Reading -- 992 (May 27 aft.), 1048-49 (May 28 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1341-43 (Oct. 15 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1454 (Oct. 21 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force November 4, 2008; SA 2008 c13]
- 15 Family Law Amendment Act, 2008 (Redford)**
First Reading -- 770 (May 15 aft.)
Second Reading -- 992 (May 27 aft.), 1049-50 (May 28 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1343-44 (Oct. 15 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1455-56 (Oct. 21 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2008 c15]
- 16 Municipal Government Amendment Act, 2008 (Danyluk)**
First Reading -- 904 (May 22 aft.)
Second Reading -- 992 (May 27 aft.), 1050-51 (May 28 eve.), 1077-78 (May 29 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1329-33 (Oct. 15 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1456-57 (Oct. 21 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2008 c24]

- 17 Alberta Personal Income Tax Amendment Act, 2008 (\$) (Evans)**
First Reading -- 904 (May 22 aft.)
Second Reading -- 958 (May 26 eve.), 993-95 (May 27 eve.), 1044-47 (May 28 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1079-81 (May 29 aft.), 1122-28, 1139 (Jun. 2 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1204-07 (Jun. 3 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Jun. 9 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2008 c8]
- 18 Film and Video Classification Act (Blackett)**
First Reading -- 848 (May 21 aft., referred to Standing Committee on Community Services), 1477 (Oct. 22 aft., reported to Assembly)
Second Reading -- 1572 (Oct. 27 eve.), 1593-1600 (Oct. 28 aft.), 1653-54 (Oct. 29 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1719-22 (Nov. 3 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1769-70 (Nov. 4 eve., passed)
- 19 First Nations Sacred Ceremonial Objects Repatriation Amendment Act, 2008 (Blackett)**
First Reading -- 848 (May 21 aft.)
Second Reading -- 967-68 (May 26 eve.), 1075-77 (May 29 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1302-08 (Oct. 14 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 1465-66 (Oct. 21 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force November 4, 2008; SA 2008 c17]
- 20 Agriculture Statutes Repeal Act, 2008 (Griffiths)**
First Reading -- 848 (May 21 aft.)
Second Reading -- 968 (May 26 eve.), 996-97 (May 27 eve.), 1047 (May 28 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1308-09 (Oct. 14 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 1502-03 (Oct. 22 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force November 4, 2008; SA 2008 c10]
- 21 Heating Oil and Propane Rebate Act (Griffiths)**
First Reading -- 848 (May 21 aft.)
Second Reading -- 968 (May 26 eve.), 1047-48 (May 28 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1333-36 (Oct. 15 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1453-54 (Oct. 21 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2008 cH-7.5]
- 22 Appropriation Act, 2008 (\$) (Snelgrove)**
First Reading -- 932 (May 26 aft.)
Second Reading -- 981-86 (May 27 aft.), 997-1004 (May 27 eve., passed on division)
Committee of the Whole -- 1030-37 (May 28 aft.), 1041-42 (May 28 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1067-75 (May 29 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Jun. 3 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force June 3, 2008; SA 2008 c3]
- 23* Weed Control Act (Mitzel)**
First Reading -- 1095 (Jun. 2 aft., referred to Standing Committee on Resources and Environment), 1478 (Oct. 22 aft., reported to Assembly)
Second Reading -- 1572 (Oct. 27 eve.), 1609-10 (Oct. 28 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1724-26 (Nov. 3 eve., passed with amendments)
Third Reading -- 1770 (Nov. 4 eve., passed)
- 24* Adult Guardianship and Trusteeship Act (Jablonski)**
First Reading -- 1095 (Jun. 2 aft., referred to Standing Committee on Health), 1478 (Oct. 22 aft., reported to Assembly)
Second Reading -- 1569-71 (Oct. 27 eve.), 1589-93 (Oct. 28 aft.), 1610-11 (Oct. 28 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1793-99 (Nov. 5 aft.), 1805-10 (Nov. 5 eve., passed with amendments)
Third Reading -- 1841-43 (Nov. 6 aft., passed)
- 25 Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2008 (Redford)**
First Reading -- 1095 (Jun. 2 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1295-96 (Oct. 14 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1329 (Oct. 15 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- (Oct. 21 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force November 4, 2008; SA 2008 c23]

- 26 Labour Relations Amendment Act, 2008 (Goudreau)**
First Reading -- 1096 (Jun. 2 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1154-70 (Jun. 3 aft.), 1171-1204 (Jun. 3 eve., passed on division)
Committee of the Whole -- 1207-08 (Jun. 3 eve.), 1224-35, 1237-66 (Jun. 4 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1268-81 (Jun. 4 eve., passed on division)
Royal Assent -- (Jun. 9 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2008 c9]
- 27 Funeral Services Amendment Act, 2008 (Johnson)**
First Reading -- 1323 (Oct. 15 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1371 (Oct. 16 aft.), 1417 (Oct. 20 eve.), 1611-14 (Oct. 28 eve.), 1654-55 (Oct. 29 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1723-24 (Nov. 3 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1770-71 (Nov. 4 eve., passed)
- 28 Jury Amendment Act, 2008 (Redford)**
First Reading -- 1323 (Oct. 15 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1371 (Oct. 16 aft.), 1417-18 (Oct. 20 eve.), 1438-39 (Oct. 21 aft.), 1485-87 (Oct. 22 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1529-30 (Oct. 23 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 1574 (Oct. 27 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2008 c20]
- 29 Alberta Capital Finance Authority Amendment Act, 2008 (\$) (Evans)**
First Reading -- 1323-24 (Oct. 15 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1371 (Oct. 16 aft.), 1433-38 (Oct. 21 aft.), 1487-92 (Oct. 22 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1933-34 (Nov. 18 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1962 (Nov. 19 aft., passed)
- 30 Alberta Evidence Amendment Act, 2008 (Bhullar)**
First Reading -- 1324 (Oct. 15 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1371-72 (Oct. 16 aft.), 1418-19 (Oct. 20 eve.), 1439-42 (Oct. 21 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1530-31 (Oct. 23 aft.), 1616-17 (Oct. 28 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1660-61 (Oct. 29 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force November 4, 2008; SA 2008 c11]
- 31 Financial Administration Amendment Act, 2008 (Snelgrove)**
First Reading -- 1324 (Oct. 15 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1370 (Oct. 16 aft.), 1442-45 (Oct. 21 aft.), 1526-27 (Oct. 23 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1617-19 (Oct. 28 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1661 (Oct. 29 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force November 4, 2008; SA 2008 c16]
- 32* Meat Inspection Amendment Act, 2008 (Griffiths)**
First Reading -- 1361 (Oct. 16 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1419 (Oct. 20 eve.), 1457-59 (Oct. 21 eve.), 1481-85 (Oct. 22 aft.), 1527-29 (Oct. 23 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1620 (Oct. 28 eve.), 1756-57, 1759-60 (Nov. 4 eve., passed with amendments)
Third Reading -- 1774 (Nov. 4 eve., passed)
- 33* Agriculture Financial Services Amendment Act, 2008 (\$) (Groeneveld)**
First Reading -- 1361 (Oct. 16 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1419-20 (Oct. 20 eve.), 1459-62 (Oct. 21 eve.), 1572-74 (Oct. 27 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1621-22 (Oct. 28 eve.), 1761-63 (Nov. 4 eve., passed with amendments)
Third Reading -- 1774 (Nov. 4 eve., passed)
- 34 Employment Pension Plans Amendment Act, 2008 (Brown)**
First Reading -- 1361 (Oct. 16 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1420 (Oct. 20 eve.), 1463-65 (Oct. 21 eve.), 1603-04 (Oct. 28 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1650 (Oct. 29 aft.), 1655-56 (Oct. 29 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1726-27 (Nov. 3 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2008 c14]

- 35 Government Organization Amendment Act, 2008 (Hayden)**
First Reading -- 1324 (Oct. 15 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1370 (Oct. 16 aft.), 1462-63 (Oct. 21 eve.), 1492-94 (Oct. 22 aft.), 1495-96 (Oct. 22 eve.), 1503-04 (Oct. 22 eve.), 1523-26 (Oct. 23 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1646-50 (Oct. 29 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 1729 (Nov. 3 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force November 4, 2008; SA 2008 c18]
- 36 Land Titles Amendment Act, 2008 (Brown)**
First Reading -- 1361 (Oct. 16 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1420 (Oct. 20 eve.), 1574-75 (Oct. 27 eve.), 1604-06 (Oct. 28 aft.), 1607 (Oct. 28 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1650-51 (Oct. 29 aft.), 1656 (Oct. 29 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1727-28 (Nov. 3 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2008 c22]
- 37 Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (Holodomor) Memorial Day Act (Zwozdesky)**
First Reading -- 1673-74 (Oct. 30 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1675-81 (Oct. 30 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1681 (Oct. 30 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 1682 (Oct. 30 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force November 4, 2008; SA 2008 cU-0.5]
- 38 Securities Amendment Act, 2008 (Fawcett)**
First Reading -- 1388 (Oct. 20 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1479-80 (Oct. 22 aft.), 1614-16 (Oct. 28 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1656-60 (Oct. 29 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1728-29 (Nov. 3 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- 1743 (Nov. 4 aft.) [Comes into force on various dates; SA 2008 c26]
- 39 Court Statutes Amendment Act, 2008 (Denis)**
First Reading -- 1389 (Oct. 20 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1480-81 (Oct. 22 aft.), 1575-76 (Oct. 27 eve.), 1726 (Nov. 3 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1760-61 (Nov. 4 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1800-01 (Nov. 5 aft., passed)
- 40 Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Amendment Act, 2008 (Dallas)**
First Reading -- 1858 (Nov. 17 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1921-23 (Nov. 18 eve.), 1949-52 (Nov. 19 aft.), 2004-05 (Nov. 20 aft., adjourned)
- 41* Municipal Government Amendment Act, 2008 (No. 2) (Danyluk)**
First Reading -- 1634 (Oct. 29 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1801 (Nov. 5 aft.), 1812-13 (Nov. 5 eve.), 1834-37 (Nov. 6 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1990-93 (Nov. 20 aft., passed with amendments)
- 42 Health Governance Transition Act (Liepert)**
First Reading -- 1588 (Oct. 28 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1653 (Oct. 29 eve.), 1743-52 (Nov. 4 aft.), 1771-74 (Nov. 4 eve.), 1787-93 (Nov. 5 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1810-12 (Nov. 5 eve.), 1837-41 (Nov. 6 aft.), 1889-90 (Nov. 17 eve.), 1916-19 (Nov. 18 aft.), 1934-35 (Nov. 18 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1962-63 (Nov. 19 aft.), 1965-66 (Nov. 19 eve., passed)
- 43 Emergency Health Services Act (Anderson)**
First Reading -- 1694 (Nov. 3 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1801-02 (Nov. 5 aft.), 1813-16 (Nov. 5 eve.), 1843-44 (Nov. 6 aft.), 1884-87 (Nov. 17 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1913-16 (Nov. 18 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 1966 (Nov. 19 eve., passed)
- 44 Pharmacy and Drug Amendment Act, 2008 (Denis)**
First Reading -- 1694 (Nov. 3 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1802-03 (Nov. 5 aft.), 1816 (Nov. 5 eve.), 1844-45 (Nov. 6 aft.), 1888 (Nov. 17 eve.), 1905-06 (Nov. 18 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1955-58 (Nov. 19 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 2003-04 (Nov. 20 aft., passed)

- 45 Statistics Bureau Amendment Act, 2008 (Goudreau)**
First Reading -- 1694 (Nov. 3 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1803 (Nov. 5 aft.), 1816-17 (Nov. 5 eve.), 1888-89 (Nov. 17 eve.), 1906 (Nov. 18 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1958-61 (Nov. 19 aft.), 1974-75 (Nov. 19 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 2004 (Nov. 20 aft., passed)
- 46 Health Professions Amendment Act, 2008 (Anderson)**
First Reading -- 1829 (Nov. 6 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1880-81 (Nov. 17 eve.), 1906-10 (Nov. 18 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1975-76 (Nov. 19 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 2004 (Nov. 20 aft., passed)
- 47 Mines and Minerals (New Royalty Framework) Amendment Act, 2008 (Webber)**
First Reading -- 1829-30 (Nov. 6 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1881-82 (Nov. 17 eve.), 1910-13 (Nov. 18 aft.), 1952-54 (Nov. 19 aft.), 1966-69 (Nov. 19 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1993-99 (Nov. 20 aft., passed)
- 48 Alberta Corporate Tax Amendment Act, 2008 (\$) (Evans)**
First Reading -- 1830 (Nov. 6 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1882 (Nov. 17 eve.), 1923-28 (Nov. 18 eve.), 1954-55 (Nov. 19 aft.), 1970-72 (Nov. 19 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1999-2000 (Nov. 20 aft., passed)
- 49 Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2008 (Berger)**
First Reading -- 1830 (Nov. 6 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1882-83 (Nov. 17 eve.), 1928-30 (Nov. 18 eve.), 1969-70 (Nov. 19 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2000-02 (Nov. 20 aft., passed)
- 50 Victims Restitution and Compensation Payment Amendment Act, 2008 (\$) (Redford)**
First Reading -- 1830 (Nov. 6 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1883-84 (Nov. 17 eve.), 1930-33 (Nov. 18 eve.), 1972-74 (Nov. 19 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 2002-03 (Nov. 20 aft., passed)
- 201 Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Heritage Act (Mitzel)**
First Reading -- 59 (Apr. 17 aft.)
Second Reading -- 89-102 (Apr. 21 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 430-43 (May 5 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 625-31 (May 12 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (May 15 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force May 15, 2008; SA 2008 cH-15.5]
- 202 Alberta Volunteer Service Medal Act (Cao)**
First Reading -- 59 (Apr. 17 aft.)
Second Reading -- 102-07 (Apr. 21 aft.), 258-64 (Apr. 28 aft., six-month hoist amendment agreed to)
- 203 Election Statutes (Fixed Election Dates) Amendment Act, 2008 (Allred)**
First Reading -- 224 (Apr. 24 aft.)
Second Reading -- 265-74 (Apr. 28 aft.), 443-44 (May 5 aft.), 631-34 (May 12 aft., six-month hoist amendment agreed to on division)
- 204 Traffic Safety (Hand-Held Communication Devices) Amendment Act, 2008 (Johnston)**
First Reading -- 224 (Apr. 24 aft.)
Second Reading -- 937-49 (May 26 aft., referred to Standing Committee on the Economy), 1478 (Oct. 22 aft., not proceeded with)
- 205 Traffic Safety (Used Vehicle Inspection) Amendment Act, 2008 (Bhardwaj)**
First Reading -- 401 (May 1 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1100-12 (Jun. 2 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1553 (Oct. 27 aft., defeated)
- 206* Alberta Personal Income Tax (Physical Activity Credit) Amendment Act, 2008 (Rodney)**
First Reading -- 587 (May 8 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1112-13 (Jun. 2 aft.), 1396-1406 (Oct. 20 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1696-1707 (Nov. 3 aft., passed with amendments)
Third Reading -- 1859-66 (Nov. 17 aft., agreed to on division)

- 207 Young Albertans' Advisory Council Act (Fawcett)**
First Reading -- 1295 (Oct. 14 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1553-62 (Oct. 27 aft.), 1708-11 (Nov. 3 aft., six-month hoist amendment agreed to)
- 208 Alberta Affordable Mortgage Protection Act (Weadick)**
First Reading -- 1479 (Oct. 22 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1866-74 (Nov. 17 aft., adjourned)
- 209 Traffic Safety (Driver Disqualification and Seizure of Vehicles Arising From Drug Offences) Amendment Act, 2008 (Quest)**
First Reading -- 1479 (Oct. 22 aft.)
- 210 School (Enhanced Protection of Students and Teachers) Amendment Act, 2008 (Forsyth)**
First Reading -- 1634 (Oct. 29 aft.)
- 212 Agricultural Operation Practices (Confined Feeding Operations Approvals) Amendment Act, 2008 (McFarland)**
First Reading -- 1988 (Nov. 20 aft.)
- 213 Environmental Protection and Enhancement (Fines for Littering on Public Lands and Highways) Amendment Act, 2008 (Calahasen)**
First Reading -- 1988 (Nov. 20 aft.)
- Pr1* Young Men's Christian Association of Edmonton Statutes Amendment Act, 2008 (Lukaszuk)**
First Reading -- 719 (May 14 aft.)
Second Reading -- 1078 (May 29 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1122 (Jun. 2 eve., passed with amendments)
Third Reading -- 1266-68 (Jun. 4 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Jun. 9 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force June 9, 2008]

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