



Province of Alberta

The 27th Legislature
Second Session

Alberta Hansard

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Issue 29

The Honourable Kenneth R. Kowalski, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

The 27th Legislature

Second Session

Kowalski, Hon. Ken, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock, Speaker
Cao, Wayne C.N., Calgary-Fort, Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees
Mitzel, Len, Cypress-Medicine Hat, Deputy Chair of Committees

Ady, Hon. Cindy, Calgary-Shaw (PC),
Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation
Allred, Ken, St. Albert (PC)
Amery, Moe, Calgary-East (PC)
Anderson, Rob, Airdrie-Chestermere (PC),
Parliamentary Assistant, Solicitor General and Public Security
Benito, Carl, Edmonton-Mill Woods (PC)
Berger, Evan, Livingstone-MacLeod (PC),
Parliamentary Assistant, Sustainable Resource Development
Bhardwaj, Naresh, Edmonton-Ellerslie (PC)
Bhullar, Manmeet Singh, Calgary-Montrose (PC),
Parliamentary Assistant, Advanced Education
and Technology
Blackett, Hon. Lindsay, Calgary-North West (PC),
Minister of Culture and Community Spirit
Blakeman, Laurie, Edmonton-Centre (AL),
Deputy Leader of the Official Opposition
Official Opposition House Leader
Boutilier, Guy C., Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (PC)
Brown, Dr. Neil, QC, Calgary-Nose Hill (PC)
Calahasen, Pearl, Lesser Slave Lake (PC)
Campbell, Robin, West Yellowhead (PC),
Deputy Government Whip
Chase, Harry B., Calgary-Varsity (AL),
Official Opposition Whip
Dallas, Cal, Red Deer-South (PC)
Danyluk, Hon. Ray, Lac La Biche-St. Paul (PC),
Minister of Municipal Affairs
DeLong, Alana, Calgary-Bow (PC)
Denis, Jonathan, Calgary-Egmont (PC)
Doerksen, Arno, Strathmore-Brooks (PC)
Drysdale, Wayne, Grande Prairie-Wapiti (PC)
Elniski, Doug, Edmonton-Calder (PC)
Evans, Hon. Iris, Sherwood Park (PC),
Minister of Finance and Enterprise
Fawcett, Kyle, Calgary-North Hill (PC)
Forsyth, Heather, Calgary-Fish Creek (PC)
Fritz, Hon. Yvonne, Calgary-Cross (PC),
Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs
Goudreau, Hon. Hector G., Dunvegan-Central Peace (PC),
Minister of Employment and Immigration
Griffiths, Doug, Battle River-Wainwright (PC),
Parliamentary Assistant, Agriculture and Rural Development
Groeneveld, Hon. George, Highwood (PC),
Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development
Hancock, Hon. Dave, QC, Edmonton-Whitemud (PC),
Minister of Education, Government House Leader
Hayden, Hon. Jack, Drumheller-Stettler (PC),
Minister of Infrastructure
Hehr, Kent, Calgary-Buffalo (AL)
Horne, Fred, Edmonton-Rutherford (PC)
Horner, Hon. Doug, Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert (PC),
Minister of Advanced Education and Technology
Jablonski, Hon. Mary Anne, Red Deer-North (PC),
Minister of Seniors and Community Supports
Jacobs, Broyce, Cardston-Taber-Warner (PC)
Johnson, Jeff, Athabasca-Redwater (PC)
Johnston, Art, Calgary-Hays (PC)
Kang, Darshan S., Calgary-McCall (AL)
Klimchuk, Hon. Heather, Edmonton-Glenora (PC),
Minister of Service Alberta
Knight, Hon. Mel, Grande Prairie-Smoky (PC),
Minister of Energy
Leskiw, Genia, Bonnyville-Cold Lake (PC)
Liepert, Hon. Ron, Calgary-West (PC),
Minister of Health and Wellness
Lindsay, Hon. Fred, Stony Plain (PC),
Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security
Lukaszuk, Thomas A., Edmonton-Castle Downs (PC),
Parliamentary Assistant, Municipal Affairs
Lund, Ty, Rocky Mountain House (PC)
MacDonald, Hugh, Edmonton-Gold Bar (AL)
Marz, Richard, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills (PC)
Mason, Brian, Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood (NDP),
Leader of the NDP Opposition
McFarland, Barry, Little Bow (PC)
McQueen, Diana, Drayton Valley-Calmor (PC),
Parliamentary Assistant, Environment
Morton, Hon. F.L., Foothills-Rocky View (PC),
Minister of Sustainable Resource Development
Notley, Rachel, Edmonton-Strathcona (NDP),
Deputy Leader of the NDP Opposition,
NDP Opposition House Leader
Oberle, Frank, Peace River (PC),
Government Whip
Olson, Verlyn, QC, Wetaskiwin-Camrose (PC)
Ouellette, Hon. Luke, Innisfail-Sylvan Lake (PC),
Minister of Transportation
Pastoor, Bridget Brennan, Lethbridge-East (AL),
Deputy Official Opposition Whip
Prins, Ray, Lacombe-Ponoka (PC)
Quest, Dave, Strathcona (PC)
Redford, Hon. Alison M., QC, Calgary-Elbow (PC),
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Renner, Hon. Rob, Medicine Hat (PC),
Minister of Environment, Deputy Government House Leader
Rodney, Dave, Calgary-Lougheed (PC)
Rogers, George, Leduc-Beaumont-Devon (PC)
Sandhu, Peter, Edmonton-Manning (PC)
Sarich, Janice, Edmonton-Decore (PC),
Parliamentary Assistant, Education
Sherman, Dr. Raj, Edmonton-Meadowlark (PC),
Parliamentary Assistant, Health and Wellness
Snelgrove, Hon. Lloyd, Vermilion-Lloydminster (PC),
President of the Treasury Board
Stelmach, Hon. Ed, Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville (PC),
Premier, President of Executive Council
Stevens, Hon. Ron, QC, Calgary-Glenmore (PC),
Deputy Premier, Minister of International and
Intergovernmental Relations
Swann, Dr. David, Calgary-Mountain View (AL),
Leader of the Official Opposition
Taft, Dr. Kevin, Edmonton-Riverview (AL)
Tarchuk, Hon. Janis, Banff-Cochrane (PC),
Minister of Children and Youth Services
Taylor, Dave, Calgary-Currie (AL)
VanderBurg, George, Whitecourt-St. Anne (PC)
Vandermeer, Tony, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview (PC)
Weadick, Greg, Lethbridge-West (PC)
Webber, Len, Calgary-Foothills (PC),
Parliamentary Assistant, Energy
Woo-Paw, Teresa, Calgary-Mackay (PC)
Xiao, David H., Edmonton-McClung (PC),
Parliamentary Assistant, Employment and Immigration
Zwozdesky, Hon. Gene, Edmonton-Mill Creek (PC),
Minister of Aboriginal Relations,
Deputy Government House Leader

Officers and Officials of the Legislative Assembly

Clerk	W.J. David McNeil	Senior Parliamentary Counsel	Shannon Dean
Clerk Assistant/ Director of House Services	Louise J. Kamuchik	Sergeant-at-Arms	Brian G. Hodgson
Clerk of <i>Journals</i> /Table Research	Micheline S. Gravel	Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms	J. Ed Richard
Senior Parliamentary Counsel	Robert H. Reynolds, QC	Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms	William C. Semple
		Managing Editor of <i>Alberta Hansard</i>	Liz Sim

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 23, 2009

[The Speaker in the chair]

Prayers

The Speaker: Good afternoon. Welcome.

Let us pray. Give to each member of this Legislature a strong and abiding sense of the great responsibilities laid upon us. Give us a deep and thorough understanding of the needs of the people we serve. Amen.

Please be seated.

Introduction of Guests

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

Mr. Horner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly a group of grade 6 students from Camilla school in Rivière Qui Barre in my riding. This year their school gym became non-usable, and the community has come together along with the parents and facilities in the community. I want to commend both the teachers and parents and the students for making a difficult situation workable while we repair the gym. They're here touring the Legislature today and have had a great morning touring around the magic spot and whatnot. I'd like to introduce to you the teachers, Ms Amanda Langford, Mr. Mike Panstian, Mrs. Sandra Hollett, Mrs. Chancy Moores, and bus driver Mr. David Soetaert. They are seated in our public gallery, and I would ask that they rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills.

Mr. Marz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today and introduce a group of enthusiastic, hard-working students from Kneehill Christian school, which is located just outside the village of Linden. They're here today to learn how democracy works, and I'm sure they won't be disappointed. They are accompanied today by teachers Miss Terri Miller and Miss Vicki Reimer as well as by parents and helpers Mr. DaVon Baerg, Mrs. Darla Baerg, Mr. Lorne Reimer, Mrs. Staphene Reimer, Mr. Dale Wiebe, and Mrs. Charmaine Wiebe. They're in the members' gallery, and I would ask them to rise and receive the gracious welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Drayton Valley-Calmar.

Mrs. McQueen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to welcome a group of wonderful students from Winfield school in my riding of Drayton Valley-Calmar. These 25 bright grade 6 students along with their teacher, Mr. Thomas Wilkinson, and parent helpers Mrs. Renee Harris and Mrs. Jeannette Chappell will be touring our Legislature, and I'll have the pleasure to be meeting with them later on today. They will be arriving during question period; however, I still invite you to give them the traditional warm welcome of this Legislature.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Strathcona.

Mr. Quest: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to rise today

and introduce to you and through you to this Assembly a group of students here today visiting us from Madonna Catholic school in Sherwood Park. I'm introducing this group on behalf of my colleague the hon. Member for Sherwood Park. They're accompanied today by their teacher, Mr. Ray Rudanec, and parent helper Mrs. Tracy McCloy. They're seated in the public gallery, and I would ask that they all rise to receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Strathmore-Brooks.

Mr. Doerksen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a group of 31 grade 6 students from Bassano elementary school. These young people travelled four hours on a school bus yesterday to be in Edmonton, are here this afternoon in the Legislature, and will be travelling back later this afternoon. They are accompanied today by their teachers, Miss Jeneen Armstrong and Mrs. Della Armstrong, and parent chaperones Mrs. Jodi Bjornson, Mr. Bill Kelly, Mr. Marty Holmes, Mrs. Tanya Moss, Mrs. Carrie Lassiter, and Mr. Darrell McCoomb. They are seated up in the public gallery, and I would ask them all to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly a group of nine teachers from the Rotary group study exchange team from Belize. Rotary group study exchange teams provide young professionals and businesspersons an opportunity to experience their business or profession during a three- to four-week visit to another country. For the past two years this Rotary district in co-operation with Belize Rotary clubs and the Belize Ministry of Education has been sending a team of 24 teachers to Belize each summer to conduct workshops for teachers in that area in the areas of math, science, and language arts. Funding has been provided by the Rotary Foundation, Rotary district 5370 Rotary clubs, and a matching grant from the government of Alberta.

Today we have with us a group from Rotary district 5370's Belize literacy program. The purpose of the program is to assist Belize in raising its primary school completion rate, reduce the dropout rate, and improve teaching excellence. The group study exchange team is lead by two Rotarians from Belize, Dr. Eve Aird and Javier Moreno, and includes seven other team members of teachers, school administrators, and Ministry of Education officials: Erwin Arnold, Nelson Longsworth, Jerris Valentine Jr., Franzine Flores, Althea Spain, Glenford Parham, and Anthony Morris. They're joined by St. Albert teacher Bernie Hryciw and local Rotarian Marilyn Mucha. They're seated in the members' gallery. I'd like to ask all of our guests to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

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

Mr. Sandhu: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise and introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly four very special people in the members' gallery today. Alyse Reid and Lynne Amyotte are University of Alberta students who have volunteered with the give a kid a lunch program. They are joined by Natalie Chesser and Linda Armstrong of the Unity Centre. I will give a statement describing more about their wonderful work

today. I would ask these four guests to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

Thank you.

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

Ms Blakeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm just delighted to introduce an individual who works very hard for the people in the city of Edmonton. We have with us, joining us in the public gallery, Jon Hall. Jon is the manager of marketing and communications for the Edmonton Real Estate Board. We were hoping to have him joined today by Bill Fowler, who is the director of industry and government relations for the Alberta Real Estate Association, but he, unfortunately, was turned back on the highway from Calgary. We do have Jon with us in the gallery, and I would ask him to please rise and accept the warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

Dr. Sherman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly a prominent Albertan. Her family came from Barry, south Wales, to Irma, Alberta, in 1927, where they farmed. Her mother moved to Edmonton and became a teacher. Unfortunately, her father died when she was 10. This Albertan married and had four children, went to Grant MacEwan College and the University of Alberta, worked in information management, and was one of *Alberta Ventures* magazine's 50 most influential people. She wrote a story about an Albertan family. It's called *No Corner Boys Here*. The book won an Independent Publisher's book award, best nonfiction, Canada west category. The hon. Member for Battle River-Wainwright purchased a copy for every library in his constituency, and in Edmonton-Meadowlark we purchased a copy for every school in our constituency. This is a history of our province and the people in this wonderful province. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to ask Jean Crozier to rise so that she may be welcomed by my friends in this Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to make a second introduction today to you and through you to all members of the House: two Albertans who are very involved in working with students with learning disabilities, improving the learning experiences and outcomes of these students, and furthering research in the realm of learning disabilities. They're here today as we table a white paper from the world summit on learning disabilities which was held in Alberta. With us today is Kathryn Burke, executive director of the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta, the author of the white paper on behalf of the world summit organizing committee, an active volunteer working with children at risk, and the proud parent of a gifted teenager affected by learning disabilities. Kathryn is well published through her volunteer and professional activities and has presented all over Canada. With her is Michele Pentyluk. Michele is a registered psychologist practising in Edmonton who specializes in the area of learning disabilities. She is the president of the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta and is also a popular speaker and author and has also presented all over Canada. I'd ask my two guests to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

1:40

Members' Statements

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

Give a Kid a Lunch Program

Mr. Sandhu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I introduced to the House four special people visiting the Legislature today. The Unity Centre does wonderful work and is located in my riding of Edmonton-Manning. Alyse Reid and Lynne Amyotte, two University of Alberta students, as a part of their degree have been volunteering with this great organization. Through their volunteering these students noticed how many clients of the Unity Centre were children and that most of them were going to school hungry. That's why Alyse and Lynne developed the give a kid a lunch program. This project, which ran from April 7 to 14, was very successful: \$811 was raised in food donations and \$695 in cash and gift certificates. This money will go a long way towards helping our city's most needy people.

I would like to congratulate these girls on their hard work and for helping those who are less fortunate than themselves. Our government will continue to support groups just like the Unity Centre through the funding available from Culture and Community Spirit. This will mean that organizations such as the Unity Centre can focus on helping Albertans and strengthening the community.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Gordon Hansen

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize the contributions of one of my constituents, Gordon Hansen, a long-time resident of Marlborough Park, who is entering his retirement. The Marlborough Park community was registered in 1973. Gordon saw a vision of a new hall and facility to replace the small hall in Marlborough Park, and he and another constituent, Doug Caswell, were instrumental in the planning and design of the new facility. The grand, multifunctional centre opened on May 23, 1987. Gordon spent most of his life serving on the board of directors and as a volunteer. Gordon's volunteer spirit also runs throughout his family. His son and daughter have also been involved with the organization.

The centre began to offer sports for youth and a preschool for the little ones. Mr. Speaker, Gordon was a huge part of the community by fundraising, bartending, helping out at bingos, and initiating Marlborough Park Community Association's participation at casinos for fundraising. Gordon was also the co-ordinator from 1998 until the present date. He has a reputation for knowing every single detail about the building that the association currently owns, including loose tiles and the number of nails. He oversaw the smooth running of all events held such as jelly bean dances, bridge tournaments, wedding parties, as well as dealing with the staff, purchasing, and reporting to the board of directors.

Gordon's hard work has earned him his retirement. The community will surely miss Gordon's involvement and his time spent within the walls of the Marlborough Park Community Centre. My best wishes go out to Gordon and his family. His dedication has made a profound impact on the residents of Marlborough Park.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Achievement Bonuses

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to talk about the achievement bonuses that have been provided by the government of Alberta for the last 10 years to senior managers of this province. The total for these bonuses exceeds \$250 million. In fact, that's what we can glean from the annual reports.

That's the information that the government has quietly made available to the taxpayers, who have footed this big bill.

Now, when we look at the reaction of the senior government ministers, including the President of the Treasury Board, that surprises me because in 2006 Meyers Norris Penny recommended that bonuses of this nature compromise the independence and the impartiality of senior officials, including the officers of the Legislative Assembly.

The officers of the Legislative Assembly did the right thing, Mr. Speaker. They do not take achievement bonuses. But what did this government do so that they could control and manage the top levels of the civil service? They've continued with this practice while at the same time asking others to do with less. The others, I would remind the hon. President of the Treasury Board, include seniors; they include people with very, very little, if any, income at all. Meanwhile, this bonus structure, that has reached a quarter of a billion dollars, goes on without any proper accountability to the taxpayers. The government should be ashamed of themselves.

Thank you.

St. George's Day

Dr. Brown: Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of St. George's Day. Historians tell us that St. George was an officer in the Roman army who died a martyr on April 23, 303 AD, for protesting the persecution of Christians. Over the centuries his fame grew, and by the sixth century the legend of St. George slaying a dragon was recorded, possibly as an allegory of his conflict with the Roman emperor, leading to his death.

In the 11th century he was adopted as the patron saint of soldiers, and in 1415 St. George was officially recognized as the patron saint of England. St. George was adopted as the patron saint of Scouting and of many other countries, including Georgia, Malta, Russia, Lithuania, Greece, and Portugal.

Seventeen centuries after his death the memory of St. George remains associated with the virtues of duty, defence of the poor and helpless, and bravery and heroism. The poet Edmund Spenser conveyed St. George's persona in his epic poem the *Faerie Queene*:

But on his breast a bloody Cross he bore
The dear remembrance of his dying Lord,
For whose sweet sake that glorious badge we wore
And dead (as living) ever he adored.

St. George's standard is the red perpendicular martyr's cross on a white background, which makes up part of the Union flag of the United Kingdom and of the flags of four provinces hanging in this Assembly. St. George has special significance for our province as his standard figures prominently in both our Alberta provincial flag and our provincial crest.

Today I'd like to recognize St. George's Day on behalf of our friends in England, those of English descent, and others around the world who embrace St. George and his heroic spirit and to wish everyone a happy St. George's Day.

Genome Alberta

Mr. Griffiths: Mr. Speaker, Saturday, April 25 marks the 56th anniversary of James Watson and Francis Crick announcing the discovery of the double helix as the basis for the structure of DNA. In plants DNA controls the genetics and genetic selection which allows plants to thrive in different climates. Livestock farmers track the genetics of their herds to raise quality Alberta beef. In humans DNA is largely what makes us who we are. It determines the colour of our eyes and our hair. Unfortunately, it can also lead to a host of diseases.

DNA- and genome-based technologies and knowledge can provide the world with tools for better diagnostics, open the door to more informed choices in therapeutics, and offer lifestyle choices which promote health and lower the incidence of disease. In our province Genome Alberta is helping to put Alberta on the North American genetics map and ensuring that Albertans may be among the first to benefit from new discoveries. Established in 2006 through funding from the Alberta government and Genome Canada, this group is making good headway in the study of how genes interact with each other and the environment.

Genome Alberta is working with research organizations across Canada in tackling mountain pine beetle problems by looking at the complex interaction between the tree, the beetle, and the deadly blue stain fungus which ultimately is killing sections of our province's forest. Field crews are set to sequence the previously unknown genome of the fungus.

Genome Alberta is now launching a couple of new projects. In one project scientists will sequence the active genes of many important plant species, and in the second project they will look deep beneath Alberta's surface into hydrocarbon deposits, where naturally occurring microbes may be able to play a role in sustainable ways of extracting oil and in managing tailings ponds.

In the 56 years since the double helix was discovered, the world has come a long way in understanding and finding the genetic basis for many human diseases and conditions. With the work that Genome Alberta is doing, Alberta will soon be at the forefront of international metagenomics research and innovation.

April 25 is an important day in the world of science, Mr. Speaker. I encourage all members to recognize the achievements of Alberta's genetic science community.

Thank you.

1:50

Oral Question Period

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

Seniors' Pharmaceutical Plan

Dr. Swann: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today in an unprecedented closed-door press conference this minister of health released his revised plans for seniors' drug coverage. Obviously, the government wants to control the message, and for this media release little has actually changed. To the minister. Under the old proposed plan, 60 per cent of seniors would pay nothing or less than before. Under the new plan 60 per cent of seniors will pay nothing or less than before. What, Mr. Minister, has changed?

Mr. Liepert: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the Leader of the Opposition endorses our new plan because he's absolutely right that under the plan 60 per cent of seniors today will pay less than they're currently paying for drug costs. We do want to ensure, however, that we have a plan for those who do have to pay, that there's some predictability around it, and that's what today's plan did.

Dr. Swann: Well, under the new plan many single seniors with an income between \$12,000 and \$24,000 a year will actually pay more. How can the minister say this is an improvement? Was he listening to seniors?

Mr. Liepert: Well, Mr. Speaker, there are two situations here that need to be clarified. Under the plan that we announced in December, we used total income. We have changed that by listening to seniors. The original plan was total income; the plan we rolled out

today is taxable income, so we in fact did listen to seniors. But the key thing is: compare what we announced today to what seniors are paying today, and 60 per cent of seniors July 1, 2010, will pay less for drugs than they do today.

Dr. Swann: Well, Mr. Speaker, what many seniors are asking us today is: why is this minister taxing seniors to make up for the mismanagement of this government?

Mr. Liepert: Mr. Speaker, I don't recall anybody talking about taxes. What we did was we introduced an optional plan – let's be clear; this is an optional plan – for seniors to give them some predictability with their costs. Yes, that is tied to income so that some close to 70 or 80 per cent of Alberta's seniors will be in some way assisted by government. Overall when this plan goes into effect, the government will continue to pick up 80 per cent of the cost of drugs for seniors.

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

Labour Protection for Paid Farm Workers

Dr. Swann: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Minister of Employment and Immigration said that families of injured and killed farm workers "have access to the courts" just like any other Albertans. The minister knows, however, that there is no prosecution for occupational health and safety as there is for all other occupations in this province. To the minister: does the minister support a policy where the only way employers of paid farm workers can be charged with unsafe workplaces is if the families take this issue to court?

Mr. Goudreau: Mr. Speaker, I indicated that I am always very sympathetic to any types of deaths or injuries no matter where they happen in the province of Alberta. I've also indicated to this House that farmers have other options that are available to them, and farm employees have options that are available to them. I also indicated that we did hire a consultant to talk to the farm industry out there to see what else could be done.

Dr. Swann: The minister again tried to dodge this issue by speaking about the unique circumstances of family farms. The minister surely acknowledges that there is a difference between a family farm and a corporate farm and that paid farm workers deserve the same rights and protections as any other employees in the province. What's your response, Mr. Minister?

Mr. Goudreau: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, those are the areas that we're looking at at present. We're going to keep on working with the agricultural industry. We're going to see where we might be able to clarify some of those definitions and see if there is anything in addition that needs to be done.

Dr. Swann: Well, the minister and this government have been consulting on changes for many, many years. They've simply not only failed in their duties to these families, but they have failed Albertans and shamed us nationally. How many more years, Mr. Minister, will it take for you to do the right thing?

Mr. Goudreau: Mr. Speaker, I indicated that we had hired a consultant to look at this. That particular person is to report to both my ministry and to the minister of agriculture over this particular

summer. We will look closely at the options that will be before us and no doubt examine various ways to make distinctions between family farms as we know them and maybe corporate entities for possible regulatory and legislative purposes.

The Speaker: Third Official Opposition main question. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

Condominium Property Management

Ms Blakeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The Condominium Property Act is heavily slanted toward the start-up of newer conversion condos but contains little for the ongoing problems long after the developer has gone. My constituents, some of whom are in the gallery today, are being left in untenable positions by large management companies who take fees from the condo boards but do not do the work, leaving the boards and the owners on the hook. To the Minister of Service Alberta: why is there no assistance available under the condo act to these condo boards who cannot get the work, including producing financial reports, from the management companies that they contract with?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is indeed a very serious situation, and I appreciate this question. With respect to some of the issues that have been raised through Service Alberta, under the Residential Tenancies Act there are certainly a number of things that we can do to support consumers and help them when they are faced by this situation, whether it's management fees or the work not being done. That's what has been made clear to me in some of the correspondence that I've handled.

Ms Blakeman: That was a nonanswer.

Back to the same minister. Given that the government offers others, like a renter, rights and protections or shareholder-investors rights and protections, why is there no section in the legislation which steps in to protect people who own condos when they are taken advantage of by property management companies?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, under the Condominium Property Act we are constantly looking and reviewing just to make sure the legislation is up to date and pertinent to the situations and the challenges that Albertans are facing right now with respect to condos not being attended to and some of the things that we need to look at. If there's a particular situation that I need to be aware of, I'd be more than happy to look into it.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Ms Blakeman: Thank you. Back to the same minister. What is happening here, Mr. Speaker, is that the little guy, the condo owner, and their board are expected to duke it out in court with large national property management companies with unlimited resources. How is that fair? Why can't the government protect these individual owners and their boards as part of the Condominium Property Act?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I will reiterate that with respect to changes or things that we need to look

at under that act, we have to make sure that these changes are enforceable and effective. If indeed there are consumers that have situations, I need to be aware of those. I am aware of some situations that are going on, and we are currently looking at the legislation as we speak.

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

Government House News Conference

Mr. Mason: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Today is a black day for democracy in Alberta. For the first time that I can recall, opposition MLAs have been physically prevented from attending an important government announcement. This was done on the order of this government to prevent the opposition from commenting on yet another attack on Alberta seniors and public health care. My question is to the health minister: why did this government order security personnel to physically prevent opposition MLAs from hearing and responding to a major government policy announcement?

Mr. Liepert: Mr. Speaker, I know that this particular member craves media attention, but if he'd take a look at the release that went out yesterday, it said: for news media. There are restricted areas there, and I'm afraid that, you know, it wasn't a town hall meeting. We didn't invite the president of the chamber of commerce or the mayor of Edmonton, and frankly we didn't invite the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

2:00

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Mason: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, it was a public building.

This is the most secretive government in Canada. Today's action at Government House shows that it is also the least democratic. Nothing could underline more clearly this government's contempt for the role of the opposition. To the same minister: why would the government take the unprecedented step of blocking opposition access unless it's afraid of what we have to say about yet another attack on public health care and Alberta seniors?

Mr. Liepert: Mr. Speaker, that is just such a bunch of bunk. This particular government, this particular Legislature provides more funding to that party, which is not an officially recognized party. We do things that are unprecedented in this House. For that member to stand there and say that kind of stuff is baloney.

Dr. Taft: Point of order.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This government in the last election promised a more open and transparent government, but it has delivered the opposite. This is the most secretive and undemocratic government in Canada. To the same minister: why won't you admit that this Tory government misled voters with its promise of openness and transparency and that you tricked them on your plans to privatize health care as well?

Mr. Liepert: Well, Mr. Speaker, from what I'm hearing from my constituents, I haven't heard one of them say that I misled them at the door. When I was at the doors during the election last year, what

Albertans told me was: we have an outstanding health care system; you've got to get the costs under control; you've got to make it more accessible. And that's exactly what we're doing. I'm not sure who he was talking to, but that's who I was talking to.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Strathcona, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary-Currie.

Seniors' Pharmaceutical Plan

(continued)

Mr. Quest: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today government announced changes to the new drug plan for seniors. My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness. Why is government reintroducing premiums for seniors just a few months after eliminating health care premiums for all other Albertans?

Mr. Liepert: Well, Mr. Speaker, we need to make the distinction. The premiums that had been in effect – in fact, the removal of those premiums have given Albertans something like a billion-dollar tax break – were actually premiums that covered those procedures and those services that are under the Canada Health Act. In essence, this particular program is covering a service or drugs that do not fall under the Canada Health Act.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Quest: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My second question also for the Minister of Health and Wellness: why were the plan's income thresholds lowered rather than increased?

Mr. Liepert: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think what the member is asking is relative to what we announced last December because there are no income thresholds today. I think the unfair part of the program that exists today is that every senior, regardless of income, has to pay 30 per cent of their prescription costs. What we are finding is that many low-income seniors are not able to access the drugs that they need, so what we have done is we have simplified the income threshold. In fact, there is no income threshold. In essence, there is a premium. Government is assisting almost 80 per cent of Alberta seniors with those premiums.

Mr. Quest: Mr. Speaker, my final question is for the same minister. Why is government asking seniors to contribute to their prescription drug costs but not asking all other Albertans to also contribute?

Mr. Liepert: Well, again, Mr. Speaker, that's something that we've heard during this discussion that we had with seniors. I can only repeat that under this particular program the Alberta government assists to the tune of 80 per cent of drug costs for seniors. We do not do that for any other Albertan. If you're an Albertan and you're not a senior, you buy a plan, and you pay the premium. So to say that somehow we're putting a premium on seniors or making them pay for something that other Albertans don't pay for is incorrect.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary-Fort.

Provincial Fiscal Strategy

Mr. Taylor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, it became pretty clear at last night's budget estimates on the Ministry of Finance and Enterprise that the only strategy this government has for savings is to hope that the economy recovers next year sufficiently that by 2012 there might be some surplus dollars kicking around to start

topping up the sustainability fund. It's pretty clear that this government has not developed a long-term fiscal vision, and I do not understand why there's a continued reluctance to do so. To the President of the Treasury Board: how much longer do Albertans have to wait before this government actually puts forward a comprehensive fiscal strategy that includes a long-term vision for savings, controlled spending, and a reduction in reliance on nonrenewable resource revenue to fund core government programs?

Mr. Snelgrove: Mr. Speaker, there are those now today that can tell you exactly what was going to happen. They weren't telling us a year ago, but now they're brilliant in their ability to say what happened.

This government has charted a very clear and direct course to the future with a balance in savings in our heritage savings trust fund and the other endowments. We were prudent in putting into our savings account close to \$17 billion in the unwelcome eventuality that times like this might happen. We have built an infrastructure that is second to none to enable the people of Alberta and industry to thrive. That's pretty good planning.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, why can't this government, why can't this minister wrap his head around the notion that you need to invest for the long term as well as saving short term to have cash on hand for emergencies, both simultaneously, at the same time, like walking and chewing gum?

Mr. Snelgrove: You know, I guess he maybe has practised that at home. Good.

Mr. Speaker, it's clear. They have the opportunity to come out and say: "We wouldn't have built the hospital in Calgary; we'd have put that money in the bank. We wouldn't have opened the new wings in the hospitals or universities throughout this province; we'd have put that money in the bank so that we've got a savings account. You can drive over all the potholes you want in Alberta. Not us Liberals; we've got money in the bank."

It's not magic. There is a dollar. It's full of a hundred cents as opposed to no sense somewhere. You can't have it both ways. You can't spend your way out of debt and save your way into prosperity.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, the only thing this government has practised, the only thing this minister has been consistent at is trying to insult the opposition.

He has no plan. He's never had a plan. He never will have a plan. Why is this government so reluctant to implement a long-term savings strategy? What are you afraid of?

Mr. Snelgrove: Well, now, Mr. Speaker, I have to admit that was the most intelligent question I've heard from him in this entire session. I want to thank him for asking how my family is. They're wonderful. They belong in a province that is prudent, that is forward-thinking, that is as transparent and open with our forecasts and our budgets as anywhere in Alberta.

Unfortunately, they have so little to hang their future opportunity on that they have to continually tell themselves how bad things are, and if they do it enough, they start to believe it.

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

Carbon Emissions Monitoring

Mr. Cao: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of great interest and concern to my constituents and myself is the air we breathe, the water we drink,

and the land we live on. The world is now hyped up about the danger of global warming and the debate on its causes. My question today is to the hon. Minister of Environment. The minister has always publicly stated that Alberta leads other jurisdictions in having taken concrete action in reducing harmful gas emissions while others are still talking about it. Can the minister tell us how the greenhouse gas emissions and their reduction are measured?

Mr. Renner: Well, Mr. Speaker, the member is absolutely right. There has been a great deal of discussion over the last couple of days on this whole issue of greenhouse gas and CO₂ emissions and measurement. What's so important to note is that we know that there are reductions because we have been measuring since 2003. It's not that we just started measuring last year and then invented somehow what our baseline is. We only established a baseline because we've been measuring since 2003. Without having that base, then I think that the criticism that somehow or other we're dreaming up a reduction could be valid, but the fact is that we have had measurement in place since 2003.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Cao: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same hon. minister: since the law of climate change and emissions management was approved through this Chamber, what has this unique Alberta law achieved?

Mr. Renner: Well, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that it has achieved is the development of a great deal of Alberta expertise on this whole issue of measurement. I've said in this House before that you can't put CO₂ on a scale and read the total and say: well, that's how much CO₂ was emitted. It's all based on chemical formulas. It's very complex. What we have developed in Alberta is a regime, that is third-party verifiable, that actually can determine with a great deal of accuracy the amount of CO₂ that is emitted from any particular facility.

2:10

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Cao: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same hon. minister: looking into the future, what kind of improvements can my constituents expect in the quality of the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the land we live on?

Mr. Renner: Well, Mr. Speaker, directly as a result of legislation surrounding climate change and CO₂ management, we can expect that Alberta will be able to join the rest of the world in dramatically reducing the amount of CO₂ emissions. We're going to do that because we started small but learned a whole lot. We'll be able to apply what we learned on a much larger and grander scale, and CCS, which we've discussed in this House, is just one of the many tools. In the longer term protecting the air from greenhouse gas emissions will protect the results of climate change, the inherent water shortages, and others that the member refers to.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar, followed by the hon. Member for Red Deer-South.

Achievement Bonuses

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 10 years the government paid out over a quarter of a billion dollars in bonuses to hand-picked senior managers. In 2006 Meyers Norris Penny in an independent review of the salaries of officers of this Legislative

Assembly determined that bonus measures would seriously compromise the independence and autonomy of those officers. My first question is to the President of the Treasury Board. Does this recommendation not also apply to deputy ministers and other senior government officials, whom you have so generously rewarded so that you can control them?

Mr. Snelgrove: Mr. Speaker, the public service in Alberta has been asked to do over the years a very difficult but an incredible job of bringing good, sound public policy to implementation. I find it somewhat surprising that continually in here, day after day, the senior management, who are nonpolitical, have to listen to how poorly they are working or that other payment mechanisms that have been found to be truly successful in the corporate world, such as bonuses for performance being implemented in a corporate structure to try and save money, to try and build efficiencies, has somehow now become a bad word for them. I think they, actually, owe an apology to the senior management team in this province.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you. Again, Mr. Speaker, to the same minister: why did the government continue to compromise the independence and the impartiality of senior government managers by ignoring the 2006 recommendations from Meyers Norris Penny to cut out the bonus program? You know full well that the base salaries of senior civil servants here are very generous, and they can certainly live on them.

Mr. Snelgrove: Mr. Speaker, we hardly set a salary here and determine whether you can live on it or not. We have to compete, as every other entity in Alberta has done in the past few years, with a rapidly expanding and very successful private sector. The size of the Alberta government can be debated, but it's around a \$40 billion corporation where all Albertans are shareholders. Most shareholders demand of their corporation that you get the best people possible to implement your policies as a government. We have done that through different strategies. One of them is appropriate bonuses for senior management in our government.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you. Again to the same minister: given that over five years five individual positions on the Alberta Teachers Retirement Fund board received \$1.1 million in bonuses, all of which were individually reported, separately reported, in the Department of Education's annual reports – these bonuses, and I emphasize this, were separate from other benefits – why did the government hide the quarter of a billion dollars in bonuses that have been paid out in the last 10 years by hiding it in the financial fine print? If it's good enough for one annual report, why is it not good enough for all the rest?

Mr. Snelgrove: Mr. Speaker, I know the opposition thinks that I know everything that goes on this government, but we don't include all of the pension boards, all of the agencies, everything that has an indirect or direct responsibility to the government. I don't know of the situation that the hon. member has talked about specifically. I do know that our achievement bonuses are covered very clearly on a directive that is published on the Alberta government website. It's not a secret. It's an effective tool we use to attract and retain good talent.

Thank you.

Seniors' Pharmaceutical Plan (continued)

Mr. Dallas: Mr. Speaker, seniors have built this province, and we are indebted to them for their tremendous contributions. As part of the pharmaceutical strategy seniors were asked to make further contributions, leaving some seniors frustrated. My question is for the Minister of Health and Wellness: why are you asking seniors to pay more for their drug coverage than they do today?

Mr. Liepert: Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all, the member is absolutely correct that the program that we announced in December had a fair level of frustration with seniors. I think it needs to be pointed out, however, that a senior's drug cost today at 30 per cent of the prescription is presenting some real difficulties for low-income seniors, so we set out to fix that. Maybe we didn't get everything right in our announcement in December, so we aren't afraid to say: if it's not all right, we're going to make it right. I'll leave it at that for the next question.

Mr. Dallas: Mr. Speaker, my second question is also for the Minister of Health and Wellness. The minister has frequently mentioned that helping those seniors in need is a priority. Is changing the seniors' drug plan contrary to that philosophy?

Mr. Liepert: No because what I was just talking about, Mr. Speaker, is exactly that, helping those in need.

But I need to make another point. This particular plan we announced today is not about the senior for today; it's about the senior of tomorrow. As we move forward, the number of seniors is growing, but along with that the income of seniors is growing. This business about one size fits all has to change in health care. This is one of the things that we're saying: if you can afford to pay and enrol in a plan, that's the way of the future.

Mr. Dallas: Mr. Speaker, my final question is for the same minister. Why are you basing this plan on income, especially with all the controversy over that aspect of the plan?

Mr. Liepert: Well, in fact, Mr. Speaker, the only part that's based on income is in reverse. It's: at what level of income does government no longer assist you in ensuring that you can pay into what is a very good plan? I would like to repeat again that under this particular plan not only does government pay 80 per cent of seniors' drug costs, but some 80 per cent of seniors in one way or another will be assisted by this plan.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona.

Oversight of Police Conduct

Mr. Hehr: Mr. Speaker, the Solicitor General has stated that the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team and the Law Enforcement Review Board provide adequate civilian oversight of police conduct. However, the head of the Edmonton Police Association believes that independent civil oversight is necessary to strengthen public confidence and adequately protect police officers. Last year there were 21 disciplinary hearings involving members of the Edmonton police. There was only one in Calgary. What is the Solicitor General doing to rectify this imbalance?

Mr. Lindsay: Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all, I'm not sure there is an imbalance, and I'm not sure how each agency reports their internal

disciplinary action. I'm completely satisfied that both chiefs of police, whether it be in Edmonton or Calgary, are doing a great job in regards to internal disciplinary actions within their agencies.

Mr. Hehr: Well, Mr. Speaker, during last year's estimates the minister indicated that the department was developing a new model for police complaints and disciplinary processes to encourage police professionalism and enhance public confidence. How about including independent oversight for the Edmonton Police Service in this new model?

Mr. Lindsay: Mr. Speaker, we already have a great model for public oversight in regard to policing agencies across this province. First of all, we have police commissions and police committees across the province who are appointed by elected representatives. They, in turn, appoint a chief of police who is responsible to them, so that is where the public oversight comes in.

2:20

Mr. Hehr: Well, we know we already have them, but people are calling for better ways. For instance, the Edmonton Police Association president, Sergeant Tony Simioni, wants independent oversight for simple reasons, to provide better service and to increase public confidence in the force. Will the minister tell me why he is so opposed to an independent oversight for Alberta policing agencies?

Mr. Lindsay: Mr. Speaker, as I've already indicated, we already have a public oversight process in this province that works very well. In regard to the concerns of a union representative for Edmonton Police Service I'm not going to get into management-union issues. The chief of police is assigned his duties, and we'll leave it at that.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary-Lougheed.

Seniors' Pharmaceutical Plan

(continued)

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today in the health minister's closed-door announcement this government broke yet another election promise. They said that they were going to eliminate health care premiums, but they just reintroduced them except this time it's just for seniors. If a senior makes more than \$24,000 a year, she or he will be forced to pay under this plan between \$400 and \$800 a year in premiums. To the minister: why is this minister so committed to making seniors pay for this government's mismanagement?

Mr. Liepert: Well, Mr. Speaker, let me deal at the outset with this secret meeting. Any time you talk to the media, it's hardly a secret, and that's exactly what we did. So I'm not so sure what the two are all, you know, getting their hair on fire about. If they really want all the information, we'll be happy to send it over to them.

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, any time you use public resources to keep the opposition out, it's a secret.

Now, a senior who takes in \$2,000 a month before taxes has to pay at least \$31 a month in premiums plus up to \$15 for each prescription. The minister hasn't fixed their problem; he's just rebranded it. Because they're still going to have to choose between paying these out-of-pocket expenses and paying their rent, more seniors are going to go without, get sick, and end up in the hospital. At a time when we have nothing but a shortage of beds in hospitals,

why is this minister committed to going after the very thing that helps keep seniors healthy and at home?

Mr. Liepert: Mr. Speaker, about once every four years we ask Albertans: do you want elected officials who want to tax people? We ask them: do you want to give everything to people for free and increase taxes, or do you want to have people accept some personal responsibility? Every four years Albertans say no to them and yes to us.

Ms Notley: Well, Mr. Speaker, one year ago seniors were not asked by this government about this plan, so they got no say on it at all.

Now, the minister's announcement on insisting on including income testing. He's pushing some seniors to seek private health insurance, and he's keeping others from getting the drugs that they need. Why can't the minister understand that income testing undermines the universal public health care that Albertans demand and need and that seniors themselves worked so hard to build?

Mr. Liepert: First of all, Mr. Speaker, nowhere does it say that drug coverage has to be universal and paid for by the taxpayer. What we are doing is ensuring that those seniors who have the inability to pay, lower income, are in fact getting universal free drug coverage, which is an improvement upon today. I can only repeat that government continues to pick up 80 per cent of the cost for seniors' drugs, and I would suggest that's probably a program most seniors are quite appreciative of.

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

Conquest Vacations

Mr. Rodney: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The holiday is over for Conquest Vacations, and thousands of people are out of luck with their travel plans. Some are even stranded in other countries. Many questions are being asked with respect to what protections are in place for Albertans in situations such as this. My first question is for the Minister of Service Alberta. What strategies are organized within your ministry to assist Albertans who have been impacted in this particular instance?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, this is a very unusual situation, and Service Alberta is encouraging individuals to contact our consumer contact centre so we can speak with them and give them some advice and hear about their experiences. Of course, depending on how they purchased their vacation, there are provisions under Alberta law to help travellers get their money back either from the company or from their credit card company. People can call us, and we'll review their situation and determine how we can best help them.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Rodney: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My second question is for the same minister. Other provinces such as Ontario have a travel insurance fund. Why is that not the case here in Alberta?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Travel insurance funds

only cover vacations booked through travel agencies, and we well know that many individuals book their trips online. That certainly has evolved over the years, and it's only growing. Alberta does have a regulation called the Internet sales contract regulation, which does include cancellation rights for consumers doing business with a company on the Internet. Under this regulation if the consumer has booked their vacation with Conquest and they didn't get what they paid for, there are provisions for getting their money back.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Rodney: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Following that, my final question to the same minister: how is it, then, that someone from this province who has booked their vacation online with Conquest Vacations actually gets their money back?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The first step is that these individuals should contact Conquest Vacations first to request their money. If they're not reimbursed within 15 days, under our regulations a credit card company is required to reimburse them. For those who already started their travel plans and are being billed by their hotel, it is more complicated. We encourage them to come home, and then we can look at their situation. For someone else caught in this situation, there are very many variables. This is a new situation, and, again, please call our consumer contact line at 1.877.427.4088.

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

All-terrain Vehicles in Parks and Protected Areas

Mr. Chase: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation, her staff, and my Community Service Committee colleagues for a brief but collaborative budget discussion Tuesday night.

If the first responsibility of this ministry is to protect, preserve, maintain, and hopefully expand our provincial parks and protected areas, which currently account for barely 4 per cent of Alberta's designated land use, then surely the second task is to celebrate and promote our multifaceted natural wonders to the world. Can the minister explain how the portrayal of two blond children romping on a British beach benefits Alberta tourism?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mrs. Ady: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member makes the point that there are some 500 parks in this province, all of them beautiful – love them all – but when it comes to the promotion of this province, I can tell him that we do have a digital library in Alberta, some 25,000 images of all of Alberta. We encourage people to use those when they promote this province at all times, and we will continue to do that. I would say that we've done a good job with our digital library.

Mr. Chase: I don't understand, then, why British photos got into that mix. Let's celebrate Alberta.

Given the damage done in Ghost-Waiparous, Indian Graves, and most recently around McLean Creek, can the minister commit to restricting access to parks and protected areas to off-road vehicles other than those parks and trails designated for that specific use?

Mrs. Ady: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think I've shared with this hon. member many times that we are looking at the trail situation in this province right now, not just for ATVs but for horses and hikers and bicyclists. That's why we had the hon. Member for Athabasca-Redwater meeting with both sustainable resources and the parks systems to take a look at this issue to see where we can safely and appropriately use these trails in all manners, and we'll get back to him as soon as we have that policy ready.

Mr. Chase: I look forward to that policy and the land-use framework policy especially.

In keeping with our Alberta Liberal caucus commitment to give Albertans a voice, Kelly from Leduc wrote in and would like to know, and I quote: why is this government spending money on expanding trails for ATVs in wilderness areas when the government's own survey shows that Albertans, at least those surveyed, do not want this?

Mrs. Ady: Well, Mr. Speaker, we've had, actually, lots of surveys done in this province. We continue to consult a wide range of Albertans, and the land-use framework as well as the new parks plan is going to do further consultations in a region. So to say from one report that you should or shouldn't have: I don't know that that's as balanced as we want to be. We're listening to all stakeholders, and when we put together these plans, you'll see a multistakeholder vision with these regions.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Egmont, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview.

Taser Testing

Mr. Denis: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today the Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security released the results of tests conducted on tasers being used by police agencies in this province. Of the more than 400 tasers tested, about 12 per cent did not meet manufacturer specifications. My questions are all for the Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security. While the results indicate that most of these tasers are operating as they should, can the minister explain to the Assembly what will happen to the 12 per cent of the tasers, or 50 devices, that did not meet manufacturer specifications?

2:30

Mr. Lindsay: Mr. Speaker, we just completed what we believe is the most comprehensive and largest independent testing of tasers in the world today. As the hon. member has mentioned, about 12 per cent of those instruments did not meet the manufacturer's specifications. I want to say that most of those devices that did not meet specifications were operating below those particular standards. I will say that all devices that were tested that did not meet the manufacturer's specifications have been pulled from service. Those that have been pulled will be independently retested before going back into service or destroyed. Those tasers that were operating properly have been returned to service.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Denis: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the same minister: did the results of this testing get us any closer to determining once and for all if tasers are safe for usage by police in this province?

Mr. Lindsay: Mr. Speaker, when we started this testing, we said that we were conducting these tests to determine if these devices

were operating within the manufacturer's specifications, and the vast majority of them are. While this will not quell the debate around safety of these tasers, it does provide us with more scientific information to share with law enforcement agencies and researchers to help in developing policy and training. We believe that these tasers are an effective tool to help police deal with violent and dangerous situations. Having said that, my department will continue to look at new information that will strengthen the strict taser guidelines that are already in place in Alberta.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Denis: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. Finally, to the same minister: what about the remaining 550 tasers in Alberta that have not been tested? What does this minister's department plan on doing with them? Does he want to take them to Vegas?

Mr. Lindsay: Well, Mr. Speaker, if I was going to go to Vegas and stay in some of the cheaper hotels, I may need that for protection.

Mr. Speaker, we will be conducting independent testing of the remaining tasers that are in use.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary-Montrose.

Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute

Dr. Taft: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Last week the Minister of Health and Wellness told this Assembly, "I'm told by Alberta Health Services that they expect to have the Mazankowski centre starting to take patients next month." Today Alberta Health Services said publicly that they never advised the minister of this and that the Mazankowski will not begin taking patients until at least late summer or into the fall. Mr. Speaker, misleading this Assembly on an issue like that, I'm sure you'd agree, is very serious.

Mr. Liepert: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Dr. Taft: To the Minister of Health and Wellness: where did he get his information that the Mazankowski was opening next month?

Mr. Liepert: The CEO.*

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Dr. Taft: Thank you. There seems to be, Mr. Speaker, a lot of political covering up when it comes to the Mazankowski. Last week Alberta Health Services' website showed that the hours of operation for virtually all their services were zero – I'll table the print-offs of that – but after I raised the question in the Legislature, the website was changed to make it look like everything in the Maz is up and running and taking patients even though it's not. To the Minister of Health and Wellness: why can't the public get an honest answer on what's really going on at the Mazankowski?

Mr. Liepert: Well, Mr. Speaker, the public will get an honest answer if they listen to the government, not the opposition. What I said was that there have been some real issues around commissioning the facility. You know, I'm not sure what this particular member wants us to do. If the technology is not one hundred per cent certain, does he want us to put a heart patient on a bed and say, "Well, it might work. It might not"? Is that what he wants? Say so.

Dr. Taft: I'm just looking for a straight answer on behalf of the public, the patients, and the staff, Mr. Speaker.

We've heard from this minister a whole range of different stories. He's distanced himself from the official opening, he distanced himself from construction management, and now he seems to be having all kinds of difficulties in working with Alberta Health Services. My question to him is: why is his working relationship with Alberta Health Services so strained?

Mr. Liepert: Well, Mr. Speaker, in the answer to the first question I suggested that the CEO had given me information that they expect to start taking patients in May. Now, I would suggest that if I'm talking to the CEO and he's giving me information, that is hardly what I'd call a strained relationship. What we have here, obviously, is a particular member of the Legislature who can't seem to give up his former job.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Montrose, followed by the hon. Member for Lethbridge-East.

Northeast Calgary Ring Road

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the northeast leg of the Calgary ring road is nearing completion, many of my constituents in the communities of Applewood, Abbeystead, and Monterey Park are concerned about the proximity of the road to their homes. Specifically, they are concerned that children playing behind their homes can wander onto the new road. My first question is to the Minister of Transportation. Will there be any barrier between the homes and the road?

Mr. Ouellette: Well, Mr. Speaker, we always fence off the road components in a transportation and utility corridor. The children would have to go through a barbed wire fence before they could get to that road. We encourage people, especially children, to stay away from transportation and utility corridors, and I sincerely hope that parents would educate their children properly, supervise their children, and really explain to them the dangers of playing by a high-speed roadway.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the minister perhaps may have meant to say "chain-link fence."

The residents are also concerned about the increased noise caused by traffic when the road is under construction. My second question is to the same minister. What can the minister do to ensure that there is not excessive road noise?

Mr. Ouellette: Mr. Speaker, engineering studies indicate that noise levels should not exceed the sound limits on that roadway. However, once the road is built, we will go out there, do the proper testing, and make sure that it's within our allowable limits. If we find that the noise exceeds the limits, then we'll engineer and fix the problem.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During construction they have also been forced to deal with issues like excessive garbage in their yards, dirt on their windows and their homes. My final question to the same minister: what is your department doing to ensure that the concerns of the residents are being addressed?

*See page 817, right column, paragraph 7

Mr. Ouellette: Mr. Speaker, I do understand that there have been some complaints over time of some dust and some debris blowing around. You always have a bit of that problem when you're under construction. It's one of the hazards of construction that needs to be done. Our contractors have been instructed – and I understand that they're living up to that – to water down the site whenever they can or whenever they notice that it's getting too windy. My staff have been instructed to make sure that if there's wind and some of the papers or the debris from the construction site blows around, you send guys out there and pick the stuff up. From what I understand, our contractors have been largely complying with these instructions.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Lethbridge-East, followed by the hon. Member for Lacombe-Ponoka.

Government House News Conference

(continued)

Ms Pastoor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to, I think, put these questions aside and only have one if I might, and it would be to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Why was I as an elected member of this House and a dedicated defender of seniors' rights thrown out of Government House this morning when all I wanted was to be part of a public announcement?

Mr. Liepert: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier and in this particular case, I would check to see whether anybody was thrown out of anywhere. That's a pretty serious accusation.

But what was clear in the invite was that it was a news media news conference. The last time I checked, that particular member was not a member of the news media. This was not a public meeting. No other elected officials or other business leaders were invited. I can say no more than that, other than the fact that if this hon. member, in fact, was thrown out of Government House, then I'd like her to stand up and acknowledge that. If she was told at the door that this was a news conference only, then I'd also like her to say that in this particular House.

The Speaker: Hon. member, do you have an additional question?

Ms Pastoor: No. I'm going to let it go.

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

Ms Pastoor: No, I won't. I'm sorry.

The Speaker: Sorry. I've already recognized the hon. Member for Lacombe-Ponoka.

Livestock and Meat Strategy

Mr. Prins: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I see that the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency along with Agriculture and Rural Development have announced \$30 million worth of grant programs which will be delivered by ALMA. This is very welcome news to many of my constituents as well as agricultural producers around the province. To the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: why are these programs necessary at this time?

2:40

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Groeneveld: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. These programs certainly are critical to help the industry do things differently. We

know that the status quo isn't working, and the idea behind the strategy is to better respond to what the markets are asking for. These grant programs will provide industry with a means to undertake projects that will improve our competitiveness by better responding to what customers and potential customers are asking for. Industry is now doing things differently, and it was imperative that as a government we shifted out of funding short-term to long-term solutions.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Prins: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My second question is to the same minister. What makes this type of funding different from what we've done in the past?

Mr. Groeneveld: Well, Mr. Speaker, all of these programs focus on tactics identified in the Alberta livestock and meat strategy to help improve the long-term profitability, including differentiating products, diversifying markets, enhancing marketing effectiveness, fostering effective business models, and promoting a strengthened supply chain. When I announced the strategy last June, I also said that there would be no more ad hoc payments. Instead, we would focus on making the right investments that would move industry forward and into a profitable future.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Prins: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. My final question to the same minister: who is eligible for these programs?

Mr. Groeneveld: Well, that's a good question, Mr. Speaker. These programs are certainly open to all industry associations, individual producers, and agribusinesses in Alberta. Anyone who falls into one of these categories and has a new, innovative idea that fits the objectives of a grant program is eligible. I would certainly encourage all industry members to put forward ideas and work with ALMA people to get the projects off the ground.

The Speaker: Hon. members, that was 104 questions and responses. In a few seconds from now I'll call on the last member to participate in Members' Statements.

Members' Statements

(continued)

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

Trade Unions

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Trade unions ensure that workers, who are the backbone of our economy, are treated fairly by their employers and by the government. They ensure that workers' rights are not forgotten in the rush to allow corporations to turn a profit. Jobs are being lost at an alarming rate in Alberta. Where a year ago there were far more jobs than workers, things have quickly changed. Now, more and more, workers need to access employment insurance, and good jobs are being replaced with low-paying part-time work. In times like this they need the protection of a union more than ever.

Safety standards are not in place for farm workers at all, and for the rest government provides only vague regulations, almost no enforcement, and refuses to legislate worker safety committees. As a result, Albertans need unions to help them keep safe in their

workplace. We all benefit from the work of trade unions, be it in the livable wages that we enjoy, the pensions that will see us through retirement, equality in the workforce, recognition of human rights for underrepresented groups of people, and, of course, the weekend.

But, Mr. Speaker, in its ongoing efforts to place corporate profit above the interests of working Albertans, this government hangs onto a regressive set of laws, intent on doing everything they can to stand between workers and unions. It is time for this to change. Over the last few years labour groups have consistently asked that Alberta's labour legislation be made fair for all. They have called for a return to the right to strike for all workers, a ban on scab labour, first contract arbitration, automatic certification when the majority of workers sign up with the union, and the elimination of the Public Service Employee Relations Act. It is time for this government to treat all Albertans fairly and change the law to right the imbalance that exists only in this province.

Today we salute workers, we salute trade unions, and we ask this government to join us in finally doing the same.

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) to advise the House that on Monday, April 27, 2009, we will deal with motions for returns 21, 22, 23, and 24.

Tabling Returns and Reports

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

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table the appropriate number of copies of 10 reports from long-term care workers indicating specific problems on shifts that were short-staffed. These indicate that some residents received their meals late, did not receive their bath, and were left in bed all day.

Thank you.

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 copies of a petition organized by the Friends of Medicare. It's a petition indicating a cease-and-desist order against the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness regarding the dismantling of our public health care structure.

My second tabling is in reference to my questions earlier in question period. It is a spreadsheet indicating the government's \$250 million plus senior management achievement bonuses scheme over the last 10 years.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Are there others? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview.

Dr. Taft: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Two different sets of tablings. One is documents I referred to in question period. They're printouts of the website from Alberta Health Services from before my questions last week on the hours of operation of the Mazankowski. These indicate hours of operation at zero. On the current website that's all been wiped out.

My second set of tablings is a range of correspondence on the government's policy on gender surgery. It's letters from Matthew Cadrin, Karen Hofmann, and a number of other people.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On April 13, 2008, 189 people from around the world gathered in Lake Louise for the first-ever world summit on learning disabilities. International experts from diverse disciplines and backgrounds together with parents and individuals with learning disabilities attended the summit. The findings of the summit, as articulated in this white paper, fit well with the discussions and work that are taking place through setting the direction for special education in Alberta. I know from conversations with the steering committee and staff working on the initiative that the work done at the world summit will inform the setting the direction process. I'd like to table five copies of the report A Call to Action: World Summit on Learning Disabilities, that was held in Lake Louise April 13 to 16, 2008.

Projected Government Business

The Speaker: The Acting Official Opposition House Leader.

Dr. Taft: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would the Government House Leader please inform the Assembly of the expected government business next week for the Assembly?

Thanks.

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Tuesday, April 28, in the afternoon under Government Bills and Orders for second reading we would intend to introduce to the Assembly bills 29, 31, 32, 33, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, and 42. Those would be moved so that the Assembly would have the benefit of the initial speech indicating the purpose of those bills. That's the Family Law Amendment Act, 2009; Rules of Court Statutes Amendment Act, 2009; Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act; Fiscal Responsibility Act; Gas Utilities Amendment Act, 2009; Alberta Corporate Tax Amendment Act, 2009; Tourism Levy Amendment Act, 2009; Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 2009; Alberta Personal Income Tax Amendment Act, 2009; Protection for Persons in Care Act; and Gaming and Liquor Amendment Act, 2009. We would anticipate being in Committee of the Whole on Bill 19, subject to progress today, and on bills 6, 7, and 9, and, time permitting, third reading of bills 4 and 17.

Wednesday, April 29, in the afternoon under Government Bills and Orders for second reading Bill 10, Supportive Living Accommodation Licensing Act; Bill 11, Fisheries (Alberta) Amendment Act, 2009; Bill 12, Surface Rights Amendment Act, 2009; Bill 13, Justice of the Peace Amendment Act, 2009; and Bill 14, Carbon Capture and Storage Funding Act; for third reading bills 6, 7, 9, and 19; and as per the Order Paper.

April 30 in the afternoon under Government Bills and Order for second reading Bill 14, Carbon Capture and Storage Funding Act; Bill 16, Peace Officer Amendment Act, 2009; Bill 20, Civil Enforcement Amendment Act, 2009; Bill 23, Municipal Government Amendment Act, 2009; Bill 24, Animal Health Amendment Act, 2009; and in Committee of the Whole Bill 10, Supportive Living Accommodation Licensing Act; Bill 11, Fisheries (Alberta) Amendment Act, 2009; Bill 12, Surface Rights Amendment Act, 2009; Bill 13, Justice of the Peace Amendment Act, 2009; and as per the Order Paper.

2:50

The Speaker: Hon. members, earlier today during part of the Routine there were some interventions with respect to purported points of order. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview.

Dr. Taft: No. I'll withdraw mine.

The Speaker: Okay. Hon. Minister of Health and Wellness, you rose on a purported point of order?

**Point of Order
Parliamentary Language**

Mr. Liepert: I did, Mr. Speaker, and it's a very simple one. This clearly refers to *Beauchesne* under Alberta's standing orders. In the line of questioning the Member for Edmonton-Riverview said something to the effect that I had misled this House. I would ask him to withdraw those comments, please.

The Speaker: So you're making a point of order?

Mr. Liepert: Yes. I did.

Some Hon. Members: What's your citation?

The Speaker: Well, it was a citation under Standing Order 23, I'm sure.

Go ahead, hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview.

Dr. Taft: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to explain, briefly, the exchange. We were informed earlier today from Alberta Health Services that the conversation with the minister had not occurred. It appears that we were misinformed. The minister is saying that the CEO of Alberta Health Services told him the Mazankowski Heart Institute will be accepting patients next month. At this point we'll take the CEO at his word, so I do withdraw my comments. We'll see how it plays out.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: That's all very good. Well, actually, the chair was going to say something. I'm just going to say it anyway because it's Thursday afternoons that we always have these kinds of activities. What the hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview actually said: "Mr. Speaker, misleading this Assembly on an issue like that, I'm sure you agree, is very serious." It's absolutely correct that there's an innuendo associated within there, and there's a direct relationship.

Then we heard the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness respond. But the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness probably was offside, too, because he did say something to the effect that if the public wanted the truth, they should actually "listen to the government, not the opposition." You know, there's a bit of cut and thrust in all of this.

I was going to call this a draw, but seeing as you have both clarified the situation, I really appreciate that as the chair because it provides for the ultimate harmony, and there's the suggestion that we can get along very well. So that's very good.

Mr. Snelgrove: Let's call it 4:30.

The Speaker: You want to call it 4:30? There's a motion put forward by the hon. President of the Treasury Board to call it 4:30. If all members agree, it will be done.

[Motion lost]

**Orders of the Day
Government Bills and Orders
Committee of the Whole**

[Mr. Mitzel in the chair]

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

**Bill 19
Land Assembly Project Area Act**

The Deputy Chair: We're debating comments or questions on the bill as amended. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We will certainly continue the discussion and the debate on Bill 19. I'm not satisfied, and debate at Committee of the Whole is the ideal time to try to improve this legislation as it exists. It has been amended, as you have correctly stated. There have been valiant attempts by various members to try to fix this legislation. Certainly, there are many, many people throughout the province who still have concerns and issues with this.

I know that there was a time recently – I guess I'll have to say that I was more idealistic – when I thought maybe the government would move this bill from any further discussion here in the Assembly out into the public, where the public could have a good look at this. If they wished, they could make suggestions. They could express their concerns through public hearings through the Standing Committee on the Economy. But that wasn't done, so here we are. We have this benevolent idea in the government benches that they certainly know what's best, and this bill is an example of that.

Now, when we look at what we're deciding here with the Land Assembly Project Area Act and refer back to what was said yesterday afternoon, Mr. Chairman, there was a bit of discussion on the original restricted development areas as they were implemented through, I think, the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act. When you look at the RDAs, as they were called, the result of those RDAs is, of course, the land that was assembled for the ring roads in Edmonton and Calgary. There was a restricted development area in Sherwood Park. There was one in Devon. What happened to the land in Devon around that RDA is a mystery in itself. Anyway, when we look at the plans of this government and we look at this legislation and we look at the maps of the ring road around Edmonton and the maps of the ring road around Calgary, what land does the government plan to acquire through this bill, if it does become law, for the outer ring roads?

Now, I was told yesterday that that's not in the planning stages.

Mr. Snelgrove: Relevance.

Mr. MacDonald: It's typical of that hon. member across the way to say "relevance." This hon. member, who's in charge of so much money – in fact, Mr. Chairman, I think I'm going to report that hon. member to the former Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster, Steve West. I realize that he's. . .

The Deputy Chair: Talk to the bill.

Mr. MacDonald: Hold on here, Mr. Chairman. [interjection] I still can't see it. Okay. I thought it was the map to Steve West's house. I suggest that you pay him a visit.

The Deputy Chair: Hon. member, we'll speak to the bill.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. Absolutely, Mr. Chairman. When we look at the Land Assembly Project Area Act and we look at the long-term plans of this government, the medium-term plans, and the short-term plans, this is legislation that they need to acquire the land for these outer ring roads in Edmonton and Calgary. You'll be pleased to know there are also plans afoot for a ring road around Medicine Hat.

There's one around Lethbridge. There's one around St. Albert, Red Deer, Lloydminster. Now, that'll be a delicate negotiation with the province of Saskatchewan. We're not going to go there.

Anyway, somewhere in the Department of Infrastructure – or maybe it's in Treasury Board because there's a lot of planning going on there, and we do know that the 20-year strategic Infrastructure plan is on the President of the Treasury Board's website. I'm not going to talk about this, but there was some suggestion before, during debate at committee, as to who exactly was in control of the 20-year strategic infrastructure plan, which this bill is very, very crucial to, whether it's the President of the Treasury Board or whether it's the Minister of Infrastructure.

Regardless, what land and where is it and how much is needed to fulfill the requirements of these projects? Has any of that land already been purchased? If these maps are drawn up, who has them? Who has knowledge of them? Is it the minister? Is it senior officials in the department? Is it the entire cabinet? I mean, we know the control that the cabinet is going to have around decisions relating to this bill. Who would make the suggestions that we need a ring road?

3:00

Let's look at Legal. Let's take Legal as an example. Does the outer ring road, Mr. Chairman, go as far north from Edmonton as Legal? Now, maybe the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology can enlighten the House. Does it go past Spruce Grove, or does it go on the other side of St. Albert? Where does it go? How big is it going to be? How much land is going to be set aside? Is there going to be a transportation utility corridor with those roads?

There is a lot of land to be purchased. There is a lot of information here. If we look at the past and we see what happened in Calgary and in Edmonton with the acquisition of the land for the ring roads, I think it would be in the best interests of public confidence and, certainly, interests of the taxpayer, to protect the taxpayer, if these proposed plans, these complete plans were made public because they're part of this bill.

Mr. Chairman, I would strongly urge all hon. members of this Assembly to have a close look at the 20-year strategic infrastructure capital plan that I referred to earlier. It's a document from January 2008. It wasn't part of the election process, but it was a document that was developed by this government. It's on at least two ministry websites, and it is the details that would follow this proposed Bill 19, Land Assembly Project Area Act. It would be the fine print if this was to be the initial direction that we are going in.

Now, if these maps do exist – and the Minister of Advanced Education and Technology certainly implied that they exist, particularly in his area – I think they should be tabled. I think they should be tabled in the Assembly. I know we went into the argument about the regulations and why or why not we can see those before we pass this enabling legislation, but typical: the regulations are to follow, and we have this sort of trust-us attitude with the government members. But when you think, Mr. Chairman, that this information should be made available so the taxpayers can have a look, we could put these maps, these potential or possible or future ring road maps, on the Infrastructure website.

We used to have really detailed maps of the ring road around Edmonton and the one around Calgary. Those maps were front and centre on the Infrastructure website, but I was asking questions about some of the land deals surrounding those ring roads, and poof, Mr. Chairman, those maps disappeared from that website. But I suspected that, and I downloaded them in colour. I suspected that would happen.

I'm going to have to be more and more aware of that, Mr. Chairman, particularly after the events of today, which I can't

believe. Government House would be in the Infrastructure department, and for members of the opposition, all parties to be banned . . .

The Deputy Chair: Talk about this.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. You're absolutely right. It's Thursday afternoon, and the minister of health has provoked me.

Now, Mr. Chairman, yesterday afternoon we went through this bill line by line, detail by detail. We certainly had a fairly good look at it, but there are some amendments that I think we need to discuss. Certainly, when I talked to particularly rural landowners, they had an issue around section 14, the offences. "A person who contravenes an enforcement order under section 7 is guilty." There has been a lot of discussion about that. Not only are they guilty of an offence but liable

- (a) in the case of an individual, to a fine of not more than \$100 000 or to imprisonment for a period of not more than 2 years, or to both a fine and imprisonment, or
- (b) in the case of a corporation, to a fine of not more than \$1 000 000.

I have had a few discussions with individuals regarding this. First off, Mr. Chairman, I said: if you had my job and you wanted to try to improve this bill and convince the government of any one thing, what would it be? I was surprised that many people wanted amendments to this section to reduce the \$100,000 amount to \$25,000, so I would like at this time, please, to introduce an amendment. I believe it would be A5.

The Deputy Chair: Okay. We'll pause while that is brought to the table and then distributed.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. I have a signed copy here. I would be glad to do that.

The Deputy Chair: Okay, hon. member, please continue. This is amendment A5. We'll be speaking to this now.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. Thank you very much. Officially for the record, Mr. Chairman, I would move that Bill 19, the Land Assembly Project Area Act, be amended in section 14(1)(a) by striking out "\$100 000" and substituting "\$25 000."

If the government is insisting that this proposed legislation go through the usual process here and we get through to third reading and it's imposed on the citizens whether they agree or disagree with it, I think it would be better if we were to reduce the penalty. There are certainly going to be individuals that are going to be affected by this. It is individual Albertans who have spoken out the loudest about this. There certainly have been, as we talked about yesterday, many editorials from various newspapers across the province that have had a lot to say about this bill and the direction that the government is going in. But it's the individual property owners that we've got to be thinking about here this afternoon.

3:10

I think \$25,000 would be a reasonable amount if a person was found guilty of an offence under this act. I would like an explanation as to why the government thought \$100,000 was their amount. It certainly seems to me to be excessive. I've been told by many different people that they feel that the government is high-handed here.

Before I take my seat, I would just remind all hon. members of the comments of Mr. Erickson from Drayton Valley-Calmar – I think he's the leader of the Green Party – who stated that he has met so many individuals, he's had so many discussions regarding this

proposed legislation, and I suspect that he has not met the minister of health because he has not met anyone, Mr. Chairman, who is in favour of this bill.

The Deputy Chair: We're talking to amendment A5.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes, we certainly are.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion I would like to urge all hon. members of this Assembly to please consider reducing the fine amount for an individual from \$100,000 to \$25,000. Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Does the minister wish to respond?

Mr. Hayden: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The amendment speaks to a maximum, and of course that would be determined in a court of law. The fact that no fine has been issued over the past 35 years under this enforcement indicates to me that we don't have a problem, so I oppose this amendment.

The Deputy Chair: The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills.

Mr. Marz: Yeah. Just to add to that, Mr. Chair, \$100,000 is a maximum for very extreme cases. As was pointed out by the minister, this probably would only be used in extreme circumstances, where it may require a huge fine to prevent some corporation with deep pockets that would be intent on preventing some type of thing like the building of a dam or that sort of thing. I think it would not apply to the average farmer or landowner of little means such as myself. I'm a landowner, and I'm not concerned about this level of a fine in there because I know how these things work. You know, it seems to me that the opposition is looking at going through this bill one word at a time and wanting to strike out a word or add a word here and there.

I've been to some of these meetings as well. On the amendment, a lot of these people at these meetings have been intimidated into silence, actually. Some of them have approached the minister and told him that they support what the minister is trying to do here in the bill and that these amendment-type things don't concern them at all, but they're afraid to stand up at a public meeting because of the mood and the intimidation at the meetings. Quite frankly, one guy said: I'm afraid to get out of here with my skin. I talked to numerous ones one-on-one, and they told me the same thing. I got very few calls in my constituency – I got some opposed to this, but I got a lot that were in favour of it as it is. So I oppose the amendment.

The Deputy Chair: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

Ms Blakeman: Well, thanks very much. I listened with great interest to the previous speaker and his comments. With respect, we are in Committee of the Whole, which does allow us to examine a bill line by line, clause by clause, word by word. So it's a perfectly legitimate way to examine legislation.

The second interesting thing he said was that, you know, the hundred thousand was really there for corporations, but in fact the way section 14(1) is set out, it says:

(a) in the case of an individual . . .

It's listed in the legislation.

. . . to a fine of not more than \$100 000 or to imprisonment for a period of not more than 2 years, or to both . . . or

(b) in the case of a corporation, to a fine of not more than \$1 000 000.

It is considering it in two different ways, and this amendment is amending section (a), which is talking about the individual.

I'm taking a step back, and I'm thinking: what is the point of putting punishment in legislation? It's meant to act as a deterrent from the get-go so that if people are aware of the legislation, they say: "Oh, boy, that's a stiff penalty. I wouldn't want to put myself in a position where that might come into play." Fair enough. That's what deterrents are for. Also, if it's actually enforced, it acts as a deterrent to others: "Well, you know, this actually did play out. Mr. So-and-so down the road a bit was convicted of this and, in fact, did pay a fine of X amount of money." Again, that falls under the deterrent section.

I think to myself: what's enough to be a deterrent to an average Albertan like me? A hundred thousand is like winning the lottery. I mean, a hundred thousand dollars is a lot, a lot of money, and to have to contemplate paying that out of my own resources, especially in a dispute with government, to which I've probably already committed a fair amount of funds to fighting the government or supporting others that are trying to bring forward their concerns around these land assembly projects, that's so far beyond a deterrent that it's into the realm of the magical or the horror film. A hundred thousand dollars is a lot of money for Albertans. So I think that in this case it has gone too far.

Mr. MacDonald: These guys spend that in hosting expenses, you know.

Ms Blakeman: Well, I understand that the government can blow that off in a hosting expense, no problem, but for most Albertans \$100,000 is more money than they will have in their bank account at any time except for right when they retire, and hopefully they've got that much and more in their account when they do retire. For the rest of us that's just not happening or, at least, not in my world. That just doesn't happen.

I heard the reaction back from the government members: "Well, you know, it's a maximum, so don't sweat it. That'll never be issued." The truth is that you don't know that. You shouldn't be passing legislation and at the same time saying: well, yeah, I know that's the way it's written, but I don't think it'll ever happen that way. That's what's in the legislation. It says \$100,000. It says that it can go up to a fine of not more than \$100,000 or to imprisonment or both. That's what could happen. You can't be supporting legislation thinking: "Well, yeah, that's the max, but it'll never be laid out that way. It'll be less than that. Trust me. It'll be less than that. It'll be – I don't know – say, \$5,000 or \$10,000." Really? Does the member have that much control over the courts and what kind of fine a judge would levy in the end. I don't think that's a good way to go about making legislation.

The second point I want to raise is about the government's rebuttal of this: "Well, you know, in X period of time, in a long period of time" – 35 years I think I heard the minister say – "this kind of a fine has never been levied." Well, once again, not a great way to write legislation, guys, to say, "Well, this is what it is in the legislation, but honestly in a similar circumstance it has never actually come in to play, so don't worry about the amount." No, that's not how you write legislation.

You need to take it seriously, and you need to understand – I hope the government members do – that this is how you're writing it. This is the direction that you have given the courts in the interpretation of it, and you have to expect that this is the way it will play out. Yes, it says not more than a hundred thousand, but it is well within the courts' ability to levy a fine of a hundred thousand and levy it every time it comes before it. You can't be saying: "Don't worry about this. It's not over the top. It's not too much because (a) it'll never be implemented, or (b) it won't go to that amount of money."

3:20

Therefore, I support my colleague's amendment, amendment A5, which is reducing the \$100,000 maximum amount to \$25,000. I think that even \$25,000 is a lot of money. I am looking at who is likely to be affected in most cases. We may well be talking about landowners that have owned a considerable amount of land, but that doesn't mean that they have a considerable amount of money in the bank correspondingly. I think \$25,000 is still a scary amount of money for anyone to have to contemplate pulling out of their pocket and laying down in a cashier's cheque to the court should they be found in contravention of the legislation. I think that \$25,000 as a maximum is high enough to scare people. Let's face it, if it's going to be levied under \$25,000 – and it could be \$5,000 – that's true as well for the other legislation. So it might as well be \$25,000 as a maximum rather than the hundred thousand.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak in favour of amendment A5. I urge my colleagues in the Assembly to also support amendment A5. Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Any other members? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview.

Dr. Taft: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Speaking to A5, I'm inclined to support this amendment, but I'd like to explain why. I hope that the Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills will participate for a few minutes in this discussion because I know he's eager and anxious. I'll get to the point I was going to ask him right away. Given that, as section 14 points out, this is only the section that applies to individuals and not corporations, the Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills said: well, this hundred thousand dollars would be used only in extreme circumstances. I think that was the phrase he used. So help me understand: what would be an extreme case where a hundred thousand dollar fine might be applied? Can the member give me an example of when that might be needed?

Mr. Marz: Specifically, no. Not right now.

Dr. Taft: I appreciate that. Just for the record, the member couldn't pull one out of thin air, but maybe with a bit of thought. I know he wasn't prepared for that, but it would help me balance this out, \$25,000 versus \$100,000, if I could sort of picture in my mind what it was meant to do. Anyway, I appreciate that, hon. member.

There's a point in principle that concerns me, and I'm very glad that the Minister of Justice is here. Here's what I feel I'm being asked to consider here as an MLA with this bill. Section 14, which we are debating an amendment to, proposes penalties in the case of an individual, \$100,000; in the case of a corporation, up to a maximum of a million. Those are the maximums. Those are for offences, and it says here in section 14(1): "A person who contravenes an enforcement order under section 7 is guilty of an offence." So I then go to section 7 to see what would exactly be involved in the offence, and it says in section 7: "Where, in the Minister's opinion, a person has contravened a regulation made under section 3." Then it outlines what the minister may do. So now we're bumped, if I'm reading this correctly, to section 3.

Section 3 is a fairly long section; it's a bit over a page. It addresses several areas, and I'll briefly enumerate these, Mr. Chairman. What's crucial here is that it says that the Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations, and then there's a long list here:

- (a) respecting the control, restriction, prohibition or approval of any kind of use, development or occupation of land . . .

- (b) authorizing the Minister to consent to or approve any particular kind of use, development or occupation . . .

I'm abbreviating here.

- (c) respecting the removal of any buildings, improvements, materials or animals . . .
- (d) respecting the control, restriction or prohibition of the exercise of any power referred to in the regulations . . .
- (e) respecting the control, restriction, prohibition or approval of the dumping, deposit or emission . . .
- (f) making any or all of the provisions of the Surface Rights Act inapplicable.

I don't need to go through (g) and (h). My point is this: section 3 really empowers the minister to make all kinds of regulations in very important areas; section 7 then says that if those regulations are violated, they can be enforced by the minister; and then section 14, which, in fact, we are debating here – there is a clear logic, Mr. Chairman – provides the offence.

My concern as a citizen is that I'm being asked to approve a scale of offence – when I trace it back, I don't know what the regulations might be that the offence could be against. So I feel like exercising the principle of caution. If I knew what the regulations were, I would be more comfortable saying a hundred thousand dollars or a million dollars. But when I look at what's in the act and how broad those regulations could be and how they could affect everything from an order to remove a building or an order for land use or all kinds of things, I'm very reluctant as a legislator to go to the point of a maximum penalty of \$100,000 under regulations I've never seen. It's really asking us to make an enormous leap of faith as an Assembly.

It's frankly compounded because – and this isn't anything personal – when I asked the Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills for an example, I couldn't even get an example. I'm very concerned that as an Assembly we're giving a penalty here for an offence we don't really have any knowledge of, we don't even have an example of, we don't have any regulations about, and that concerns me. So in the principle of being prudent and conservative, I'm more comfortable with the smaller fine. I am concerned about the intrusion of government into an area that's not spelled out here.

Those are my points, Mr. Chairman, and I quite genuinely ask members to consider that. If we had the regulations in front of us and could see what the offences would be, then maybe \$100,000 is fine. Maybe it's not enough. But without those regs we actually don't know what the offence could be. So I think that we're prudent to support this amendment and be cautious rather than incautious.

I also do want to repeat the point made by the Member for Edmonton-Centre that for most individuals \$100,000 is an awful lot of money. Most farmers I know, most Albertans I know are going to go a long way to avoid the risk of a \$25,000 fine. Imagine if there was a \$25,000 fine for speeding. I bet you not many people would be speeding anymore. So I just want to make those points for the record. Any debate on it: I'd love it.

Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Any other members wish to comment? The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills.

Mr. Marz: Yeah. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview was asking for some examples, and of course any example anyone could give in this House, including myself, would be strictly hypothetical. For example, if we wanted to build a dam in this province at some point in time, there would be an RDA applied to all that property that would be flooded. If someone within the flood plain decided to start building houses down there or a recreational area along the river, would \$25,000 be enough to deter him? He may feel: well,

I've already got three built, I may as well keep building a dozen. Would \$25,000 be enough for that? I don't know. The bottom line is that the amount, whether it's \$25,000 or \$100,000, would be determined by the courts. Up to \$100,000 would be determined by the court, not by us, and that is a maximum for an individual that may or may not want to do that. That's an example that that could be applied to.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

3:30

The Deputy Chair: Any other members? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to join in the discussion of this amendment. I listened with interest to what the Member for Edmonton-Riverview had to say with respect to this, and I've just been quickly rereading some of the sections that exist. Actually, what concerns me about the penalties, as we work backwards from assigning a penalty to how the offence is defined and then to who actually defines the offence – and I'd just like to point out that quite apart from the financial penalty contained in section 14, there is also a provision for imprisonment up to two years, which I believe is the maximum under provincial legislation, the maximum penalty of imprisonment that can be imposed under provincial jurisdiction; otherwise, it becomes a federal and criminal act. So we can put someone in jail and fine them up to \$100,000 or both under this act, and that is done for someone who is found guilty of contravening an enforcement order under section 7.

As we work backwards through the legislation from section 14 to section 7, we see that, in fact, when someone "has contravened a regulation made under section 3, the Minister may serve that person with an enforcement order." So we move back from section 7, working backwards to section 3, and we find that the regulations, of course, are made by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, and those can authorize the minister "to consent to or approve any particular kind of [land] use, development or occupation of land in the Project Area" and so on.

What we have, then, is that the government, the cabinet, you know, as they meet privately, can make regulations, and if you don't follow the regulations, you get served with an enforcement order by the minister, and if you don't follow the enforcement order, then you can go to jail for two years. So I'm concerned. I share the hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview's concern with respect to this because I know that sometimes government gets it a bit wrong. To have the cabinet make a regulation and, ultimately, if you violate the regulation which they set – and there are very few constraints on what can be in those regulations – if you don't follow it and you get an enforcement order and you violate that enforcement order, you can be sent to jail or fined up to \$100,000 or both.

I think that that is excessive. I think that if you're going to actually have fines on that scale, if you're going to have penalties of imprisonment of up to two years, we need to have a little bit more certainty about what kind of regulations we're going to see. I think it would be certainly preferable from my perspective if we could set out offences requiring imprisonment in legislation so that it can be debated in public rather than have the government make rules without public debate, the violation of which can result in people being faced with enormous fines or, in fact, imprisonment.

Mr. Chairman, I want to indicate that I am convinced by the arguments put forward by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar and the hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview that would reduce the penalty here. I certainly would hope that we could also be looking at an amendment to reduce the imprisonment portion of the

penalty or eliminate it altogether. I think that that would be something as well. It's great to reduce the fine from \$100,000 to \$25,000, but if you can still go to jail for two years, then we haven't really dealt with the problem completely. So perhaps we'll be able to deal with that.

As I say, Mr. Chairman, and have said with respect to this piece of legislation, I find it to be not only draconian but unnecessary. The imposition of penalties for basically refusing to go along with what the government tells you to do, if that's not putting too fine a point on it, is not something that I think we ought to be agreeing to. I certainly won't.

Based on that reasoning and the concern that I have about the bill in general, I am prepared to support this amendment, and I hope that other members will as well.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The Deputy Chair: Do any other members wish to speak to amendment A5? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you very much. To certainly conclude discussion on amendment A5, I would like to express my gratitude to those who have spoken regarding this legislative amendment, not only thank you to those who are for it but to those, too, who are opposed to it.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview has some more comments regarding this, and I would be delighted to take my seat and hear from the hon. member.

Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview.

Dr. Taft: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Ever so briefly I want to just reinforce my concern with the nature of this when not only are we being asked to enact a penalty of up to \$100,000 and up to two years in jail for an individual who may be contravening regulations we've never seen, but it is also the case in this legislation – I've been uneasy about this from the beginning – that there are parts of this for which there is no appeal. In other words, the way this will be set up, for section 7(2)(a) and (b), I believe, there's no appeal. So we are being asked not only to rubber-stamp regulations we've never seen, but we are actually then passing a bill sections of which the enforcement relates to cannot be appealed.*

We as a Legislature, if we pass this as it is, would be creating a situation in which a landowner, who owns the land through full due process, fully paid for – you know, the buildings may have been in her or his family for generations – can be subject to an order made under regulations that we don't know, and it says here under section 7 that the minister may serve that person with an enforcement order directing a person "to cease the contravention specified in the order," and the landowner cannot appeal that, or directing a person "to stop doing something, or to change the way in which the person is doing it," and the landowner cannot appeal that. Then we are saying that not only can you not appeal, not only are you subject to regulations that we don't know anything about in this Assembly, but you could be fined \$100,000 and be sent to jail for two years. It feels heavy-handed to me, Mr. Chairman. It feels like as an Assembly we're being asked, as I said, to take a leap of faith.

3:40

I'm doubly concerned when I realize that part of that relates to things for which the legislation prevents any appeal. Is this due process? It would be interesting, if there ever is a court challenge to this, if this legislation would stand all the way up. I don't know if

*See p. 804, left col., para. 8

there's due process in here or not when you prevent an appeal. I think everybody has the right to due process and appeal.

Anyway, I won't take more time of this Assembly. I just wanted to say that the more I think about this, the more concerned I am to be quite so heavy-handed.

Thanks.

The Deputy Chair: Do any other members wish to speak? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you very much. That was certainly an interesting observation by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview. Certainly, I don't see members opposite rising quickly to respond.

In conclusion on A5, I certainly would like to say that this amendment is a good amendment. It reduces the individual penalties to \$25,000 or less for a person or persons. We on this side of the House think that the current penalties are far too draconian. We think this bill in itself is too draconian. This amendment, if it was to be passed, would go some way to reduce the impact of this legislation on landowners.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview has summed it up very, very well, Mr. Chairman. Please, let's think of the landowners here and the valid issues that they have had regarding these proposals.

Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Are you ready for the question?

Hon. Members: Question.

[Motion on amendment A5 lost]

The Deputy Chair: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar on the bill as amended.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. Thank you very much. You bet. Mr. Chairman, that was another attempt at taking bad legislation and trying to make it better. When we look at this, when we look again at the government's plans, we have to try again to improve this.

Now, I'm sure that there are landowners across this province who are questioning how this debate is transpiring. Certainly, there have been amendments from the hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona. There have been amendments from the Official Opposition. There were amendments, of course, before we went to second reading on this bill, which is unusual. When you think of the political firestorm that has occurred, particularly in rural areas, over Bill 19, Mr. Chairman, it is worth while to again attempt to improve this legislation at committee.

Now, I don't know what's going to happen at third reading with this bill. I have no idea.

Mr. Liepert: It'll pass.

Mr. MacDonald: It'll pass. Do you think it's going to pass?

Mr. Liepert: When we get third reading.

Mr. MacDonald: Yeah. That's the confidence of the minister of health. Mr. Chairman, the minister of health is reading a newspaper over there, something he probably should have read when he was Minister of Education. I would like to call a point of order.

The Deputy Chair: There is no point of order.

Mr. MacDonald: There's no point of order. Okay.

It's quite odd. There seems to be a difference between the *ATA News* and the *Globe and Mail*.

The Deputy Chair: Hon. member, let's get back to the bill as amended.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. Absolutely. I am, for the record, speaking of the bill, and we have wide latitude at committee, Mr. Chairman, to discuss this bill.

Since you weren't in the chair yesterday, I think maybe what I should do now is refresh all the members of the Assembly on the bill line by line, word for word.

The Deputy Chair: Hon. member, there's no need to refresh us. Everyone has had an opportunity to either read *Hansard* or see it online, so we'll continue on.

Mr. Mason: I didn't catch it.

Mr. MacDonald: There. Okay. For the benefit of the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood. When we look at the section analysis of this bill, Mr. Chairman, we have to realize – and this is for the benefit of the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood, who has been very busy doing his other duties and hasn't had a chance to review *Hansard* or look at the bill from yesterday. [interjection] Well, if he had known, hon. member, that he was going to be physically blocked from that event, he could have taken *Hansard* from yesterday with him and read it.

The Deputy Chair: Through the chair, please.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. Anyway, Mr. Chairman, when we look at this bill and, specifically for the benefit of the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood, we go through and we look at the definitions, we look at the definition of registered owner, we look at the definition of project area, project area order, public project, two words we don't see in there are “public interest” because, of course, the public interest has been neglected. This bill fails the public interest. It fails the property owners of this province.

Now, when we look at section 2, again, and we look at the land assembly project area – and we discussed this before, but for the benefit of the hon. member I would strongly urge you or your researchers to have a look at the 20-year strategic plan, the capital plan, that is the work of the Department of Infrastructure and the President of the Treasury Board. They're both sharing this on their websites. This is what the whole idea behind the land assembly project area is. When we see this 20-year strategic plan, we see why the government so quietly, so desperately wants this bill to become law so that they can go about their business acquiring specific, targeted properties in various locations in the province for their needs.

Now, I don't think anyone is going to be interested in speculating on the possible location of a nuclear power plant. But maybe there will be speculation occurring on some of the proposed ring roads or on other projects or on the rights-of-way, and this is what we've got to prevent once and for all for the sake of the taxpayers, speculation that drives up the price of land beyond any sort of market measure. That's what we have to do. I think, Mr. Chairman, that the government has failed to listen to our concerns on that. In fact, I don't

think; I know they have. Now, that is why we have to look at this section 2, the land assembly project area, closely.

3:50

I agree with what the Minister of Infrastructure said earlier about the transmission corridors. That's a separate issue. That certainly is a separate issue. There's a significant bottleneck created because of electricity deregulation. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood is certainly aware of that. He gets his power bill just like the rest of us. His power bill would be significantly higher than what it used to be, and it's going to be higher even still when the transmission lines have to eventually be paid for through the consumers' bills. Those transmission lines will be on a separate corridor I'm told. I would accept that, but anything can change with this legislation. What is now considered a utility corridor, well, we can change the rules, and we just might do that. With this government rules change all the time, and the rule changes that are made sort of discreetly, quietly are the ones they like the best, Mr. Chairman.

Now, we didn't talk earlier about subsection (2)(c), a project related to the conservation or management of water. That could include a canal. It could include an above the surface pipeline. It could be a pipeline below the surface. There are a lot of different issues around water conservation and management in this Assembly. I think this is the first session in a while – and the hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview could refresh our minds – where we haven't had a stand-alone bill to transfer water from one river basin in the province to the next. A project that would be related to legislation of that nature would of course, I think, be captured under subsection (2)(c).

I don't want to open up this whole debate in committee on a discussion on water exports or transfer of water from the northern half of the province to the southern half of the province, where we could use more water. The allocations have been utilized. There are examples – and the hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview is very concerned – of water transfers or parts of licences or portions of licences being sold. Under subsection (2) there is a possibility – and we have to be cautious of that – that that could occur under this land assembly project area. It could be a canal. It could be a pipeline. It's interesting.

Now, section 3 is, again, the powers of the cabinet. We had a discussion on that yesterday. The hon. member knows fully well the extreme powers of the cabinet. I would say that before the hon. member was, unfortunately, physically barred from attending a news conference today, it would have been discussed by that cabinet. That's another example, Mr. Chairman, of the extreme powers of this cabinet. In this bill the cabinet is going to have more power than they've ever had. [interjection] Too much power. Draconian power. The hon. member is absolutely right.

Now, section 3 was discussed during the previous amendment. [interjection] The hon. member is absolutely right, but there is one thing. In my view, this is why in committee we go over these bills word for word, line by line, paragraph by paragraph. Every hon. member is entitled to do that. Every member is entitled. Whether they want to participate or not, that's their business.

The government agency that we were referring to here in subsection (2), we're also debating – and I should find my Order Paper – another piece of legislation around the public agencies governance. This bill, Mr. Chairman, was one of the earlier ones: Bill 32, the Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act. Now, I'm not going to be able to find that. The definition of government agency means

a corporation that is an agent of the Crown in right of Alberta, and any corporation, commission, board or other body empowered to

perform quasi-judicial or governmental functions and whose members are appointed by an Act of the Legislature, the Lieutenant Governor in Council or a Minister of the Crown or any combination of them.

I believe that's the same definition of a government agency as Bill 32.

Now, Bill 32 in itself is interesting because that's legislation that has come from a government recommendation, and that was a recommendation that was used – and this is incredible. Legally, it's quite interesting. [interjection] The hon. Member for Peace River laughs, but his health authority in the Peace River . . .

The Deputy Chair: Through the chair. Hon. member, through the chair.

Please, quickly, tell me how Bill 32 relates to Bill 19, and we'll move on with Bill 19.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. If you will listen carefully, please.

The government agency that's listed here, I want to know if it's the same definition as in Bill 32 because there are implications to this. There was a legislative officer from this Assembly – to be exact and precise that was the Ethics Commissioner – who had a lot of discussion on the definition of a government agency. We need to be perfectly clear before we go any further with this bill what is meant because there are two, if not three, interpretations of what exactly a government agency is. It depends on who you talk to and in what context it's used, so it is quite important. If I could have some clarification on that, I would really appreciate it, Mr. Chairman.

Now, when we think of how on the Order Paper we're dealing with Bill 32 and how this government when they reorganized the health authorities and fired the regional health authorities, including the hon. member's one, they pretended it was already a law when it was only a recommendation – Mr. Chairman, you're absolutely right. That may not be part of this bill, but it needs to be a part of the official record of this Assembly.

Now, when we go on to section 4, that has been discussed as well.

We go to 5, the acquisition of land. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood, certainly section 5 was reflected in his comments regarding the amendment that was previously discussed.

Section 6 is, of course, the obligations of a person with interest in the project area land.

Enforcement orders under section 7, the control, the restriction, and the prohibitions that are in section 3 are related. That was outlined very well by my colleague from Edmonton-Riverview.

When we look further, Mr. Chairman, maybe we should have a look at section 7, section 7(4)(a) to be precise, and consider what this will do. Perhaps an amendment to this section cutting out the authority that the minister has – the minister can amend or add terms or conditions. The members across the way may not be concerned about that, but landowners are. They've instructed us to at least get this on the public record. This allows for additional penalties and powers outside of the process that has been set up previously, and we think this is unfair to landowners. The rules for enforcing these powers should be very clear. This section allows the minister to increase the burden of orders too easily. So I would like at this time, Mr. Chairman, to propose an amendment to this section.

4:00

The Deputy Chair: We will pause while that is brought to the table and then distributed. Hon. members, we will title this amendment A6.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Amendment A6, for the record, would read that

Bill 19, Land Assembly Project Area Act, be amended in section 7(4)(a) by striking out “amend a term or condition of, add a term or condition to or.” That would be deleted. If we were to do that to the bill, that would significantly change not only that section but some of the tone of this bill.

Now, the proposed amendment cuts out the section that states that the minister can amend, as I said before, or add terms or conditions. This allows, of course, for additional penalties, in our view, and powers outside of the process set up previously. Again, this is totally unfair to landowners. The rules for enforcing these draconian powers should be very clear. This section, if we allow it to remain, provides the minister an easy method of imposing cabinet’s will – I suppose I could call it that – on an innocent, unsuspecting landowner, who, certainly, as the hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre has pointed out very accurately, doesn’t have the resources that back up this government, legal or financial resources to defend their property rights. It’s not a fair fight.

I would please ask all members to give this amendment A6 consideration. I look forward to the debate and discussion on this. Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: The hon. Minister of Infrastructure.

Mr. Hayden: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I stand to oppose the amendment. In the conversation that took place where the member has been speaking about the concerns that are being brought forward, even though he got the president of the party’s name wrong – that’s another party; there’s a different president for the Green Party – I’m not just sure if this was another one that was brought forward from that information. It would be interesting if the members that are supporting this and bringing these forward on behalf of those people are familiar with all of the land proposals and policies that go with that party, if they’ve tied themselves that closely.

The Deputy Chair: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview on A6.

Dr. Taft: Yes. On A6. Mr. Chairman, I rise first to briefly make a correction to some statements I made earlier. I believe I was actually mistaken and misreading the bill, and I think it’s important for the record because some people are following this debate. When I was indicating that the way I was reading the bill, section 7(2)(a) and (b) were not appealable, I think I was mistaken in that. I think they are appealable. For anybody following this and for the integrity of this Assembly I need to acknowledge that I think I was mistaken in that.*

As far as amendment A6 goes, I had noticed this myself when I went through the bill, this particular clause, and it did strike me as an area of concern, so I’m pleased that the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar has brought forward this amendment. I just have to question why we need to give the minister such power. Just to reinforce this for people who are following here, the clause right now reads:

- (4) The Minister may, by order,
 - (a) amend a term or condition of, add a term or condition to or delete a term or condition from an enforcement order.

That’s a very broad power. It’s a very broad power, and this one is in fact not just in the hands of the cabinet; it’s in the hands of a single minister. I think this amendment would curtail an unusual and, perhaps, even extreme power being granted to a minister without any great controls that we can see. Again, I need to refer to the point that we don’t have the regulations in front of us.

As far as I can see – and maybe somebody here can correct me – if we pass this bill without this amendment, the bill doesn’t seem to provide any limitations on the power that it’s giving this minister. It says, “the Minister may, by order.” It doesn’t say the minister in consultation with the Lieutenant Governor in Council or anything like that. “The Minister may, by order . . . amend a term or condition.” It doesn’t put any limits whatsoever on that. Or he may add a term or condition. Again, there are absolutely no limits on that, unless I’m reading this incorrectly. I’d welcome to be corrected on this, but it seems to be giving an extraordinary power to the minister here. I mean, after all, we are talking about an enforcement order that’s already been prepared under this act.

Let’s use the example that the Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills used earlier, which was a farm that was in the way of a planned reservoir going up behind a dam. The landowner refuses to comply, so an enforcement order is written under this act. Presumably that enforcement order is going to do everything that’s necessary. It’ll say that the landowner must leave the land or the landowner must desist from building even more buildings or whatever. If we already have that enforcement order, why do we need to give such extraordinary powers to the minister to amend it or to add to it?

Maybe the minister could help me with this, actually. I’m looking at the minister here. He’s been very helpful. I want to give kudos to this minister for sitting through these debates and responding in good faith to our questions. Mr. Minister, I’m referring here to section 7(4)(a), which is on page 8 of the bill. My question to the minister is: why would he or his successor need such extraordinary power? In other words, why would he need the legislative right to amend or add a term or condition to an enforcement order when that enforcement order is already written? It was very helpful to have the Member for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills give an example earlier. Could the minister justify why that particular power, which strikes me as quite extreme, is necessary?

4:10

Mr. Hayden: The enforcement order can be issued, but with respect to any fine or any action taken, that has to go through the courts. Of course, that’s not determined. But the varying of an enforcement order and the changes that may be necessary to be made to it could be to remediate damages done on a right-of-way. Those are the types of things that, once issued, might need to be amended, to ensure that the right-of-way is put back in a condition that’s consistent with the land-use restrictions that are on it.

The Deputy Chair: The hon. member.

Dr. Taft: Thank you. I appreciate that. But aren’t those the kinds of things that would be in the enforcement order already? Why would an enforcement order be written up and imposed, if that’s the word, if it was incomplete? Wouldn’t that be done already?

The Deputy Chair: The hon. minister.

Mr. Hayden: Yeah. For the sake of clarity, in the enforcement order there could be extra actions and works that took place between the delivery of the enforcement order and the time that we actually could get to it. There could be extra considerations that would be required to be remediated.

The Deputy Chair: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

Ms Blakeman: Well, thank you very much. This has been an interesting exchange. It strikes me that what we have here is

*See p. 801, right col., para. 10

essentially a “whoops, uh-oh” clause that allows the minister, or the Crown, the government, to go back on an action where a mistake was made or there was an omission, to be able to fix it. I’m a little reluctant to okay that kind of thing in an act.

Just given the resources that are available to the government and the period of time that’s now being anticipated to reach this point with what’s being set out in this act, even given that we don’t know what is in the regulations, I just would not expect that a mistake or an omission would be made. Essentially, that’s what I’m seeing this section, 7(4)(a) – it is the “whoops, uh-oh” clause.

I can’t tell you which is worse, the whoops or the uh-oh. You know, I used to run a small company, and I just hated it when I could hear the workers say that. You could tell by the tone of their voice that this was going to cost money.

Mr. Denis: You were in business.

Ms Blakeman: Business, yeah.

I honestly couldn’t tell you which was worse, when they went “whoops” or when they went “uh-oh.” I think, actually, probably “uh-oh” was more expensive.

That is what I’m seeing in this particular section. I guess if you’ve reached that point, given the amount of planning and anticipation and front time that this bill is anticipating, I think that if we’re at the point where there’s a whoops or an uh-oh, maybe there’s a much more serious problem than just having a situation where the minister can correct it through this particular section. I guess what I’m saying is that if this section needs to be used, then maybe there’s a much bigger problem and you need to re-examine the whole thing.

I would like to see that happen given the timelines that are anticipated in this bill, but it does strike me that this is what this is, and therefore I’m supportive of my colleague’s attempts to remove it from the act. I think it signals a much larger problem, and/or this is a sort of quick and dirty way of getting out of something or a cheap and cheerful way of getting out of something that maybe needs some more consideration.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The Deputy Chair: Do other members wish to speak?

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

Mr. Mason: Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I’m pleased to rise to speak to this amendment, which is called A6. I’ve considered very carefully the comments that I’ve heard from some of my colleagues in support of this particular amendment. This particular amendment would amend, or change, section 7(4)(a), that allows the minister to “amend a term or condition of, add a term or condition to or delete a term or condition from an enforcement order.” It doesn’t amend (b), which allows the minister to cancel an enforcement order, and I think that’s wise. However, I do upon careful consideration find that I disagree with my colleagues on this point, so I’m going to speak for a little bit about why that is.

It seems to me that one of the things that I’ve learned since coming into the opposition and becoming part of this legislative process is that the government is not infallible. I know that may come as a shock to many of you. Based on careful observation of this government and of individual ministers, I have discovered that they occasionally make mistakes. Now, they don’t often admit that, but it’s true. So I think it follows from that, Mr. Chairman, that in terms of developing these enforcement orders, in terms of some of the things that the minister can do, it might be good to let them

actually have a way to change their mind in case they do make a mistake.

For example, the orders under this could

- (a) direct a person to cease the contravention specified in the order,
- (b) direct a person to stop doing something, or to change the way in which the person is doing it.

Now, that’s an interesting bit of wording there. If you directed someone to stop doing something and then decided that by doing that thing, he or she wouldn’t really violate the intention of the regulation in the first place – in other words, you’d made, perhaps, a mistake – then you could use this clause to amend your order. I think that in this respect we could do it.

Take, for example, 7(2)(c)(i). That says that the minister could order somebody to take action to remedy a contravention; for example, “the removal or demolition of a structure that has been erected or placed in contravention.” Suppose somebody has built a structure, for example an outhouse, that is seen to be in contravention, and then suddenly the government realizes that it’s just an outhouse and it doesn’t really affect anything. You can knock it down in five years or whenever the government finally decides to move on whatever it is they want to build. So then the minister could change it. He could change, he could vary the term or condition, and I think he would be wise to do that.

You know, it’s with the greatest respect and regret that I find that I don’t agree with this amendment called A6 because I actually believe that the government needs to be allowed to change its mind from time to time. If, in fact, they brought in a very bad order and they came to their senses and realized it was a mistake, if we pass this amendment, the government would have no recourse.

Of course, they could get around it. They could withdraw it because wisely we haven’t eliminated section 7(4)(b), which allows them to cancel. They could cancel it, and then they could issue a new one with the changes. But I think it’s just simpler and more direct to allow them to amend it and change it, so I think this section of the act should remain unamended. I think we should defeat the act for reasons that I’ve stated, but I certainly think that eliminating the ability of the government to change its mind in the very rare cases that it makes a mistake is probably not a good idea.

4:20

While I won’t be able to support the bill, I will support retaining this particular clause and will, with the greatest of regret to my colleagues in the Official Opposition, not be able to support this particular amendment. But I encourage them to continue because most of their amendments have been very supportable, and I look forward to a continuing number of amendments from the Official Opposition as well.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The Deputy Chair: The hon. Member for Calgary-Nose Hill.

Dr. Brown: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to just briefly address the hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar with respect to the matter. I really don’t see what problem the opposition has with respect to this. I mean, if the minister has the ability to make these orders, the minister should certainly have the ministerial power to amend the orders. An example: if one of these orders provided for the various things that were specified in the draft bill, the removal or demolition of a structure.

Another thing that’s provided in there is that the minister may state a time within which there could be compliance. There may well be a circumstance in which the minister might want to give additional time to remedy or to rectify the situation or to take down

a structure or to put the land back into a condition amenable to whatever use is being planned for it.

I think those provisions are entirely consistent. They're consistent with what happens in other legislation as well where there is a quasi-judicial body that has the ability to change an order. If you don't have that in there, the body then lacks that flexibility. So I think it's an entirely reasonable proposition, and I would urge members to defeat this amendment.

The Deputy Chair: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Now, I listened to the two previous speakers with interest, and I certainly can appreciate what they're saying. But if we were to pass this amendment, I would remind the House that the new section 7(4)(a) would read: the minister may – may; it's not shall – by order delete a term or condition from the enforcement order or cancel an enforcement order. So the minister can still change their mind. There's the odd time that they might make a mistake. The option is there with this amendment that if there was a mistake to be made, this would give them the avenue to correct it.

Now, in regard to the hon. Member for Calgary-Nose Hill, certainly, section 7(2)(c) would still be applicable. I can understand where the member is coming from, but this is not going to put too many restrictions and too many limitations on the minister. The minister, it is our interpretation of this, can still change their mind and delete a term or a condition from an enforcement order or cancel it. They still have those options.

Thank you.

The Deputy Chair: Are you ready for the question?

Hon. Members: Question.

[Motion on amendment A6 lost]

The Deputy Chair: Hon. members, it is 4:25 p.m. According to Standing Order 4(3) we will now rise and report.

[Mr. Mitzel in the chair]

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Nose Hill.

Dr. Brown: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has had under consideration a certain bill. The committee reports some progress on the following bill: Bill 19. I wish to table copies of all amendments considered by Committee of the Whole on this date for the official records of the Assembly.

The Acting Speaker: Does the Assembly concur in this report?

Hon. Members: Concur.

The Acting Speaker: So ordered.

The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

Mr. Zwozdesky: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It has been another excellent week of some excellent progress, as has been identified. On that note, I would move that we now call it 4:30 and adjourn until Monday at 1:30 p.m.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 4:26 p.m. to Monday at 1:30 p.m.]

Bill Status Report for the 27th Legislature - 2nd Session (2009)

Activity to April 23, 2009

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.

*An asterisk beside a Bill number indicates an amendment was passed to that Bill; the Committee line shows the precise date of the amendment.

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 Employment Standards (Reservist Leave) Amendment Act, 2009 (Stelmach)

First Reading -- 6 (Feb. 10 aft.)
Second Reading -- 90-93 (Feb. 17 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 503-4 (Mar. 19 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 583-84 (Apr. 8 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Apr. 20 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2009 c4]

2 Lobbyists Amendment Act, 2009 (Redford)

First Reading -- 9 (Feb. 11 aft.)
Second Reading -- 93-94 (Feb. 17 aft.), 121-23 (Feb. 18 aft.), 212-14 (Mar. 3 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 575-79 (Apr. 8 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 609 (Apr. 9 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Apr. 20 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2009 c5]

3 Credit Union Amendment Act, 2009 (Berger)

First Reading -- 17 (Feb. 11 aft.)
Second Reading -- 123-24 (Feb. 18 aft.), 202-03 (Mar. 3 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 579-80 (Apr. 8 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 609-10 (Apr. 9 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Apr. 20 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force April 1, 2009; SA 2009 c3]

4 Post-secondary Learning Amendment Act, 2009 (Bhullar)

First Reading -- 17 (Feb. 11 aft.)
Second Reading -- 124 (Feb. 18 aft.), 353-56 (Mar. 11 aft.), 585-86 (Apr. 8 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 680-83 (Apr. 16 aft., passed)

5 Marketing of Agricultural Products Amendment Act, 2009 (Griffiths)

First Reading -- 17 (Feb. 11 aft.)
Second Reading -- 125 (Feb. 18 aft.), 214-15 (Mar. 3 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 506-07 (Mar. 19 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 585 (Apr. 8 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Apr. 20 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2009 c6]

6 Protection of Children Abusing Drugs Amendment Act, 2009 (Forsyth)

First Reading -- 18 (Feb. 11 aft.)
Second Reading -- 356-60 (Mar. 11 aft.), 586 (Apr. 8 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 633-38 (Apr. 14 aft., adjourned)

7 Public Health Amendment Act, 2009 (Liepert)

First Reading -- 18 (Feb. 11 aft.)
Second Reading -- 437-38 (Mar. 17 aft.), 439-40 (Mar. 17 aft.), 586-87 (Apr. 8 aft., passed)

- 8 Feeder Associations Guarantee Act (\$) (Groeneveld)**
First Reading -- 18 (Feb. 11 aft.)
Second Reading -- 203-08 (Mar. 3 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 580-83 (Apr. 8 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 610 (Apr. 9 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Apr. 20 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2009 cF-11.1]
- 9 Government Organization Amendment Act, 2009 (Campbell)**
First Reading -- 18 (Feb. 11 aft.)
Second Reading -- 360-61 (Mar. 11 aft.), 587-88 (Apr. 8 aft., passed)
- 10 Supportive Living Accommodation Licensing Act (Dallas)**
First Reading -- 18 (Feb. 11 aft.)
Second Reading -- 361-62 (Mar. 11 aft.), 588 (Apr. 8 aft., adjourned)
- 11 Fisheries (Alberta) Amendment Act, 2009 (VanderBurg)**
First Reading -- 19 (Feb. 11 aft.)
Second Reading -- 362-63 (Mar. 11 aft., adjourned)
- 12 Surface Rights Amendment Act, 2009 (Berger)**
First Reading -- 19 (Feb. 11 aft.)
Second Reading -- 383-85 (Mar. 12 aft., adjourned)
- 13 Justice of the Peace Amendment Act, 2009 (Redford)**
First Reading -- 19 (Feb. 11 aft.)
Second Reading -- 385 (Mar. 12 aft., adjourned)
- 14 Carbon Capture and Storage Funding Act (\$) (Knight)**
First Reading -- 138 (Feb. 19 aft.)
Second Reading -- 208-10 (Mar. 3 aft., adjourned)
- 15 Dunvegan Hydro Development Act (Oberle)**
First Reading -- 105-06 (Feb. 18 aft.)
Second Reading -- 210-11 (Mar. 3 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 504-06 (Mar. 19 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 584-85 (Apr. 8 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Apr. 20 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force April 20, 2009; SA 2009 cD-18]
- 16 Peace Officer Amendment Act, 2009 (Lindsay)**
First Reading -- 106 (Feb. 18 aft.)
Second Reading -- 385-86 (Mar. 12 aft., adjourned)
- 17 Securities Amendment Act, 2009 (Fawcett)**
First Reading -- 106 (Feb. 18 aft.)
Second Reading -- 386-87 (Mar. 12 aft.), 622-26 (Apr. 14 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 737 (Apr. 21 aft., passed)
- 18* Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement Implementation Statutes Amendment Act, 2009 (Stevens)**
First Reading -- 161 (Mar. 2 aft.)
Second Reading -- 211-12 (Mar. 3 aft.), 349-52 (Mar. 11 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 381-83 (Mar. 12 aft.), 446-54 (Mar. 17 aft.), 472--81 (Mar. 18 aft.), 482-83 (Mar. 18 aft.), 574-75 (Apr. 8 aft., passed with amendments)
Third Reading -- 604-09 (Apr. 9 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Apr. 20 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force April 20, 2009; SA 2009 c7]
- 19* Land Assembly Project Area Act (Hayden)**
First Reading -- 161 (Mar. 2 aft.)
Second Reading -- 438-39 (Mar. 17 aft.), 626-33 (Apr. 14 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 683-90 (Apr. 16 aft.), 737-53 (Apr. 21 aft.), 770-84 (Apr. 22 aft.), 797-806 (Apr. 23 aft., adjourned)
- 20 Civil Enforcement Amendment Act, 2009 (Denis)**
First Reading -- 161 (Mar. 2 aft.)
Second Reading -- 767 (Apr. 22 aft., adjourned)

- 21 Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2009 (\$) (Snelgrove)**
First Reading -- 283 (Mar. 9 aft.)
Second Reading -- 377-80 (Mar. 12 aft.), 386 (Mar. 12 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 440-43, 454 (Mar. 17 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 468-71 (Mar. 18 aft.), 481 (Mar. 18 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Mar. 23 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force March 23, 2009; SA 2009 c2]
- 22 Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2009 (\$) (Snelgrove)**
First Reading -- 344 (Mar. 11 aft.)
Second Reading -- 380-81 (Mar. 12 aft.), 386 (Mar. 12 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 443-46, 454 (Mar. 17 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 471-72 (Mar. 18 aft.), 481-82 (Mar. 18 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Mar. 23 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force March 23, 2009; SA 2009 c1]
- 23 Municipal Government Amendment Act, 2009 (Danyluk)**
First Reading -- 401 (Mar. 16 aft.)
Second Reading -- 735 (Apr. 21 aft., adjourned)
- 24 Animal Health Amendment Act, 2009 (Griffiths)**
First Reading -- 303 (Mar. 10 aft.)
Second Reading -- 735-36 (Apr. 21 aft., adjourned)
- 25 Teachers' Pension Plans Amendment Act, 2009 (\$) (Evans)**
First Reading -- 283 (Mar. 9 aft.)
Second Reading -- 767 (Apr. 22 aft., adjourned)
- 26 Wildlife Amendment Act, 2009 (Mitzel)**
First Reading -- 303 (Mar. 10 aft.)
Second Reading -- 736 (Apr. 21 aft., adjourned)
- 27 Alberta Research and Innovation Act (\$) (Horner)**
First Reading -- 466 (Mar. 18 aft.)
Second Reading -- 767-69 (Apr. 22 aft., adjourned)
- 28 Energy Statutes Amendment Act, 2009 (McFarland)**
First Reading -- 467 (Mar. 18 aft.)
Second Reading -- 769-70 (Apr. 22 aft., adjourned)
- 29 Family Law Amendment Act, 2009 (Denis)**
First Reading -- 401 (Mar. 16 aft.)
- 30 Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2009 (Drysdale)**
First Reading -- 401 (Mar. 16 aft.)
Second Reading -- 736-37 (Apr. 21 aft., adjourned)
- 31 Rules of Court Statutes Amendment Act, 2009 (Denis)**
First Reading -- 402 (Mar. 16 aft.)
- 32 Alberta Public Agencies Governance Act (Horne)**
First Reading -- 467 (Mar. 18 aft.)
- 33 Fiscal Responsibility Act (Evans)**
First Reading -- 545 (Apr. 7 aft.)
- 35 Gas Utilities Amendment Act, 2009 (McFarland)**
First Reading -- 591 (Apr. 9 aft.)
- 37 Alberta Corporate Tax Amendment Act, 2009 (\$) (Evans)**
First Reading -- 701 (Apr. 20 aft.)
- 38 Tourism Levy Amendment Act, 2009 (Evans)**
First Reading -- 702 (Apr. 20 aft.)
- 39 Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 2009 (Evans)**
First Reading -- 702 (Apr. 20 aft.)

- 40 Alberta Personal Income Tax Amendment Act, 2009 (Brown)**
First Reading -- 702 (Apr. 20 aft.)
- 41 Protection for Persons in Care Act (Brown)**
First Reading -- 766 (Apr. 22 aft.)
- 42 Gaming and Liquor Amendment Act, 2009 (Anderson)**
First Reading -- 734 (Apr. 21 aft.)
- 52 Health Information Amendment Act, 2009 (Rogers)**
First Reading -- 436 (Mar. 17 aft.)
Second Reading -- 436 (Mar. 17 aft., reinstated), 437 (Mar. 17 aft., referred to Standing Committee on Health)
- 201 Traffic Safety (Vehicles with Unlawfully Possessed Firearms) Amendment Act, 2009 (Hehr)**
First Reading -- 106 (Feb. 18 aft.)
Second Reading -- 165-76 (Mar. 2 aft.), 284-86 (Mar. 9 aft., defeated on division)
- 202 Municipal Government (Municipal Auditor General) Amendment Act, 2009 (Johnston)**
First Reading -- 138 (Feb. 19 aft.)
Second Reading -- 286-96 (Mar. 9 aft.), 406-08 (Mar. 16 aft., referred to Standing Committee on Community Services)
- 203 Local Authorities Election (Finance and Contribution Disclosure) Amendment Act, 2009 (Johnson)**
First Reading -- 251-52 (Mar. 5 aft.)
Second Reading -- 408-16 (Mar. 16 aft., adjourned)
- 204 Provincial-Municipal Tax Sharing Act (Blakeman)**
First Reading -- 498 (Mar. 19 aft.)
- 205 Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure (Third Party Advertising) Amendment Act, 2009 (Anderson)**
First Reading -- 649-50 (Apr. 15 aft.)
- 206 School (Enhanced Protection of Students and Teachers) Amendment Act, 2009 (Forsyth)**
First Reading -- 621 (Apr. 14 aft.)
- Pr1 Beverly Anne Cormier Adoption Termination Act (Anderson)**
First Reading -- 376 (Mar. 12 aft.)
- Pr2 Caritas Health Group Statutes Amendment Act, 2009 (Elniski)**
First Reading -- 376 (Mar. 12 aft.)
- Pr3 Les Filles de la Sagesse Act Repeal Act (Dallas)**
First Reading -- 376 (Mar. 12 aft.)

Table of Contents

Introduction of Guests	785
Members' Statements	
Give a Kid a Lunch Program	786
Gordon Hansen	786
Achievement Bonuses	786
St. George's Day	787
Genome Alberta	787
Trade Unions	795
Oral Question Period	
Seniors' Pharmaceutical Plan	787, 789, 791, 792
Labour Protection for Paid Farm Workers	788
Condominium Property Management	788
Government House News Conference	789, 795
Provincial Fiscal Strategy	789
Carbon Emissions Monitoring	790
Achievement Bonuses	790
Oversight of Police Conduct	791
Conquest Vacations	792
All-terrain Vehicles in Parks and Protected Areas	793
Taser Testing	793
Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute	794
Northeast Calgary Ring Road	794
Livestock and Meat Strategy	795
Notices of Motions	796
Tabling Returns and Reports	796
Projected Government Business	796
Government Bills and Orders	
Committee of the Whole	
Bill 19 Land Assembly Project Area Act	797

STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Select Special Chief Electoral Officer Search Committee

Chair: Mr. Mitzel
 Deputy Chair: Mr. Lund
 Bhullar
 Blakeman
 Campbell
 Horne
 Lukaszuk
 MacDonald
 Marz
 Notley
 Webber

Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund

Chair: Mrs. Forsyth
 Deputy Chair: Mr. Elniski
 Blakeman
 Campbell
 DeLong
 Denis
 Johnston
 Kang
 Vacant

Standing Committee on Community Services

Chair: Mr. Doerksen
 Deputy Chair: Mr. Hehr
 Benito
 Bhardwaj
 Chase
 Johnson
 Johnston
 Lukaszuk
 Notley
 Rodney
 Sarich

Standing Committee on the Economy

Chair: Mr. Campbell
 Deputy Chair: Mr. Taylor
 Allred
 Amery
 Bhullar
 Marz
 McFarland
 Taft
 Weadick
 Xiao
 Vacant

Standing Committee on Health

Chair: Mr. Horne
 Deputy Chair: Ms Pastoor
 Dallas
 Denis
 Fawcett
 Notley
 Olson
 Quest
 Sherman
 Taft
 Vandermeer

Standing Committee on Legislative Offices

Chair: Mr. Mitzel
 Deputy Chair: Mr. Lund
 Bhullar
 Blakeman
 Campbell
 Horne
 Lukaszuk
 MacDonald
 Marz
 Notley
 Webber

Special Standing Committee on Members' Services

Chair: Mr. Kowalski
 Deputy Chair: Mr. Oberle
 Elniski
 Fawcett
 Hehr
 Leskiw
 Mason
 Rogers
 Taylor
 VanderBurg
 Weadick

Standing Committee on Private Bills

Chair: Dr. Brown
 Deputy Chair: Ms Woo-Paw
 Allred Jacobs
 Amery MacDonald
 Anderson McQueen
 Benito Olson
 Bhardwaj Quest
 Boutilier Rodney
 Calahasen Sandhu
 Dallas Sarich
 Doerksen Taft
 Forsyth

Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, Standing Orders and Printing

Chair: Mr. Prins
 Deputy Chair: Mr. Hancock
 Amery Mitzel
 Berger Notley
 Calahasen Oberle
 DeLong Pastoor
 Doerksen Rogers
 Forsyth Sherman
 Johnson Stevens
 Leskiw Taylor
 Liepert Zwozdesky
 McFarland

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Chair: Mr. MacDonald
 Deputy Chair: Mr. Quest
 Benito Johnson
 Bhardwaj Kang
 Chase Mason
 Dallas Olson
 Denis Sandhu
 Drysdale Vandermeer
 Fawcett Woo-Paw
 Jacobs

Standing Committee on Public Safety and Services

Chair: Mr. VanderBurg
 Deputy Chair: Mr. Kang
 Anderson
 Brown
 Calahasen
 Cao
 Jacobs
 MacDonald
 Sandhu
 Woo-Paw
 Vacant

Standing Committee on Resources and Environment

Chair: Mr. Prins
 Deputy Chair: Ms Blakeman
 Berger
 Boutilier
 Drysdale
 Griffiths
 Hehr
 Mason
 McQueen
 Oberle
 Webber

If your address is incorrect, please clip on the dotted line, make any changes, and return to the address listed below. To facilitate the update, please attach the last mailing label along with your account number.

Subscriptions
Legislative Assembly Office
1001 Legislature Annex
9718 - 107 Street
EDMONTON AB T5K 1E4

Last mailing label:

Account # _____

New information:

Name _____

Address _____

Subscription information:

Annual subscriptions to the paper copy of *Alberta Hansard* (including annual index) are \$127.50 including GST if mailed once a week or \$94.92 including GST if picked up at the subscription address below or if mailed through the provincial government interdepartmental mail system. Bound volumes are \$121.70 including GST if mailed. Cheques should be made payable to the Minister of Finance.

Price per issue is \$0.75 including GST.

On-line access to *Alberta Hansard* is available through the Internet at www.assembly.ab.ca

Address subscription inquiries to Subscriptions, Legislative Assembly Office, 1001 Legislature Annex, 9718 - 107 St., EDMONTON AB T5K 1E4, telephone 780.427.1302.

Address other inquiries to Managing Editor, *Alberta Hansard*, 1001 Legislature Annex, 9718 - 107 St., EDMONTON AB T5K 1E4, telephone 780.427.1875.