



Province of Alberta

The 27th Legislature  
Third Session

# Alberta Hansard

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The Honourable Kenneth R. Kowalski, Speaker

**Legislative Assembly of Alberta**  
**The 27th Legislature**  
 Third Session

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## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 21, 2010

[The Speaker in the chair]

### Prayers

**The Speaker:** Good afternoon.

Let us pray. We confidently ask for strength and encouragement in our service to others. We ask for wisdom to guide us in making good laws and good decisions for the present and future of Alberta. Amen.

Please be seated.

### Introduction of Guests

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

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to introduce a fabulous group of students from Caernarvon elementary school. I had the pleasure of attending their social studies class not that long ago and discussed with them what goes on in this particular Chamber. I have to tell you that they were so well prepared and had a good understanding of what goes on over here, but I'm not surprised because their teacher, Mrs. Susanne Venaas, happens to be the cousin of Mme Micheline Gravel, who is our Clerk of *Journals* here in the Chamber. They are also accompanied by Ms Bobbi Jo Hollingsworth and Mrs. Line Johnston from Caernarvon elementary school. I would ask them all to rise and accept the traditional welcome of our Assembly.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Battle River-Wainwright.

**Mr. Griffiths:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure today to rise to introduce to you and through you to members of this Assembly 22 students from Blessed Sacrament school in Wainwright. They are accompanied by one student teacher, Amelia Medeiros, and she has the distinct pleasure of having as a mentor Ms Michelle Folk, who is one of the greatest teachers I've ever met. I always aspired to be as good a teacher as her. They're also accompanied by parent helpers Laurene Kennelly, Bev Babcock, Cheryl Heier, Brett McDonald, and Angela Lee. They are in the public gallery behind me, and I'd ask them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

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

**Mr. Doerksen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a good friend of mine, Mr. Ben Thorlakson, who, in addition to running several very successful cattle feeding operations and being involved in a broad range of beef industry research, is the past president of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, the Canada Beef Export Federation, and the Alberta Beef Producers and is one of the people who I conferred with before I agreed to do this job. He is accompanied today by his daughter Dr. Lori Thorlakson, who is a professor of political science at the University of Alberta and actually has some students in the building here today. I would like to ask them both to rise and enjoy the very warm traditional welcome of this Assembly, please.

**The Speaker:** The hon. deputy Leader of the Official Opposition, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

**Ms Blakeman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have two introductions today that I'm very pleased to make to you and through you to all members of the Assembly. First of all, I would like to introduce one of my former colleagues, Dr. Bruce Miller. Please stand, Dr. Miller. He's joining us in the public gallery. Of course, he has served the public for many, many years as a church leader and educator and as a community activist. He served as the member for Edmonton-Glenora from '04 to '08, and he is now leading a congregation at Garneau United Church. Please join me in welcoming him back to the Assembly.

My second introduction, Mr. Speaker, is a very accomplished young woman that I am pleased to be engaged with as part of the Equal Voice mentorship program, Lyndia Peters. Lyndia, please stand. Lyndia is originally from southern Alberta, graduated from the University of Lethbridge, and is employed with the city of Edmonton as a Youth Council co-ordinator. She also volunteers in the youth sector on the Youth Advisory Group to the Canadian Commission for UNESCO and is involved with a number of arts organizations near and dear to my heart, including the Edmonton Poetry Festival. Lyndia is here today at my urging to see how question period works. I would ask you all to please welcome her to the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Health and Wellness, do you have an introduction today?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members here Executive Director Bev Walkner, senior manager of the intergovernmental and integrated health strategy policy branch, and Lara McClelland. They are both here with a number of staff members. I just want to say thank you to them for coming today and paying attention to what we do in the Legislature. The intergovernmental and integrated health strategy branch is responsible for federal-provincial initiatives, strategic policy, and aboriginal programs among several other duties. I would ask Bev and Lara and all of their staff to please rise, and the rest of us could perhaps welcome them with a warm round of applause. Thank you very much.

### Members' Statements

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

#### Nonprofit and Charitable Organizations

**Ms Woo-Paw:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. National Volunteer Week provides an excellent opportunity to acknowledge Alberta's more than 19,000 nonprofit and charitable organizations, with approximately 2.5 million volunteers and over 100,000 employees. These organizations are vital to the strength and well-being of our communities, contribute to our quality of life, and are essential to attracting people to our province and keeping them here.

A report produced by the Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations entitled *Stretched to the Limit*, an economic survey with responses from about 500 nonprofit groups across Alberta, revealed that many nonprofit organizations are under enormous strain, the result of greater demand for programs and services from clients with ever-growing complex needs, decreased funding, and increased operating costs.

Declining revenue sources for the nonprofit sector include foundation grants, individual donations, corporate donations and sponsorships, earned revenue, gifts in kind and stock, and government grants and contracts. Faced with these decreases, organizations have no capacity to absorb further cutbacks. Respondents indicated

that the cumulative impact of even modest reductions of between 2 to 5 per cent can have huge impacts. More than 60 per cent of the survey respondents reported an increased demand for programs and services, and at the same time 65 per cent said their general operating costs have gone up substantially for things such as rent, utilities, insurance, staffing, supplies, and equipment.

The report affirms that Alberta's nonprofit sector is resilient and adaptable. While these groups have been adapting to changing circumstances, they are stretched to the limit. In fact, some have already cut programs and services in the communities they serve. According to the survey it's a situation that could become worse in the months ahead despite predictions of economic recovery.

One of the key suggested actions is continued dialogue and ongoing consultation between government and leaders in this sector to better understand the challenges.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Glenmore.

### Government Shortcomings

**Mr. Hinman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak about a pattern of bad decisions this government continues to make. Just in the last few weeks two new problems have come to light, the political interference in the Electoral Boundaries Commission and awarding the cataract surgery contracts. This government does not have respect for the rule of law, for property rights, or for democracy. It is displaying the worst of human traits. With its desire to centralize power and control over others, they have created an atmosphere of envy and jealousy between regions, between business sectors, and between Albertans. Many Albertans are discouraged with loss of employment and business opportunities that once flourished here.

This government is showing politics at its worst, and in doing so, they are failing Albertans. They have failed our energy sector, first, with a punitive new royalty framework and now by creating ongoing uncertainty by delaying the release of the details of the competitiveness review changes. They have failed hard-working entrepreneurs, who are trying to compete on a level playing field, by rewarding friends of the PC Party with corporate welfare like carbon capture, ethanol plants, and billion-dollar power lines.

They have failed rural landowners with the trampling of property rights under Bill 36, the land-use framework, and bills 19 and 50, to build power lines we probably don't need. They have failed students by allowing postsecondary institutes to skirt around the legislative tuition increase caps. They have failed health workers and patients with a centralized health board that is causing costs to balloon while services deteriorate. They have failed taxpayers with a \$7 billion plus cash deficit, the biggest in our province's history, and the return to deficit financing. They have failed voters with the democratic deficit. There are no fixed election dates, no set election, no free votes, no recall, and with the Legislature closing early, no accountability of question period for six months.

Former Premier Ralph Klein use to say: welcome to Ralph's world. This government has rolled up the welcome mat. Albertans want to know: what world does this government live in?

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

1:40

### 2011 Solar Decathlon

**Dr. Brown:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to congratulate a group of students from the University of Calgary who have been asked to participate in the 2011 Solar Decathlon. The University of

Calgary is the only team from Canada chosen to participate in this prestigious honour.

The Solar Decathlon is a biennial competition hosted by the United States Department of Energy. Student-led teams from around the world are invited to design, construct, and showcase solar-powered net zero homes. These homes are displayed at the National Mall in Washington, DC, and are judged by experts in 10 different fields. The Solar Decathlon attracts enormous attention from media, the public, governments, and industry leaders. In 2009 a Calgary-based team placed sixth out of 20 competitors. Next year's team will show approximately 200,000 spectators in Washington, DC, and the world what Alberta technology can achieve.

Alberta and its postsecondary learning institutions are dedicated to finding innovative solutions to today's toughest problems, including problems like productivity, energy efficiency, and competitiveness. Solutions to these problems are found right here at home in Alberta and at the University of Calgary. Team Canada's solar home is cutting edge; it's attractive, affordable, marketable, and above all it's sustainable. It's designed specifically for and with the collaboration of First Nations communities in southern Alberta.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, my hometown of Calgary is leading the country. These bright young minds are the future innovators of our nation, and I offer them sincere congratulations and support for their endeavours. I would ask all hon. members to join me in wishing the team from Calgary, Team Canada, good luck in Washington, DC.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Hays.

### SAIT Trojans Men's Hockey Team

**Mr. Johnston:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recently the SAIT Trojans became the second team in the Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference history to win four straight men's hockey titles with a 4-1 victory over Concordia in the fifth and deciding game. Coach Ken Babey is now the winningest coach in postsecondary men's hockey history and hit the 400-win plateau.

SAIT Trojans players and staff are as follows: Jonathan Malin, Bradley Plumton, Travis Bradshaw, Mike Ullrich, Clayton Goodall, Ryan Hyland, Kyle Dorowicz, Sean Bassingthwaite, Robert Nocera, Geoff Rollins, Blake Robson, Sean Goodwin, Brock Michalsky, Garret Watson, Brady Mason, Shane Lust, Jessie Tresierra, Kevin Lessard, Thane Wood, Brennan Strang, Marco Guercio, and Shadoc Stoodley. In goal Landon Kroeker, Thomas Tartaglione, and Ryan Nieszner. Coaching staff: Head Coach Ken Babey, Jim McLean, Rob Sweeney, Jason Edwards, T.J. Babey, Ray Herrington, and Timothy Lees.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Democracy and MLA Representation

**Mr. Taylor:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to say to you and through you to all members of this House that I have gained a new appreciation in the last week and a half for what an honour it is to be able to represent the constituents of Calgary-Currie in the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. I want to thank the members of all parties and, above all, to thank the staff of the Legislative Assembly Office for the many and varied kinds of assistance and co-operation they've given me to aid in my transition from where I was to where I am.

There exists a lot of goodwill in this Assembly, and while occasional bits of it may be driven by political expediency or schadenfreude, I believe that it is in the vast majority of instances real and genuine and that it springs from our common bipartisan

bond that we share in this House. Each one of us put ourselves and our names forward for public service, and most days I believe and hope each of us gets out of bed, gets dressed far better than I ever had to when I was working in radio, and goes to work because in our heart of hearts we want to do our small part to do some good, to make a difference, to leave this province better than we found it on behalf of and for the sake of the people we represent.

Mr. Speaker, I know that goodwill exists, and I'd like to see us all put it to work more frequently on behalf of and for the sake of the Albertans that we all represent. You know, in my experience, it really doesn't matter how far apart you and I or this person or that person may be politically on quite a number of issues. If we share a concern about some other issue, when we have a common concern, we have common cause, and we can work together to solve the problem for the common good. I believe that approach puts Albertans first.

Mr. Speaker, in short order this House will rise, and we'll all go home to our respective constituencies for the summer. No matter whether we call ourselves PCs, Liberals, New Democrats, Wildrose Alliance, or independents, let's remember that our bosses are none other than the Albertans who elected us, and let's come back in the fall determined to work in their interests. Where that means working across or around party lines in common cause to put Albertans first, it is my hope that we will all be prepared to do so.

Thank you.

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

#### Leaders of Tomorrow Awards

**Mrs. McQueen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to acknowledge National Volunteer Week and all the amazing volunteers in my constituency, across our province, and across our great nation. This annual celebration recognizes the efforts of nearly 12.5 million volunteers across Canada. It is estimated that each year these volunteers donate over 2 billion hours of their personal time to the benefit of our communities. Our volunteers work tirelessly to make our province and our communities a great place to live, work, and raise our families. Their dedication to making a difference in our communities is truly remarkable.

There have been several volunteer appreciation dinners held throughout my constituency this week. It is a great honour for me to attend dinners in Calmar, Leduc county, Wetaskiwin county, and Drayton Valley-Brzeau. This week I along with the hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Camrose attended a dinner that honoured the recipients of the leaders of tomorrow awards for the youth in Wetaskiwin county and city. These outstanding young volunteers ranged in age from six to 21, and we were very impressed to learn about the contributions they are making in their communities, schools, churches, and hospitals, to name a few examples.

We would like to congratulate all the winners and, indeed, the youth who were nominated. These leaders of tomorrow are in reality leaders of today. The nominees represented some of Alberta's best and brightest, and it is important to have events like this to truly recognize and thank our volunteers for the work they do. National Volunteer Week reminds us to take time to thank our volunteers in our constituencies for their hard work and dedication.

Thank you to all our volunteers, and thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, would you join me as well in extending a very happy birthday to Her Majesty the Queen.

#### Presenting Petitions

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

**Ms Woo-Paw:** Yes. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to present two petitions. The first petition of 90 signatures from the Calgary area urges the government to "introduce a bill to amend the Alberta School Act to designate in legislation the identity of the party who is primarily responsible for ensuring a child's attendance at school."

The second petition, 119 signatures from the Calgary area, urges the government to "increase the number of Attendance Officers available to Alberta School Boards in order to enhance the enforcement of school attendance."

Thank you.

#### Tabling Returns and Reports

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Education.

**Mr. Hancock:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me pleasure today to table for the House some petitions from students and parents in central Alberta. Government officials from my office and department met last Thursday with a group of students to discuss their concerns with diploma exams. The conversation was thorough and positive, and I appreciated the students exercising their citizenship and thoughtfully bringing their concerns to the government's attention. They provided me with over 450 signatures of students from Lacombe, Delburne, Caroline, Ponoka, Sundre so that the Assembly might be aware of their concerns as well.

1:50

#### Oral Question Period

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

#### Health Services Executive Bonuses

**Dr. Swann:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. There's growing evidence that shows that past a certain point in a salary more money does not mean better results. In fact, a healthy, trusting, positive work environment provides the best incentive. In light of the current bonus system at Alberta Health Services and the fact that their own staff survey shows an almost toxic work environment, it's clear that Alberta Health Services is missing the point and putting their faith in money. Again to the Premier: will the Premier immediately put an end to a flawed bonus system?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, in response to the same question a couple of weeks ago I said that the minister of health is reviewing the situation with Alberta Health Services. Alberta Health Services itself is looking at a new system for remunerating their senior officials that sit as vice-presidents and other management positions. Any other information the minister has with respect to the progress on the file.

**The Speaker:** The hon. leader.

**Dr. Swann:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that 30 per cent of the total bonuses for the 48 vice-presidents in Alberta Health Services will be determined by "adherence to values," can the Premier explain how any system can possibly measure an individual's adherence to values in an objective way?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, I can't speak to the piece of information that the hon. member just gave, but I can tell about what we did in government, and that is that we eliminated, with of course the support of our senior managers, \$40 million worth of bonuses going forward, and we worked it out with those officials. As I said, the

minister of health is working with the Alberta Health Services Board to deal with the issue.

**The Speaker:** The hon. leader.

**Dr. Swann:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, taxpayers surely have a right to know where their money is going. Will the Premier give his word that immediately on receiving this information, it will be made public to all Albertans?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, we do have a very open and transparent system of communicating with Albertans in terms of the level of compensation for all senior officials, including those that are elected. There is a range of salaries that go into the annual reports from all of the organizations that report to the various ministries.

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

#### Hydroelectric Dam on the Peace River

**Dr. Swann:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The B.C. government has just announced they're going to go ahead with a massive hydroelectric dam on the Peace River, adding to the two huge dams that are already in place. The flow to the Peace River delta has already been compromised, and all this Premier is willing to do is to seek intervenor status and offer weak platitudes about mitigating negative impacts. To the Premier: given that so much is at stake for Alberta if B.C. goes ahead with the dam, what specifically is the Premier going to do to protect Alberta's interests?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, we will be protecting Albertans' interests. As I told the media yesterday, I had a conversation with Premier Campbell on Saturday morning. He apprised me that they will be proceeding with the applications. Those applications, of course, will go to adjudication, and a quasi-judicial authority will make the decisions. We will of course be delivering our position. The Northwest Territories and First Nations have some issues. There are a considerable number of questions that have to be answered.

**The Speaker:** The hon. leader.

**Dr. Swann:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. That anticipates the next question which is, really: why has the Premier not been seeking government-to-government negotiations instead of going cap in hand merely as an intervenor in this application?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, the fact that the Premier has called and given us advance notice of the application is a good step on his part and has also given us an opportunity to dialogue on this particular matter even further. As I said before, we will protect the interests of Albertans. There are numerous concerns. The Department of Environment, Department of Justice, and SRD will be involved, and it may include other departments in terms of delivering evidence to the quasi-judicial authority.

**The Speaker:** The hon. leader.

**Dr. Swann:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the run-of-river Dunvegan dam is downstream from B.C.'s two massive dams and a key renewable resource for Alberta, what effect will B.C.'s latest development and dam have on our ability to generate our sustainable energy resource?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, there is no development; it's being proposed. That is one of the questions that will be asked by the province. Again, it's the first part of a long process. This is discussion, of course, delivering the evidence to the committee that's going to take a number of years to deal with it and make a decision. But in the meantime we're going to ensure that the interests of Albertans are protected.

**The Speaker:** Third Official Opposition main question. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

#### Workers' Compensation for Occupational Cancers

**Mr. MacDonald:** Thirteen per cent of new cancer cases identified each year in Alberta could be work related. However, only 31 cancer-related claims were accepted by the Workers' Compensation Board in the last reported year. My first question is to the Premier. Given that there is over \$300 million in the WCB's occupational disease reserve fund, will the Premier ensure that all Alberta workers have the same protections that firefighters have for work-related cancers? I believe the government did the right thing when they enhanced protection for firefighters.

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, it's a technical matter, and the minister will respond.

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, with pleasure. The Workers' Compensation Board makes decisions based on the facts, facts presented to the Workers' Compensation Board by the medical professionals. That is how cases are adjudicated. That is how entitlement is being adjudicated on files. When a worker gets injured, there's an obligation for either the employer, the worker, or the medical staff to report the accident. Reports are filed. Decisions are made by the WCB.

**Mr. MacDonald:** Again to the Premier, and this is not a technical matter; it's a matter of health and safety for Alberta workers. Why is the government reluctant to bring in legal protection so that Alberta workers such as welders have WCB protection if they are exposed to cancer-causing agents in their line of work?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, the minister just answered the question. WCB makes the determination. They're a quasi-judicial authority separate from government, and they make those decisions on behalf of Albertans.

**Mr. MacDonald:** I would remind the hon. Premier that it's this government, his government, that writes the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Now, again to the Premier: given that there are as many as 2,500 Albertans who could possibly die of occupational cancer by the year 2015, how can the Premier justify waiting five years before cutting exposure rates to cancer-causing agents in the workplace by half?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It should be known to Albertans that aside from insuring Albertans following an unfortunate work accident, the Workers' Compensation Board also provides our department of occupational health and safety with a significant amount of money for mitigating accidents. One of the areas where

the funds are being spent is on making sure that our workers are informed properly and that laws relevant to the occupational health act are being enforced. We are focusing on preventing accidents by education, by putting the proper rules around workplace environments. But when accidents occur or when occupational diseases are developed, decisions by the WCB are made based on medical evidence.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Glenmore.

### Cataract Surgery

**Mr. Hinman:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government has severely eroded what was the Alberta advantage through its incompetence. The health minister has announced that since the handling of the cataract contract process has caused so much confusion and outrage, he'll be hosting a meeting this weekend with most of the stakeholders. This government fails to realize that they should consult the stakeholders before making major decisions. Given the damage this sudden cancellation has caused patients and providers, will the Premier step in and extend the old contract for 60 days so that this issue can be properly resolved? Will you step in, Mr. Premier?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, the question has been asked two or three times by the same member, and I've clearly indicated that there was a request for proposals that was put out with a closing date of January 15. Those who wished to be part of that process were. It was open. It was public. It was transparent. It was all done accordingly. However, there is a second blitz coming up, and that will include additional opportunities. That's one of the reasons why we're meeting on Saturday; it's to provide everybody with that information.

**Mr. Hinman:** Mr. Speaker, that's why I asked the Premier.

Given that this government continues to make flawed decisions behind closed doors, will the Premier clear the air on this process, and will he have his health minister table those RFPs, as the health care act legislates, so that the right decision will be made rather than the bad political ones behind closed doors?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, that question was also asked by one of the opposition colleagues, and I indicated then the same thing that I'll indicate now. I will look into this matter further.

**Mr. Hinman:** He needs to table and make it open.

You know, all good things come to an end but, thankfully, so do the bad ones. Given that the only procedure that will fix this government's vision is one that the citizens of Alberta will perform at the next election, can the Premier promise that this appointment will not be rescheduled from the spring of 2012?

**Mr. Stelmach:** All I know is that I'm not going for cataract surgery as yet. Hopefully, I don't have to before March of 2012. I really don't know where the poor fellow is going.

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

2:00

### Health System Governance

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Almost two years ago the government decided that Albertans needed a health care villain to continue the government's privatization agenda and to

shield the Premier from responsibility. The superboard was struck in order to distance government from accountability when it came to decisions to cut public services and staff. They in turn set up their villain, Dr. Stephen Duckett, and his 50 vice-presidents. My question is to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Why won't the minister stop hiding behind Alberta Health Services and take responsibility for the health care system once and for all?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, I've answered questions about this before as well, and I would encourage the hon. questioner to please read *Hansard*. It was very clearly indicated why we went from 12 different boards, including nine provincial ones and three others. It seemed appropriate to streamline them down to one central board. There have been a number of efficiencies as a result of that, more consistent information gathering as a result of that, and taxpayers are saving money and will be getting better service as a result as well.

**Mr. Mason:** Well, since Alberta Health Services and Alberta Health and Wellness are two bureaucracies stumbling over each other to shield the minister from any responsibility and since the salary and bonus payments to two bureaucracies overloaded with at least 50 top officials are obscene and will cost taxpayers millions, why won't the health minister show real leadership and financial accountability by disbanding Alberta Health Services?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Well, I've answered this question before as well, Mr. Speaker. The issue is that there are two arms in health care. There's one arm that does strategic policy setting, that is responsible for the budget, that is responsible for legislation, that is responsible for regulations, responsible for doctors' services, and so on. That's called the Department of Health and Wellness. On the other side, the other arm deals with the specific delivery of acute services, of long-term care services, of cancer services, contracts with nurses, and so on. That's the delivery arm. Why would he want the delivery arm shut off? It makes no sense.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Mason:** Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Well, the minister knows that we want health services delivered, just not in the crazy way that he's doing it.

Given that Alberta Health Services' survey showed that less than 30 per cent of employees were optimistic about the future of Alberta Health Services and given that Alberta Health Services has created chaos in the health care system, which is made even worse by the minister's constant political interference in their decisions, why won't you tell Dr. Duckett to pack his bags, dissolve Alberta Health Services, and finally step up and take full responsibility for Alberta's health care system?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, that kind of a torque and inflammatory question barely deserves the dignity of a response in this House. That's just absolute nonsense, and the member knows it.

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

### High-intensity Residential Fires

**Mr. Taylor:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, another month, another high-intensity residential fire. It was four weeks ago yesterday that I brought this up the last time in this House. Today we're talking about the big fire in Airdrie, another Alberta classic, where one house catches fire, takes out three other houses with it,

and damages another 14. That isn't normal anywhere but this province. Since Alberta's firefighters are as well trained and capable as any on the planet, I wonder if the Minister of Municipal Affairs might be willing to finally fess up that there's something terribly, terribly flawed in Alberta's building codes.

**Mr. Goudreau:** Mr. Speaker, a couple things. One is that our mandate is to save lives and as much property as possible. The other one is to reinforce what we already have, and that's a safe building code, with one that's even safer. Again, it's a very, very difficult time for anyone involved in fire, and that in fact motivates our staff to look at some of those issues and allows us to review what's happening and then to reinforce things.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Taylor:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister please acknowledge that Alberta's climate, windy and dry as it is, is unique and distinct from the rest of Canada and that we need unique and distinct fire prevention and abatement measures built into Alberta's fire and building codes?

**Mr. Goudreau:** Mr. Speaker, we are doing all of that. Alberta should be commended for the work it has done and not necessarily criticized for proactively taking some action by protecting Albertans. We've got some of the strictest building codes in the country. We've actually updated our building codes two years ahead of any other jurisdiction across Canada, and we're continuing our consultation process with our stakeholders and the public and making sure that we're doing things right.

**Mr. Taylor:** Well, Mr. Speaker, given that those claims don't do any good when people's houses keep burning down several at a time, all at once, and given that you can't put any more space between the homes that are already built, will this minister at least admit that vinyl siding is about the next best thing to lighter fluid in a fire and ban that stuff as a building material?

**Mr. Goudreau:** Mr. Speaker, our codes have changed to address some of that, and those are coming into effect as we speak. I think we need to remind ourselves that our fire standards are important to slow down the spread of fire. The whole idea is to give people more time to escape, to get out of their homes, while firefighters take the time needed to respond.

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

#### School Construction in Edmonton

**Mr. Xiao:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 2008 this government announced plans that it would build six new schools in the Edmonton region and that two of them would be built in my constituency of Edmonton-McClung. One is a K to 9 Catholic school, Sister Annata. I'm happy to report that this school is under construction and will be open for business this fall. Another one is the K to 9 public school in the Grange area. My question is for the hon. Minister of Infrastructure. Can the minister assure my constituents that this Grange school is still on track?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Danyluk:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In fact, the

18 schools being built under the Alberta schools alternative procurement program are on track. They are being built two years ahead of schedule. We will turn over those schools by June 30. One of the schools that was started two years ago in the hon. member's constituency is one of those schools. In September these schools will serve over 12,000 students.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Xiao:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 2008 the minister announced they would build 18 schools through the ASAP initiative, which is the Alberta schools alternative procurement program. I would like to ask the minister: is this process quicker than a traditional process, and has this lived up to this claim?

**Mr. Danyluk:** Well, Mr. Speaker, as I said, yes, it is. In fact, it's two years ahead of schedule. Students in the ASAP 1 will be in their classrooms September 30. We're expecting the same with ASAP 2, and he has one of these schools. Yes, it is faster; yes, ASAP 1 saved \$97 million. Stay tuned for the announcement of the next go-round.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Xiao:** Yes. My final question is to the same minister. Can you tell me the specific date when the Grange school is going to be built?

**Mr. Danyluk:** Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all, I need to say that we go through a very stringent evaluation of the school projects. That announcement is going to happen I believe tomorrow. I'm hoping that with the speed of the first go-round – it took two years shorter – the same thing will happen with this one. It is a good program. It is a good directive to keep our students very much educated.

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

#### Use of Rocky View County Brand

**Ms Blakeman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Freedom of speech doesn't seem to be a priority for this government. They took down only the antinuclear signs in Peace River, and now they are failing to protect the residents of Rocky View county's right to free speech. In January of this year cease-and-desist orders were issued by the town council to individuals running a website which was critical of the council's policies. To the Minister of Municipal Affairs: does the minister agree with the Canadian Civil Liberties Association's criticism that the council infringed on the residents' right to free speech?

**Mr. Goudreau:** Mr. Speaker, I'm not familiar with those particular details. If the member opposite would want to give me more information on that, I would do the research and get back to her.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Ms Blakeman:** Well, thank you. Perhaps the minister at the same time could tell me why nothing was done by the ministry to protect the rights and the freedoms of those same citizens of Rocky View.

2:10

**Mr. Goudreau:** As I indicated, Mr. Speaker, I've got no details as to what may or may not have happened and the reasons why they might not have released some of that information. I'm going to wait for the member to send me that information.



**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Ms Blakeman:** Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, given that freedom of speech is only the most recent problem that the residents of Rocky View county have had with their council, could I also get the minister to agree to meet with these constituents to address their concerns?

**Mr. Goudreau:** Mr. Speaker, my role is to work with the individual municipalities. I think there might be other ministers in this room that might be more appropriate to respond to the issues that those particular individuals have. At this stage those are just allegations. Unless I get more information, I can't say yes or no that I would meet with them.

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

#### Medical Residency Positions

**Mr. Bhardwaj:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have heard from my constituents that medical students are being denied access to residency spots at Alberta's teaching hospitals. Given our shortage of doctors I sincerely hope that this is not the case. My questions are to the Minister of Health and Wellness. How many medical graduates and/or foreign-trained doctors are being denied residency training spots?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, no Alberta medical graduates are denied any training spots because there's a spot for every one of them. Funding for postgraduate medical residency training has in fact increased rather dramatically over the last five years, and that includes a spot for every Alberta medical graduate. Alberta, in fact, will train about 1,300 medical residents this year. That's up very significantly from 886 residents in 2004, and that's about a 47 per cent increase. That's more residency physicians than we've ever had in this province.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Bhardwaj:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My next question is to the same minister. What is the selection process or policy for Alberta's medical residency program at teaching hospitals?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, our Alberta international medical graduate program offers medical residency training positions to successful international medical graduate candidates who are residents of this province. The program begins with the screening of the applications and the applicants, and then a more detailed assessment is done regarding the applicants' knowledge, clinical skills, and abilities. Finally, those international medical graduate students who satisfactorily complete the four-month assessment period are then offered a full-time paid residency position.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Bhardwaj:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My final question to the same minister: when an approved medical residency applicant drops out in the middle of their program, what happens to that spot? Does it remain vacant, or is it filled by another student?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, there's some built-in flexibility with

respect to that circumstance, should it occur. There are also occasional dropouts precipitated for a variety of reasons, and that requires not only some flexibility but a less formal approach to seeing whether or not it's possible to put someone else into that program midway through an existing one. That is an important issue that is being looked at right now.

#### Charitable Gaming Model Review

**Mr. Hehr:** Mr. Speaker, last fall this government dispatched three MLAs from the backbenches to canvass charitable organizations about possible changes to Alberta's charitable gaming model, and they were supposed to deliver their final report by March 31. Obviously, this deadline has come and gone. My question is for the Solicitor General. When will this report be tabled in the Assembly? After today we adjourn for five months.

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

**Mr. Oberle:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to report that the committee, in fact, met its deadline, and I'm in receipt of a report, which I'm reviewing right now. The AGLC is reviewing it as well. I have an internal process to follow, and upon completion of that process if it's determined that the report will be released, I'll do so.

**Mr. Hehr:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the Solicitor General keeps setting and missing these deadlines, so let me just ask: why was this deadline missed?

**Mr. Oberle:** Mr. Speaker, I have done no such thing. The member himself just said that the committee is required to table a report, and they did so on the deadline. I haven't missed any deadlines.

**Mr. Hehr:** Well, this Assembly just debated legislation that would see revenues dedicated to jurisdictions they originate from. Why were you considering redistributing gaming revenues raised in one jurisdiction to some other community?

**Mr. Oberle:** Mr. Speaker, all good stuff for debate, but we'll wait until the report comes out and determine how to proceed.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Whitecourt-St. Anne, followed by the hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.

#### School Transportation Funding

**Mr. VanderBurg:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Within Whitecourt-St. Anne Northern Gateway school division spans nearly 375 kilometres from end to end, further than the distance between Edmonton and Calgary. Each day 4,000 students in this division are transported over 12,000 kilometres. My questions are all to the Minister of Education. Pembina Hills school division receives \$64 per weighted passenger more than Northern Gateway. They have fewer square kilometres, fewer weighted passengers, fewer routes, and a more compact school jurisdiction than does Northern Gateway. Mr. Minister: why the big difference?

**Mr. Hancock:** Well, Mr. Speaker, rural transportation funding is actually quite complex, I've discovered. School jurisdictions receive part of their transportation funding based on a density grid as well as distance funding and special transportation funding. At the heart of it is the density rate and Northern Gateway's placement on the transportation density grid. The density rate is multiplied by the

jurisdiction's total number of eligible weighted passengers and eligible transported ECS students to determine their funding. Based on the fact that Pembina Hills has fewer weighted eligible passengers, they occupy a different spot on the grid, a higher rate, even though their division covers nearly the same area as Northern Gateway.

**Mr. VanderBurg:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll make it even easier yet. Within my own riding Grande Yellowhead received \$73 more than Northern Gateway per weighted passenger but has 700 fewer square kilometres, 1,500 fewer eligible passengers, 37 fewer routes. Why the big difference?

**Mr. Hancock:** Mr. Speaker, I'm given to understand that while Northern Gateway covers a greater area than Grande Yellowhead, for example, they do serve a greater number of eligible passengers and therefore are considered denser based on the density calculation, hence the difference in the result.

**Mr. VanderBurg:** Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on about the injustices on this issue. Will the minister just meet with my staff and board members of Northern Gateway and get this issue resolved once and for all?

**Mr. Hancock:** Mr. Speaker, we have been working with the division to review its transportation service area to ensure that it accurately reflects their jurisdiction profile. I'll be more than happy, once we have that review, to sit down and work with them to ensure that they're appropriately placed and have equitable funding based on the grid.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, the next member to be recognized is the hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo. This doesn't follow the exact rotation that was outlined, but it's the result of an agreement between the member who had placement 4 and the member who had placement 12 today in the question period.

#### Health Services Executive Bonuses

*(continued)*

**Mr. Boutilier:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Albertans have shown their displeasure with the former minister of health's handling of health care. The new minister was like Superman, coming in, meeting with editorial boards in Calgary and Edmonton, picking up his cellphone and calling, saying: what's going on with the Tom Baker centre? That got to be a priority. It was quite impressive. I have to ask the minister: will he pick up his cellphone today, call Stephen Duckett in the same leadership approach and, in fact, go and tell him to stop the bonuses that have been mentioned by the Member for Edmonton-Riverview?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, the people who are involved in managing the delivery of health services in this province work extremely hard at their jobs to ensure that the best level of care is provided, that the best level of service is provided. When you're managing about a \$10 billion budget and you're looking after, one way or another, 85,000-plus employees, when you're looking after responsibilities for over 400 health facilities, you have to attract the best people. It is common practice in both the public and private sectors to pay some form of bonuses in that respect.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Boutilier:** Thank you. Given that the minister obviously didn't hear my first question, let me repeat it. Under the leadership style he used with the Edmonton and Calgary editorial boards, picking up his cellphone, calling to make changes, getting hands on, which we applaud and Albertans applaud, will the minister pick up his cellphone and call Stephen Duckett and cancel the superboard's bonuses for, in fact, 48 vice-presidents, that will cost Albertans millions of dollars?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, I think most of what the hon. member is asking about goes back more than about a year or perhaps even two in some cases. What we're doing is taking a look at all of those contracts, and I shouldn't say "we" because I'm not doing it; Alberta Health Services is. Nonetheless, those contracts are being looked at right now. There are obligations under contract, and some of them called for bonuses. What I can tell you is that going forward, all of these issues have been flagged for review, and that includes bonuses, that includes severances, and that includes pensions.

2:20

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Boutilier:** Thank you. Given the comment by the minister, I hope his cellphone battery isn't dead. I have an extra cellphone battery here today.

I would ask him to join me along with the Alberta legislative press gallery and take the same approach with them, where you cancel the bonuses, roll up your sleeves, similar to the approach that you used with the Calgary editorial board, where you said: let me . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, it's a tempting offer, but as all members know, cellphones aren't allowed in the Assembly, so I could hardly do that. But I understand the anxiety, and I hope I've explained sensibly and rationally that there are processes in motion.

Thank you.

#### Research and Innovation Funding

**Dr. Taft:** Mr. Speaker, this government dissolved one of Alberta's most successful organizations, the Heritage Foundation for Medical Research. AHFMR is being replaced by something called Alberta Innovates. Last Friday the chairman of Alberta Innovates: Health Solutions sent out a memo openly admitting, "We do not know the exact nature of Alberta Innovates . . . new funding programs." To the minister of advanced education: why did this government shut down AHFMR when it didn't have a detailed plan for what would take its place?

**Mr. Horner:** Well, actually, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member would peruse the rest of the letter, I think what he would find is that in this current year the competition that the fund did was actually \$4 million more into health research than what happened last year. In fact, next year that amount and potentially even more, dependent upon the endowment, will also go out into the research programs of health research in the province of Alberta, more attuned to what the Premier of this province at the time, Premier Lougheed, wanted the Alberta heritage fund for medical research to do.

**Dr. Taft:** Well, Mr. Speaker, it's a mess.

Given that Alberta's medical researchers have been told that the

September application process for funds is being cancelled and the new funding structure won't be in place until the fall, what are medical researchers who depend on applying for funding this September supposed to do? What's your guidance to them?

**Mr. Horner:** Well, actually, Mr. Speaker, I believe – and I was looking for the confirmation – that the competition that closed today was for moving forward in the fall. What is at issue here are a number of salaried employees of the universities, if you will, not just in Edmonton but also in Calgary, that are potentially not going to win the award. Whether or not they would win an award the next year and whether or not they would win an award under the program that the new Alberta Health Solutions board is going to design is the question.

The statement that the Alberta heritage fund for medical research is no longer there is a false one because it is. The statement that we're going to continue to do what it used to do is a true statement.

**Dr. Taft:** Well, again to the same minister: given that this minister has been in charge of this reorganization for longer than a year, actually, why is it that according to the chairman of Alberta Innovates in this memo Alberta Innovates is only now embarking on a strategic planning process? How could we be so far behind?

**Mr. Horner:** Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is forgetting a little bit of 18-month history here, and that is that we brought not only the Alberta heritage fund for medical research board but the University of Alberta's representatives from the health and medical fields, we brought researchers from across the province, we brought researchers in the innovation community from across Alberta together 18 months ago, and this is the culmination of their recommendations. Alberta Innovates was not written by this ministry or this minister. It was written by all of the stakeholders within that research continuum.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti, followed by the hon. Member for Lethbridge-East.

#### Volunteer Contributions to Safe Communities

**Mr. Drysdale:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's been a lot of discussion recently about screening and background checks to help ensure that vulnerable people are safe and that predators are kept away from volunteering with children. My question is to the Minister of Culture and Community Spirit. What programs are in place to help nonprofit and voluntary organizations address this issue?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Blakett:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately, this is a problem that's been ongoing for some time. Not-for-profit and voluntary organizations as well as individual volunteers spend significant money obtaining police information checks every year. This important step in the volunteer screening process often results in the funding being diverted from core services and can act as a barrier to recruiting new volunteers. The volunteer police information check program covers the costs of police information checks for volunteers engaged directly with those vulnerable populations such as children, seniors, and the disabled. This \$2.4 million, three-year program is jointly . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Drysdale:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My next question is to the same minister. What role do volunteers and nonprofit organizations play in helping to create safe communities in Alberta?

**Mr. Blakett:** Well, Mr. Speaker, volunteers play an integral part in Alberta. It's part of our rich history. For over a hundred years volunteers have always helped one another build stronger, safer communities and helped one another always take care of the less fortunate. Volunteers help coach sports teams. They help serve meals to seniors. They help take care of the disadvantaged. [interjections] If the hon. member would have some respect during National Volunteer Week. We have thousands upon thousands of volunteers in our province, who do a great job to make Alberta the great province that it is.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member?

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

#### Water Allocation

**Ms Pastoor:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta's water allocation system is out of date. It was designed to provide for the irrigation districts first but also has to balance the water needs of our growing population and industry. Instead of dealing with the problem up front, the government is allowing irrigation districts to reallocate their water for commercial use. To the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development: how does this move towards commoditization of water do anything but jeopardize the province's ability to protect water for agricultural use?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Hayden:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. While the licensing is handled under the Minister of Environment, I am pleased to report that with the new methods that are used now and the new approach that is used with irrigation, we're able to cover far more acres with less water than we did in the past, which is going to open up opportunities, I think, in the future for other uses by Albertans.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Ms Pastoor:** Thank you. Has this minister considered what other countries' approaches are to water conservation, particularly, and to irrigation, and might they work here?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Hayden:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, in fact, we have. Our agriculture industry is using the most modern technologies. The changeover is actually quite advanced, whereby we're able to irrigate crops with far less evaporation and far more of the water actually going to the growth of those crops.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Ms Pastoor:** Thank you. Given that this shift could take away farmers' rights to hold a plebiscite on water allocation, how can the minister be certain that farmers are really willing to permanently give up their water rights?

**Mr. Hayden:** Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that farmers are wanting to give up any water rights with respect to the requirements that they have for their agricultural operations. It wouldn't make sense.

There's no common sense in an approach that would reserve water rights beyond those that are required to grow the crops that these agricultural producers grow.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Lacombe-Ponoka, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

### Pension Reform

**Mr. Prins:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. As in all of Alberta, a fair number of my constituents are either retired or are approaching retirement age. Recently there has been a considerable amount of media attention around remarks made by the Minister of Finance and Enterprise that seemed to indicate that Alberta is no longer interested in pension reform. My question is to the Minister of Finance and Enterprise. Has Alberta changed its position on pension reform?

**Dr. Morton:** Mr. Speaker, the simple answer is no. The Alberta government has not changed our position. What we are saying – and it is what most pension experts are saying – is that the system is not broken. The question is: how can it be improved? It's working well for most Canadians. There does appear to be a problem for those Canadians in the middle-income bracket, so the question is how to tailor a solution that matches the problem. What we don't want to do is adopt a solution that punishes young Albertans. We don't want to do that. We will not do it.

2:30

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Prins:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. My next question is to the same minister. Reports indicate that Alberta is going to let the next decade pass before it looks at this issue. Is that true? Will the Alberta government not look at this issue for 10 years?

**Dr. Morton:** Mr. Speaker, we all know not to believe everything we read in the newspaper. There was a little misreporting on that. There is a spectrum of possible solutions to the retirement income issue, ranging from voluntary private-sector solutions to more coercive government solutions. I was down there with a group of pension experts, and I asked: would it make sense to try the voluntary private-sector solutions first before moving to the more coercive and more expensive public sector? And I said: if so, would 10 years be an appropriate time length to try those private-sector solutions first? I'm looking forward to their answer.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Prins:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. My last question is to the same minister. It isn't exactly clear what the government is going to do. What is the Alberta government going to do about pension reform next and when?

**Dr. Morton:** Mr. Speaker, our department staff is working with their counterparts in other provinces. We've also just finished a public consultation with Albertans and received some very worthwhile information and advice there. I will be going to a federal-provincial-territorial ministers' conference in June to meet with my counterparts to bring this information together. We, in turn, will issue a report that will go to all of the Premiers that meet at the Council of the Federation in August.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary-Fort.

### Noise Abatement

**Ms Blakeman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A few weeks ago I raised the issue of loud vehicle noise in the cities and the efforts of the Edmonton Police Service, the industry, and Alberta Transportation to establish testing procedures and recommendations for new legislation which would establish a provincial standard for noise emissions. We need to give officers objective noise emission levels and approved equipment. So far no legislation. To the Minister of Transportation: why is the desire of government to hit the summer barbecue circuit early more important than the eardrums and a quality night's sleep for many urban Albertans?

**Mr. Ouellette:** Mr. Speaker, I absolutely don't know where this hon. member ever got the idea that we were bringing legislation forward on vehicle noise. The province has never ever indicated we'd do that, and no other jurisdiction in Canada is doing that. Yes, we've done preliminary research tests. We've been doing static tests on noise of motorcycles. Contrary to what she believes, there's no real way to prove the tests while they're moving.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Ms Blakeman:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister: since the minister's ADM is well aware of this issue, if the minister hasn't asked for a briefing, will he ask for a briefing, which would explain to him the need to establish a workable noise limit and approved noise-testing equipment and to understand that this was developed using automotive engineering test procedures?

**Mr. Ouellette:** Mr. Speaker, I'm very aware of what she's talking about. That's why I'm telling her the real truth of the matter. The fact of the matter is that municipalities can give out and are giving out violations right now on noise with motorcycles. It's being done today.

**Ms Blakeman:** Given that the police service is having trouble getting this through the courts because it is not verifiable, it's not an objective way of dealing with this. Will the minister, since he wouldn't bring it forward this time, guarantee us that this House will see that legislation next fall?

**Mr. Ouellette:** Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker. I told her we have no intention of bringing it forward because it's not testable.

I want to reiterate that the Edmonton Police Service issued 383 tickets between May and October of last year.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Fort, followed by the hon. Member for Battle River-Wainwright.

### East Calgary Health Centre

**Mr. Cao:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The completion and operation of the east Calgary health centre is urgently required to meet the growing need for health and wellness services for our constituents in Calgary-Fort, Calgary-East, and Calgary-Montrose constituencies. My question is to the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness. When will the centre be put into operation to serve our waiting constituents?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Zwodzesky:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Basically, the project referred to is nearing completion as we speak, and I'm expecting that

centre to open very, very soon. That's very important because once it's opened, it will consolidate a number of services for people in that location and bring those services all together into one specific area.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Cao:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since its first schedule many people are anxious, waiting for the centre's completion. Why have there been so many delays?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, that particular health facility was readied, and then it was shelled in and was awaiting completion, which is now imminent. At the same time, they were still awaiting some details with respect to operational funding. As that was being done, some of the planning was also being finalized. The centre will consolidate a lot of services that were formerly provided at other facilities. It will bring them all under one roof. The really good news is that there are no more delays, hon. member, and the majority of those programs will be up and fully functioning later this summer and into the fall.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member?

The hon. Member for Battle River-Wainwright.

#### School Board Advertising to Attract Students

**Mr. Griffiths:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was driving into the city the other day, and I saw a Strathcona county school bus with a big sign on the back advertising Elk Island school division. I've seen other school divisions advertising on billboards and TV. To the Minister of Education: given the need for accountability why in these tight fiscal times are school boards spending precious education dollars on advertising rather than on students and programs?

**Mr. Hancock:** Well, it's a good question, Mr. Speaker. Locally elected school boards do have autonomy over their funds and get to direct them. They are restricted to 4 to 6 per cent on administrative funding, which is where advertising would come from. Spending on advertising comes out of that process, but it's within their budgetary discretion. It's a good question, though. All last fall we talked with school boards about whether the funds that we're using in the education system are helping us to achieve our outcomes and looking to say: can we cut back in areas where we're not achieving our outcomes? That being said, the school boards do get funded on a per capita basis, so they try to attract more students.

**Mr. Griffiths:** They try to attract more students. To the same minister, then: given that they're trying to attract students through advertising, have any of them done a business case in their business plans to show that spending money on advertising attracts enough students to offset the cost of the advertising and improves the students' education?

**Mr. Hancock:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't be privy to that information. That's within the purview of the school board. We try not to collect more information from school boards and put them through more reporting processes than they absolutely have to do, so I don't have that kind of information. However, we do have a system of choice. Again, school boards do compete for students, unfortunately – that's part of the system – so they do engage their advertising dollars, but they have to be accountable to their electorate for the way they spend their dollars.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Griffiths:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister: given that social media, the Internet, word of mouth, and great programs for students are the best ways to advertise and are free or improve education, will the minister begin discussions with the school boards to talk about curbing this policy so all dollars go to actually educating students?

**Mr. Hancock:** Mr. Speaker, that's precisely the kind of discussion we engaged in last year and we're going to continue to have. The resources that we have are substantial, but they're never going to be enough to do everything that people want to do, so we have to focus on making sure that as we use the public's resources, we're achieving the outcomes in the system that we want to achieve. We need every school board, we need everybody involved in the system, we need every teacher in the school to look at every dollar that's being deployed to determine whether we're getting the best value for the money. So that discussion will continue, the value review that says: are we achieving outcomes with the investment we're making, and is what we're doing adding value? Every school board should be doing that, the provincial government should be doing that, and every school should be doing that.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for St. Albert.

#### 911 Emergency System

**Mr. Allred:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta's 911 system is an important part of keeping Albertans safe during times of emergency. Whether a call is made to an ambulance for a medical emergency, to police to report a crime, or to a fire department to report a fire, citizens need to know that the system is reliable. To the Minister of Municipal Affairs: what portion of the 911 fees that we pay on our local phone bill goes towards the operators of the system?

**Mr. Goudreau:** Mr. Speaker, a reliable 911 system is an important part of keeping Albertans safe. The CRTC approves the fees, and under the current structure Telus charges 44 cents per line for each land line phone on a monthly basis. But more people are using cellphones now, and those 911 fees collected by the wireless providers are kept presently by the companies.

2:40

**Mr. Allred:** My next question to the same minister: since the issue falls within both municipal and federal jurisdictions, is your ministry doing anything to help municipalities ensure that these are used for 911 services?

**Mr. Goudreau:** Mr. Speaker, municipalities provide 911 services to their residents or through contracts on a regional basis. We are presently talking with our government colleagues to discuss the needs of Albertans and the 911 services, and we're also working with the municipalities and Telus to improve that system as well as reviewing how other provinces are handling these charges.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Allred:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My final question, again to the same minister: since the provincial government has a role to play in ensuring that Alberta has the most reliable 911 system possible, is there anything the minister can do to make sure that all operators are adequately and fairly funded?

**Mr. Goudreau:** Mr. Speaker, even though we aren't the regulator, we're always looking at ways to co-ordinate resources so the 911 system is efficient and properly funded. We recognize that wireless services are not available everywhere, and we want to make sure that Albertans have access to wireless 911 across the province.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, that concludes the question period for today. Today 20 hon. members were recognized. That was 116 questions and responses. Of the 20 members recognized, eight came from the Liberal Official Opposition, four from the independents, and eight from the Progressive Conservative governing caucus.

We will continue the Routine and conclude it rather quickly. We were at Tabling Returns and Reports.

### Tabling Returns and Reports

*(continued)*

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

**Ms Woo-Paw:** Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table the appropriate number of copies of a publication entitled *Stretched to the Limit: Economic Impact Survey, Alberta's Nonprofits & Charities*.

Thank you.

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

**Mr. MacDonald:** Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate this opportunity to table on behalf of an individual, Grace Irons, from Sherwood Park, Alberta, who contacted our office on behalf of her father, who is a constituent. She has issues around cataract eye surgery being taken away from the Gimbel Eye Centre and moved to the Royal Alex. She has given me permission to table this correspondence, and I appreciate the opportunity to do so.

### Tablings to the Clerk

**The Clerk:** I wish to advise the House that the following documents were deposited with the office of the Clerk. On behalf of the hon. Mr. Renner, Minister of Environment, response to a question raised by Ms Blakeman, hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre, during Oral Question Period on April 20, 2010, requesting a copy of the document entitled *Water License Change of Purpose: Administrative Licencing Criteria*.

On behalf of the hon. Mr. Oberle, Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security, responses to written questions 32, 33, 34, and 35, asked for by Mr. Hehr on March 15, 2010, and return to orders of the Assembly MR 10 and MR 11, asked for by Mr. Hehr on March 15, 2010.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, I can call Orders of the Day or give you some statistical information with respect to this spring. I'll give the information. I'm sure you'll all enjoy it. Some of these numbers

are to the end of last evening's sitting on April 20, and some of them are to now.

The number of sitting days this spring was 30 as compared to 48 last year. The number of minutes in the Assembly to this time last night was 6,973 compared to 12,934 in the 2009 sitting. The number of hours was 116 hours and 13 minutes, not counting today, compared to 215 hours and 34 minutes for the 2009 spring sitting, and the number of words spoken was 990,361 compared to 1,704,611.

Interestingly enough, though, in terms of the number of words spoken in standing committee meetings this spring, despite the difference of the 30 to the 48 days, including this morning's Public Accounts Committee, in committee 677,650 words were spoken compared to 878,459 in 2009 committees. That's rather large in proportion to the number of meetings.

The number of hours of committee meetings for this spring, also including this morning's Public Accounts Committee: 84 compared to 107 last year.

With respect to Oral Question Period, 18 sets of questions and answers or more for the current session, 11 times we had 18 sets of questions and answers, 14 times we had 19 sets of questions and answers, and on five occasions, including today, we had 20 sets of questions and answers. Compare that to the 2009 spring sitting. In 2009 we had 11 occasions with 18 sets and one occasion with 19 sets.

The total number of questions and answers for this spring was 3,359. That's an average of about 108.2 per day, keeping in mind that day 1 did not have an Oral Question Period. The total number of questions and answers for the spring of 2009 was 4,663. That was an average of 99.21 questions and answers per day, so that's almost a 10 per cent increase in questions and answers in 2010 as compared to 2009.

The number of government bills that will receive or have received royal assent is 15 compared to 46 a year ago. The number of government bills left on the Order Paper is one compared to five a year ago. Private members' public bills that will receive royal assent: two compared to one a year ago. And I do believe that this is the first time in the history of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta that an opposition member's private bill received third reading.

Private members' public bills that have received or will receive royal assent since 1993, when the standing orders affecting this item of business were amended: 48.

The hon. Government House Leader.

**Mr. Hancock:** After that exhausting list, Mr. Speaker, I would have to advise you that the business of the session has been completed. Therefore, pursuant to Government Motion 14, which was agreed to on April 13, 2010, I would ask that the House now stand adjourned.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 2:46 p.m. pursuant to Government Motion 14]

## **Bill Status Report for the 27th Legislature - 3rd Session (2010)**

**Activity to April 21, 2010**

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 Alberta Competitiveness Act (Stelmach)**

First Reading -- 4 (Feb. 4 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 123-24 (Feb. 16 aft.), 135-37 (Feb. 16 aft.), 137-42 (Feb. 16 aft.), 257-67 (Feb. 23 aft.), 286-98 (Feb. 24 aft.), 317-20 (Feb. 25 aft.), 403-09 (Mar. 10 aft.), 414-15 (Mar. 10 aft.), 434-40 (Mar. 11 aft.), 487-89 (Mar. 16 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 519-27 (Mar. 17 aft.), 556-61 (Mar. 18 aft., passed)

Third Reading -- 660-61 (Mar. 24 aft., passed)

Royal Assent -- (Mar. 25 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2010 cA-14.9]

### **2\* Professional Statutes Amendment Act, 2010 (Woo-Paw)**

First Reading -- 64 (Feb. 10 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 124-25 (Feb. 16 aft.), 430-34 (Mar. 11 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 489-92 (Mar. 16 aft., passed with amendments)

Third Reading -- 678 (Mar. 25 aft., passed)

Royal Assent -- (Mar. 25 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force March 25, 2010; SA 2010 c7]

### **3 Fatal Accidents Amendment Act, 2010 (Weadick)**

First Reading -- 64 (Feb. 10 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 125 (Feb. 16 aft.), 137 (Feb. 16 aft.), 317 (Feb. 25 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 413-14 (Mar. 10 aft., passed)

Third Reading -- 492 (Mar. 16 aft., passed)

Royal Assent -- (Mar. 25 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force March 25, 2010; SA 2010 c6]

### **4 Dangerous Goods Transportation and Handling Amendment Act, 2010 (Olson)**

First Reading -- 188-89 (Feb. 18 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 280 (Feb. 24 aft.), 410-12 (Mar. 10 aft.), 489 (Mar. 16 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 529-32 (Mar. 17 aft., passed)

Third Reading -- 678-79 (Mar. 25 aft., passed)

Royal Assent -- (Mar. 25 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force March 25, 2010; SA 2010 c4]

### **5 Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2010 (\$) (Snelgrove)**

First Reading -- 213 (Feb. 22 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 247-49 (Feb. 23 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 280-86 (Feb. 24 aft., passed)

Third Reading -- 312-17 (Feb. 25 aft., passed)

Royal Assent -- (Mar. 1 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force March 1, 2010; SA 2010 c1]

### **6 Emergency Management Amendment Act, 2010 (Bhullar)**

First Reading -- 213 (Feb. 22 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 280 (Feb. 24 aft.), 412-13 (Mar. 10 aft.), 489 (Mar. 16 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 527-29 (Mar. 17 aft., passed)

Third Reading -- 679-80 (Mar. 25 aft., passed)

Royal Assent -- (Mar. 25 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force March 25, 2010; SA 2010 c5]

- 7\***      **Election Statutes Amendment Act, 2010 (Redford)**  
First Reading -- 311 (Feb. 25 aft., passed)  
Second Reading -- 402-03 (Mar. 10 aft.), 492-503 (Mar. 16 aft., passed)  
Committee of the Whole -- 533-37 (Mar. 17 aft.), 561-62 (Mar. 18 aft.), 769-82 (Apr. 14 aft.), 850-62 (Apr. 20 aft.), 869-76 (Apr. 20 eve., passed with amendments)  
Third Reading -- 878-84 (Apr. 20 eve., passed)
- 8**      **Alberta Corporate Tax Amendment Act, 2010 (Griffiths)**  
First Reading -- 334 (Mar. 8 aft., passed)  
Second Reading -- 429-30 (Mar. 11 aft.), 503 (Mar. 16 aft., passed)  
Committee of the Whole -- 532--33 (Mar. 17 aft., passed)  
Third Reading -- 680-81 (Mar. 25 aft., passed)  
Royal Assent -- (Mar. 25 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force March 25, 2010, with exceptions; SA 2010 c2]
- 9**      **Local Authorities Election Statutes Amendment Act, 2010 (Johnson)**  
First Reading -- 576 (Mar. 22 aft., passed)  
Second Reading -- 615-16 (Mar. 23 aft.), 735-43 (Apr. 13 aft., passed)  
Committee of the Whole -- 798-804 (Apr. 15 aft.), 868 (Apr. 20 eve., passed)  
Third Reading -- 878 (Apr. 20 eve., passed)
- 10**     **Victims Restitution and Compensation Payment Amendment Act, 2010 (S) (Redford)**  
First Reading -- 486 (Mar. 16 aft., passed)  
Second Reading -- 518 (Mar. 17 aft.), 618-20 (Mar. 23 aft., passed)  
Committee of the Whole -- 682-83 (Mar. 25 aft., passed)  
Third Reading -- 876-77 (Apr. 20 eve., passed)
- 11**     **Witness Security Act (Drysdale)**  
First Reading -- 486 (Mar. 16 aft., passed)  
Second Reading -- 518 (Mar. 17 aft.), 620-24 (Mar. 23 aft., passed)  
Committee of the Whole -- 683 (Mar. 25 aft., passed)  
Third Reading -- 877 (Apr. 20 eve., passed)
- 12**     **Body Armour Control Act (Quest)**  
First Reading -- 486-87 (Mar. 16 aft., passed)  
Second Reading -- 518-19 (Mar. 17 aft.), 624-28 (Mar. 23 aft.), 743-49 (Apr. 13 aft., passed)  
Committee of the Whole -- 862-65 (Apr. 20 eve., passed)  
Third Reading -- 885-87 (Apr. 20 aft., passed on division)
- 13**     **Securities Amendment Act, 2010 (Morton)**  
First Reading -- 552 (Mar. 18 aft., passed)  
Second Reading -- 616-17 (Mar. 23 aft.), 681-82 (Mar. 25 aft., passed)  
Committee of the Whole -- 865-67 (Apr. 20 eve., passed)  
Third Reading -- 877 (Apr. 20 eve., passed)
- 14**     **Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2010 (Ouellette)**  
First Reading -- 552 (Mar. 18 aft., passed)  
Second Reading -- 617-18 (Mar. 23 aft.), 682 (Mar. 25 aft., passed)  
Committee of the Whole -- 867 (Apr. 20 eve., passed)  
Third Reading -- 877-78 (Apr. 20 aft., passed)
- 15**     **Appropriation Act, 2010 (S) (Snelgrove)**  
First Reading -- 576 (Mar. 22 aft., passed)  
Second Reading -- 608-15 (Mar. 23 aft.), 627-28 (Mar. 23 aft., passed)  
Committee of the Whole -- 643-60 (Mar. 24 aft., passed on division)  
Third Reading -- 675-78 (Mar. 25 aft.), 684 (Mar. 25 aft., passed)  
Royal Assent -- (Mar. 25 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force March 25, 2010; SA 2010 c3]
- 16**     **Traffic Safety (Distracted Driving) Amendment Act, 2010 (Johnston)**  
First Reading -- 763 (Apr. 14 aft., passed)



- 201 Workers' Compensation (Firefighters) Amendment Act, 2010 (Rogers)**  
First Reading -- 154 (Feb. 17 aft., passed)  
Second Reading -- 213-27 (Feb. 22 aft., passed)  
Committee of the Whole -- 577-85 (Mar. 22 aft., passed)  
Third Reading -- 709 (Apr. 12 aft., passed)
- 202\* Mandatory Reporting of Child Pornography Act (Forsyth)**  
First Reading -- 154 (Feb. 17 aft., passed)  
Second Reading -- 336-48 (Mar. 8 aft., passed)  
Committee of the Whole -- 586-89 (Mar. 22 aft.), 698-704 (Apr. 12 aft.), 705-09 (Apr. 12 aft., passed with amendments)  
Third Reading -- 819-25 (Apr. 19 aft., passed)
- 203 Municipal Government (Local Access and Franchise Fees) Amendment Act, 2010 (Fawcett)**  
First Reading -- 311-12 (Feb. 25 aft., passed)  
Second Reading -- 709-10 (Apr. 12 aft.), 825-32 (Apr. 19 aft.), 836-37 (Apr. 19 aft., referred to Standing Committee on Community Services)
- 204 Fiscal Responsibility (Spending Limit) Amendment Act, 2010 (Anderson)**  
First Reading -- 271 (Feb. 24 aft., passed)
- Pr1 Community Foundation of Lethbridge and Southwestern Alberta Act (Weadick)**  
First Reading -- 366 (Mar. 9 aft., passed)  
Second Reading -- 732-33 (Apr. 13 aft., passed)  
Committee of the Whole -- 749 (Apr. 13 aft., passed)  
Third Reading -- 804 (Apr. 15 aft., passed)
- Pr2\* Canada Olympic Park Property Tax Exemption Amendment Act, 2010 (DeLong)**  
First Reading -- 366 (Mar. 9 aft., passed)  
Second Reading -- 733-35 (Apr. 13 aft., passed)  
Committee of the Whole -- 749-50 (Apr. 13 aft.), 768 (Apr. 14 aft., passed with amendments)  
Third Reading -- 804 (Apr. 15 aft., passed)
- Pr3\* Lamont Health Care Centre Act (Horne)**  
First Reading -- 366 (Mar. 9 aft., passed)  
Second Reading -- 735 (Apr. 13 aft., passed)  
Committee of the Whole -- 768-69 (Apr. 14 aft., passed with amendments)  
Third Reading -- 804 (Apr. 15 aft., passed)

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