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The 27th Legislature
Fourth Session

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The Honourable Kenneth R. Kowalski, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta
The 27th Legislature
 Fourth Session

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 Cao, Wayne C.N., Calgary-Fort, Deputy Speaker and Chair of Committees
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Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 28, 2011

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

Prayers

The Deputy Speaker: We have a prayer to say today. On this day let each of us pray in our own way for all who have been killed or injured at the workplace. Life is precious. When it is lost, all of us are impacted. In a moment of silent contemplation may we now allow our thoughts to remember those taken before their time, those who have suffered through tragedies and reach out to the families, friends, neighbours, and communities most immediately impacted. May God provide them eternal peace. Amen.

Please be seated.

Introduction of Guests

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Mr. Denis: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a very high honour for me today to have the privilege of introducing to you and through you to all members of the Assembly two members of my immediate family who are sitting in your gallery. First off, my uncle, Jerome Hauk, resides in St. Albert and is a father of three, grandfather of three. He is a retired physics teacher from St. Joseph school in Edmonton. Interestingly enough, I think he might have done a pretty good job with one of his students as one of his students from years ago is, in fact, the Minister of Employment and Immigration. In addition, my second introduction is a woman who lives in Calgary-West. Her name is Marguerite Denis, and she is a mother of one, namely me. She is a retired educator and now operates a property management company in Calgary. I can say that no one has put more volunteer hours over the last few years into my particular association and campaign than my mother. Thank you very much. Would you please join me in giving them a warm welcome.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Aboriginal Relations.

Mr. Webber: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly 54 students, teachers, and parent helpers from Sherwood Park, actually. I'm introducing on behalf of the Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations. Again, 54 students, teachers, and parents from Westboro elementary school are here today to tour the Legislature. We've got teachers Ms Theresa Cartmell, Mr. Bill Stetzenko – I apologize for that pronunciation, Bill – Mrs. Erin Tompkins, Mrs. Kari Dahus, Ms Wendy Thomson and parent helpers Mr. Brent Schmidt, Mrs. Sandra McFadden, Mr. Chris Stirling and the students. I ask that they rise and please receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

Mrs. McQueen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today it's a pleasure to rise and introduce to you and through you two outstanding Albertans. Today we have a very good friend of mine, Mr. Tom McGee, a former member of Drayton Valley and currently with the ERCB. Also, joining Tom McGee today is Mr. Brady Whittaker, a real friend of the forest industry, a friend of this Legislature, and ex-

ecutive director of the Alberta Forest Products Association. It's wonderful this afternoon to have a chance to catch up with both of them, and I would ask these two fine gentlemen if they would rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Mr. Denis: I just have another introduction under guests, Mr. Speaker. Over the last few years I've of course seen many introductions of military personnel here. Well, I want to introduce some people from another type of army, and that is the Salvation Army. It would be difficult to list everything that the Salvation Army has done for this province. Instead, I simply want to say thank you to each one of them for their very terrific work and service for vulnerable Albertans. I would also ask the Assembly to join me particularly in welcoming Major Fred Waters, Major Wendy Waters, Vice-chair Bruce Bowie, board member Antoinette Alleyne, and Karen Diaper.

Interestingly enough, Mr. Speaker, I was informed by the Sergeant-at-Arms the other day that he is, in fact, a member of the Salvation Army board. These people have done excellent work. In particular, I want to say thank you to both Majors Waters, who, unfortunately, will be leaving Alberta soon, going to Toronto on their next assignment. Thank you very much for the hard work that you do. Please rise so we can give you a warm welcome.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very happy today to introduce to you and through you to Members of the Legislative Assembly three people from the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta who have contributed to the creation of the proposed Education Act, who have given trustees all across the province an opportunity to give their ideas and discuss the principles and values as well as the details of the act. They're here to watch the introduction for second reading of Bill 18, the Education Act. I'd ask them to stand and receive the traditional warm welcome of the House. Patty Dittrick, MaryLynne Campbell, and Maurice Fritze: welcome today, and please continue to do the good work that you do for us.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Goudreau: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've got two introductions to do today. It's certainly my pleasure to introduce two people that are very, very important in my life. Raymond Fortin is my nephew and godson, and he is accompanied by his fiancée, Kathryn Wasele-nak. They're both from here in Edmonton and both students at the University of Alberta. Raymond has just finished his fourth year in honours physics, and Kathryn is finishing her fourth year in business finance. They're anxious for the weather to warm up so they can take out their golf clubs. They're very, very anxious about golfing, and both are very avid golfers. I'd like both of them to stand and receive the warm tradition of the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, my second introduction is Ryan Gauthier and Rhonda Clarke-Gauthier. Both are from my constituency. Ryan is very much involved in 4-H and has been here many times with the TUXIS Parliament. Ryan is just graduating as well, from grade 12. He's accompanied by Rhonda Clark-Gauthier, also very much involved in 4-H and our SARDA board, which is an agricultural producer board. She's involved with other groups, including the church, and is a very important member of the executive on my PC association.

All four of them are accompanied my wife, Angeline. I'd like those three to stand up and receive the warm traditional welcome.

The Deputy Chair: The hon. Minister of Children and Youth Services.

Mrs. Fritz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly 14 outstanding youth leaders who are representatives of the Métis Settlements Youth Network Society. By speaking to your peers about the effects of family violence, bullying, addictions, and other social issues, you've helped many young people face the challenges that they have. I would like to thank you for being here. Each youth has travelled quite a distance in order to be in the Assembly today. I'd especially like to thank you for this beautiful gift of a sash.

We have society president Matt Belhumeur from Buffalo Lake; Delaney Cunningham, western co-chair, from Peavine; Kayla Fayant from Fishing Lake, the eastern co-chair of the society; Dayna Thompson, secretary, from Kikino; and Neil Lamouche from Gift Lake Métis settlement, the treasurer. We also have Waylon Sparklingeyes from Buffalo Lake, Kayla MacDonald from Kikino, Adriaahna Faithful from Fishing Lake, Tori Stewart from Peavine, Tristyn Haggerty and Greg Patenaude from East Prairie, Cody Chalifoux from Paddle Prairie, and Karla Lamouche and Brian Tallman from Gift Lake. As well, we have three mentors for these fine youth: Joy Ohashi, Louise Okemow, and Maurice Trudel. Please join me in giving these wonderful young people the warm welcome of the Assembly.

1:40

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Transportation.

Mr. Ouellette: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to rise to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly some great children from a wonderful school in my constituency. I think a few of those children from that school are from the hon. Member for Red Deer-South and some from the hon. Member for Red Deer-North also. I don't believe they've arrived in the Chamber yet. They are touring the Leg. today. I just had a picture with them downstairs. They're 12 students from Destiny Christian school in Red Deer county visiting us today. I'm sure at some point they'll be in the members' gallery. They have with them their principal, Glenn Mullen, and a parent helper, Miss Roberta Bechtold. As I've said many times, it's very important for these children to visit the Legislature and have some dialogue with us because we know they will be our leaders of the future. I would like them, if they are here, to rise. If not, I'd still like my colleagues to give them a great round of applause.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Strathcona.

Mr. Quest: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly some of my constituents, starting with Mr. Aaron Falkenberg. Aaron is chairman of Mercantile Trust. He's also a businessman who has been involved in poultry farming for most of his life as well as real estate development and many other endeavours. He serves on a number of boards, including the Climate Change and Emissions Management Corporation and Alberta Innovates. He's accompanied today by Todd and grandson Conor Newberry. I met Conor a couple of times. I know he's a real political keener, so he'll really be enjoying the tour and watching

question period this afternoon. They're seated in the members' gallery, and I'd like to ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

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

Mr. Johnston: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly Mary Philipo. Mary should be in the members' gallery. She's accompanied by my wife, Shirley. Mary is a worker with the Kids Cancer Care Foundation of Alberta, and she's been in the Edmonton area for training at the Stollery hospital. As mentioned, she's with my wife of 37 years, Shirley. I'd like you to give them the warm traditional welcome of this Assembly.

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

Mr. Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and introduce to you and through you 50 great students from Gibbons school located just north of Edmonton within my constituency. Gibbons is a community that my great-grandfather came to when he came to Canada and settled in in 1912, about the same year the Legislature was built. I'm very pleased to have them here. It was nice meeting them on the steps. I'd also like to welcome their three teachers: Colleen Lowe, Stephanie Thimer, and Amylia Soetaert. I'd ask these two fine school groups to please stand and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Deputy Speaker: Are there any other introductions? The hon. President of the Treasury Board.

Mr. Snelgrove: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly Mr. Dave Nelson. Dave is one of the very capable trustees of the Buffalo Trail school division, which is the regional division that serves the vast majority of my students, and they do a very good job. Mr. Nelson is currently the vice-chair and is here today to also view the second reading of Bill 18, the Education Act. I think it's important to note that over the past several years the Buffalo Trail school division has had one of the highest percentage rates of students graduating from high school and also one of the highest rates in the province of students transitioning to postsecondary education. I would ask Mr. Nelson to rise and receive the warm traditional welcome of the Assembly.

Ministerial Statements

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

National Day of Mourning

Mr. Lukaszuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today is the National Day of Mourning for workers who were killed on the job. This special day reminds us of how precious life is and how quickly it can be taken away. One hundred and thirty-six people died in our province from job-related injuries or illnesses in 2010. Of course, we're talking about more than just numbers. These are people with hopes and dreams, people with careers and aspirations, people with friends and family, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, friends, and neighbours, who are also profoundly affected by such tragedy.

Of those 136 deaths, 43 were tragedies at a workplace. That's 43 times, Mr. Speaker, that my BlackBerry actually buzzed to

deliver the news. That's 43 descriptions of the final few minutes that led to someone's life being taken away, 43 names and ages, from a 19-year-old who died of injuries just west of Edmonton last June to two 74-year-old workers, one near Stettler in January, the other near Carstairs in October, and there were 40 others. Add to this the occupational disease and motor vehicle related fatalities, and we have 136 Alberta workers who deserve so much more than a moment of our time today. They deserve workplace conditions that are healthy and safe. They deserve their lives back.

I assure all of my Legislature colleagues that every one of those BlackBerry messages that delivers the dark news of a workplace tragedy only strengthens my resolve and the resolve of this government to continue to work harder to ensure that the role of government when it comes to workplace safety is second to none. Mr. Speaker, as the minister responsible for workplace health and safety I stand before my Legislature colleagues and all Albertans to say: there are no excuses. Government, industry, employers, and workers must pick it up a notch and do a better job of protecting our most valuable resource, our people.

As a government we are in the midst of creating a stronger balance between enforcement, compliance, education, and awareness. Since delivering a National Day of Mourning message in this Assembly at this time last year, we have updated our compliance and enforcement procedures. We have launched an employer records website listing the safety records of 140,000 employers in Alberta. We have launched an internal software program enabling us to collect and analyze OHS data better than ever before. We have hired additional occupational health and safety officers, including a hiring plan for the next three years, and increased our focus on northern Alberta by adding a third regional office right in Fort McMurray.

Mr. Speaker, I am hopeful, now more than ever before, that we are on the path to ensuring that taking part in unsafe work is no longer acceptable. We will have a culture of positive health and safety practices that is commonplace regardless of where you work or what you do. In just a few days I'll be releasing the full occupational health and safety data for the year 2010. In addition to the total number of fatalities, there are many other measures that help determine whether our province is becoming healthier and safer.

Several more announcements will be made over the coming week as well, all of which lend themselves to ensuring that Alberta remains an attractive, healthy, and safe province in which to work, especially as we begin our approach to renewed economic activity. I expect Albertans to hold my feet to the fire, just as I challenge Albertans and Alberta's employers to ensure that their workers remain healthy and safe on the job. I also encourage workers to know their rights and responsibilities. This is truly a team effort, Mr. Speaker.

One hundred and thirty-six fatalities. It's an overused cliché, Mr. Speaker – I know that – but it's truly 136 too many. Hard-working men and women like Travis, Wade, Juan, Erin, Josh, Eugene are all more than just numbers. They are people who have left a mark on our province and will not be forgotten soon. Our hearts truly go out to those whose lives have forever been changed by workplace injuries and fatalities.

I thank you all.

1:50

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Mr. Speaker, let me ask for the unanimous consent of the House to complete this particular section of business in the interests of respecting the National Day of Mourning.

[Unanimous consent granted]

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

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. Thank you, sir. On this National Day of Mourning Alberta Liberal MLAs offer our condolences to the many friends, family members, and co-workers who have lost someone as a result of a workplace accident.

Fatalities on the job are avoidable tragedies, making such losses all the more heart-rending and difficult to come to terms with. The Official Opposition strongly believes that the Alberta government must do more to protect workers from workplace injuries and fatalities. In the last 10 years there have been over 1,200 occupational fatalities in Alberta. That's like losing an entire small town, Mr. Speaker, to an utter disaster. I also note, with respect, that the number of Alberta workers killed on the job jumped by 24 per cent last year. One hundred and thirty-six workers lost their lives in 2010, up from 110 the previous year.

The hard work of Albertans is responsible for the growth of our communities, provides essential services, funds public institutions and needed social programs. Labour is the bedrock, the foundation, of our prosperity, but Alberta still lags behind other jurisdictions when it comes to workplace safety and fatality rates. Despite years of Alberta Liberal questions on the issue farm workers, for example, still work without the protection of the Occupational Health and Safety Act. All paid workers in Alberta deserve the same, equal rights, Mr. Speaker. New cases of needless deaths and injuries of paid farm workers appear in the news, unfortunately, on a regular basis, yet this government remains unmoved. It's callous, unfeeling, and bad public policy.

We will never stop pushing this government to do the right thing on this issue, nor will we stop calling for other legislative changes to improve worker safety, including requiring workplaces to post health and safety rules at the job site and the implementation of mandatory health and safety committees for work sites that employ 20 or more individuals. Making accident investigation reports admissible as evidence at trials and public inquiries would also help. These three improvements could save countless lives and dramatically reduce the number of workplace injuries.

Alberta Liberals respect Alberta workers. Every day they provide for their families and keep Alberta's economic engine humming along. We have a duty as members of this House to make their workplaces safer by vigorously enforcing the laws and improving those laws where they prove to be inadequate. We must always remember to support families who have already needlessly lost a loved one as a result of a workplace accident.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. members, I have requests from the other parties, who wish to respond to the ministerial statement. I seek unanimous consent.

[Unanimous consent granted]

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Airdrie-Chestermere.

Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the colleagues in the House. I'm honoured to rise on behalf of the Wildrose caucus to commemorate this day of mourning.

Mr. Speaker, Alberta is a dynamic province blessed with an abundance of natural resources and economic potential that is the envy of the world. Every morning thousands and thousands of men and women all over Alberta wake up, grab their tools, put on their gear, and make our economy work. They are the fuel in the gas tank of the Alberta economy.

Tragically, Mr. Speaker, last year 136 Alberta workers went to work but did not come home. It's the other side of our economic coin. Along with the thousands of well-paying jobs Alberta offers in the trades, in forestry, in agriculture, and in oil and gas comes the inherent danger in carrying out the tasks associated with them. That is why we as legislators must always be vigilant in protecting and increasing worker safety, ensuring that as many men and women, moms and dads, husbands and wives as humanly possible can arrive home safely after a hard day's work.

Unfortunately, here in Alberta we consistently have one of the highest fatality rates in Canada in the workplace. Workplace fatalities are on the rise, and it seems like Alberta is once again lagging in sanctioning workplace safety violations. Over in Saskatchewan, a province with a workforce a quarter of ours, workplace safety cases are prosecuted at five times the rate they are in Alberta.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, these figures suggest that the current system is failing our workforce in a serious way. As I said before, our economy is held up around the world as one to emulate. There's no reason why our safety record should be any different.

To the families of those who have been lost on the job site: we remember your loss on this day, and I hope that all members of this House will pledge to do better. We must do better.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today around the world we take time to honour the lives of those people who have been hurt or lost their lives on the job. In our own country Alberta continues to be one of the most dangerous places to work, and the situation is only getting worse. Much of the responsibility rests squarely with a government that does not take seriously its responsibility to ensure that people who go to work can do so with confidence that they will be safe and healthy there.

This PC government looks the other way when children are working illegally; underfunds inspections and enforcement of laws that do exist; stubbornly refuses to protect farm workers by the same laws as other workers; blatantly continues to ignore the well-accepted practice in other parts of the country of having mandatory workplace health and safety committees; leads the battle across the country to prevent improvements to CPP that would offer decent pensions so older workers are not forced to stay on the job past when it is safe; treats labour unions dedicated to ensuring that workers are treated safely as hostile antagonists; avoids adequate actions to protect temporary foreign workers, who often lack sufficient language and cultural familiarity with Alberta workplaces to advocate for their safety; procrastinates in making clear information about employers with dangerous records from being easy to identify despite the urging of the province's Auditor General; and finally, undercompensates injured workers and the families of deceased workers through an employer-dominated Workers' Compensation Board.

It's a sad litany of Tory disregard for the well-being of working people and their families. No smooth platitudes from a cabinet minister saying that one death is one too many carries any weight as long as there is a continued disregard to undertake the practical actions that will make a positive difference. Every year too many workers lose their lives as a result of work-related injury, illness, and disease. Workers shouldn't have to risk their lives or their health to go to work.

Alberta's NDP is committed to the changes that are required to keep our workers safe. We need to hire more inspectors to ensure that employers comply with the law. We need to ensure that workplaces have mandatory joint health and safety committees.

We need to introduce new protective standards that deal with known dangers in today's workplaces, including workplace violence, exposure to toxins, repetitive stress injuries and injuries caused by poor ergonomics, workplace harassment, and stress. We need to remove the employer escape clause that says, quote, as far as practicable, end quote, from the health and safety act.

Every workplace death or injury is preventable, Mr. Speaker. A government that truly cared about worker safety would take the necessary steps to make it so.

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

Mr. Taylor: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Some excellent points have been made by all speakers so far in this House today, and I would just like to add a couple of comments of my own, if I could, on behalf of the Alberta Party.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity with the Minister of Employment and Immigration yesterday to attend the Work Safe Alberta young worker video contest awards. One of my constituents, Vincent Varga, a grade 11 student at St. Mary's high school in Mission, was the second-prize winner, and his video, which is up on the ministry's website now along with the first- and third-place videos, is a powerful piece of work.

2:00

Mr. Speaker, the minister has said that Alberta is walking into a perfect storm in worker shortages: the combination of our growing economy, our low birth rate, and the looming wave of retirements as boomers start turning 65. We could be facing a shortage – and I think these are the minister's numbers – of 77,000 workers. Some that I've talked to in the workforce have said that it could be as much as 110,000 within the next 10 years.

Here's where this relates to the National Day of Mourning, Mr. Speaker. As the minister knows, workplace deaths and injuries occur for a whole variety of reasons, and they do not need to occur at all if everyone involved is sufficiently experienced, sufficiently supervised, sufficiently personally motivated, and sufficiently committed to the notion that on the job site and on the way to and from the job site safety must always trump everything. But the reality is that safety in Alberta does not always trump everything. People cut corners. Businesses cut corners. Young, inexperienced workers, the workers who are statistically most likely to do dumb stuff on the job because they don't yet know any better, aren't always and in some cases are not often sufficiently supervised.

Mr. Speaker, I know the minister spends a lot of time thinking about how we might address and prevent this looming labour shortage just as he thinks about how to make the workplace safer. But where there are labour shortages, where there are not enough workers with enough experience on the job site, and where there are too many pressures to get the job done on time, on budget, under budget if possible, there will be more corners cut, more shortcuts taken, more mistakes made, and more lives lost.

We need as a province to take the advice that we give to our workers – stop, think, observe, plan – and then we need to act to protect their right and ability to work safely in Alberta.

Thank you.

Oral Question Period

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

Patient Advocacy by Health Professionals

Dr. Swann: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Dr. Irfan Qureshi, an ortho-

paediatric surgeon from Fort McMurray, is the latest in a lengthy line of doctors victimized by this government's culture of fear and intimidation. Dr. Qureshi was forced to file legal action against the health region after his medical privileges, quote, were wrongfully discontinued without sufficient cause and without investigation and caused irreparable harm to his professional reputation. End quote. How can the Premier deny that a culture of fear and intimidation continues to exist under this government's watch as lawsuit after lawsuit comes forward?

Mr. Stelmach: Mr. Speaker, there is a process in place. The profession has the College of Physicians & Surgeons to review all matters with respect to issues tied to the practice of medicine. Whatever the college did in terms of reviewing the case has been done. Now I believe that particular doctor has taken this to the courts, and the courts will decide.

Dr. Swann: Mr. Speaker, when will the Premier finally tell Albertans the full truth, that only a public inquiry can get the truth and restore public confidence and protect doctors like Dr. Qureshi?

Mr. Stelmach: Mr. Speaker, it's the same question that was asked a number of times. I suppose it could be important to go back a decade or so and look into the matters that some doctors have had. But I must remind this House that over 90 per cent of the AMA doctors signed on to bylaws in partnership with Alberta Health Services, and that is to clearly put a plan in place, a program, the steps for what doctors can do in terms of advocating for their patients. That is the right thing to do: advocate for patients; put patients first.

Dr. Swann: Well, clearly the bylaws are being violated, Mr. Premier. How many more hundreds or thousands of health professionals like Dr. Qureshi does the Premier have to hear from before he concedes that a public inquiry is the only way to address the government's culture of fear and intimidation and cover-ups?

Mr. Stelmach: Unfortunately, the hon. member is wrong. The case that he is bringing forward was well before the bylaws were agreed upon and signed, and I haven't heard of any recent case since the bylaws have been signed of any doctor coming forward saying that the bylaws aren't fair. If there is such a case that I'm not aware of, certainly that physician can go before the Health Quality Council and deliver the evidence and say that the bylaws aren't fair.

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

Health Quality Council Review

Dr. Swann: Mr. Speaker, regarding the culture of fear and intimidation in the health care system the Premier admitted yesterday that "we all want to know." He fails to say what he knows, that not only will no one ever find out what is said behind the Health Quality Council doors about individuals like Dr. McNamee and Dr. Winton, but the quality council can't compel testimony from individuals subject to nondisclosure agreements. Neither can it subpoena ministers. Why does the Premier continue to be economical with the truth by saying that doctors are free to come forward when he knows full well that doctors can't say anything if they've signed a nondisclosure agreement?

Mr. Stelmach: Actually, that's not true again. Any physician can come to the Health Quality Council and bring forward their opinions on how to improve the system. What would be in a

disclosure document that would not allow a doctor to talk about how to best improve the health care system of Alberta? That's absolutely ridiculous.

Dr. Swann: I think I speak on behalf of many Albertans and professionals who are frustrated with the non answers we get from the Premier time and again.

What damning evidence is the Premier afraid will emerge from a public inquiry that can require doctors, bureaucrats, and even ministers to testify under oath? What are you afraid of?

Mr. Stelmach: In fact, Mr. Speaker, anyone that has been asked by the Health Quality Council to appear before the council has not refused, number one. Number two, all those individuals that appear before the Health Quality Council will be protected under the Alberta rules of evidence. They will be protected in terms of what they're bringing forward to the Health Quality Council. There is nothing here to hide. The report will be public. We will have one report within three months, the second within about six months, and the final report in nine months.

Dr. Swann: Again, Mr. Speaker, the Premier is very disingenuous when he knows that people like Dr. McNamee and Dr. Winton have already said that they cannot come forward to the Health Quality Council. What are you hiding, Mr. Premier?

Mr. Stelmach: Mr. Speaker, I'm not hiding anything. I don't know what those two physicians do not want to bring forward.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I did make an inaccurate statement. I did say that Dr. McNamee was suing Dr. Winton and that Dr. Winton was suing Dr. McNamee. Actually, Dr. McNamee filed a statement of claim against Dr. Winton, and Dr. Winton filed a statement of defence against Dr. McNamee. I want to make that very clear. I'm not a lawyer, so please excuse that small inaccuracy on my part.*

The Deputy Speaker: Third question from the Official Opposition. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Memorial to Fallen Workers

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you. Today on this National Day of Mourning I would like the Premier to please commit to building a permanent, visible monument that can be seen from this Legislative Assembly so that all members of this House are reminded each and every day of the year of what happens when our occupational health and safety laws are not enforced. To the Premier: will the Premier please commit today to building this monument in memory of all the workers whose lives have been lost as a result of a workplace accident in this province?

Mr. Stelmach: Mr. Speaker, as you know, we can only advise the Speaker of this Assembly and, of course, the minister that's responsible for the Legislature Grounds. There have been a number of recommendations or requests that have come forward for statues. The Speaker and the minister are responsible for reviewing them all.

This is a very good idea. It is one that will remind us of the many tragic events. The minister may want to give further detail.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. Mr. Speaker, this time to the Minister of Infrastructure: given that there are 27 monuments already located, or sited, in various places on the Legislature Grounds and there's a

*See page 889, right column, paragraph 6

very small plaque just to the south of us to honour workers, that was installed in 1991, can we now have a permanent memorial to those who have unfortunately lost their lives on a job site in this province?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

2:10

Mr. Danyluk: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As the Premier has said and as we had the minister's statement today and also members of the opposition, it is very tragic, the individuals that we lose. I would be very happy to meet with the hon. member to discuss this further.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the same minister: given that this was a request that was made over 10 years ago, is it possible, please, to get a commitment from this government so that we can permanently remember those who have unfortunately lost their lives on a job site in this province? It's the least we can do for the families.

Mr. Danyluk: Well, Mr. Speaker, again, I have offered to meet with the hon. member. I will also defer to the hon. minister.

Mr. Lukaszuk: Mr. Speaker, not only is this a good idea; it's an idea that already has been discussed. My office has actually been approached by individuals from organized labour who also share that desire. I am more than willing to discuss that idea and share it, obviously, with the Speaker, the Premier, and the Minister of Infrastructure. Frankly, because I know you have been such a big advocate for occupational health and safety, perhaps members of the opposition would care to be involved in creating – it's quite a creative process, but I think it would be very becoming to commemorate those who have built this province for the last 100 and some years.

Property Rights

Mr. Anderson: Mr. Speaker, in a recent poll of almost 20,000 randomly selected Albertans the question was asked whether this PC government had adequately protected the rights of property owners, and 69.1 per cent of those polled answered no. The numbers are even worse for the government in rural constituencies. Whether this government agrees or not, Albertans want bills 36, 50, and 19 repealed, and they want them repealed now. Why does this Premier continue to ignore the common-sense judgment of everyday Albertans who rightly feel that this government has failed to protect their property rights?

Mr. Stelmach: Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, the bills that have been passed are there to protect property owners. As I said yesterday, this is a very sensitive topic for landowners that are in this Assembly. It's also a very sensitive topic for Albertans because this is one province where at the beginning, about 1917, 1918, many pioneers lost their land, taken away without compensation. The families moved to camps in different parts of Alberta and Canada. That is Alberta history.

The bills that are passed are here to protect property rights and offer compensation for those properties that may be needed for public infrastructure.

Mr. Anderson: That's why you should know better, Premier.

Given that this Premier refused to attend a town hall of 600 landowners in his own constituency and given that he hasn't shown up to one town hall in Alberta on these landowner rights

issues in his entire premiership and given that he has cut off debate on amendments to Bill 36 in this Legislature, with dozens of proposed amendments ready for discussion, and given his surprise and pending retirement, will the Premier just admit that he's afraid of facing voters now and in the next election because of his failure to protect Albertans' property rights?

Mr. Stelmach: Mr. Speaker, one just has to look into *Hansard* and read the eloquent speech that was given by the member in support of Bill 36. Might I remind this House that the total debate on Bill 36 was about three and a half hours. I think, Mr. House Leader, we've had at least eight hours or even more on the amendments. Now, isn't that a little bit of theatrics? Pass a bill in three and a half hours and take 10 hours to pass amendments to a bill that he so eloquently supported in the House?

Mr. Anderson: Given that your former Justice minister, a current PC leadership candidate who oversaw the drafting of Bill 36, has come to the same conclusion that I have, that we made a mistake to support Bill 36 in 2009 and that it's time to go back to the drawing board and fix it, will you, like her and like me, do the right thing, admit your mistake, just like Premier Klein would have done, and repeal these bills that Albertans clearly want scrapped? Why won't you admit your mistake and just do the right thing?

Mr. Stelmach: Mr. Speaker, the one bill, Bill 19: previous Premier Peter Lougheed had a tremendous vision for Alberta, and that was to build ring roads around Edmonton and Calgary. But what the governments did at that time is that they sterilized the property where the road was going to be built, and those people that had money to go to court fought the government in court and many won. Okay? So what Bill 19 has done: any time that the government through full public consultation decides this is where the next ring road has to be around the two cities, the government has to purchase the property within two years or remove all restrictions on the land. That is the best property protection in Canada.

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

Education Funding

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. While the Education minister struggles to perfect legislation that may never see the light of day, in Calgary hundreds of teachers will be laid off thanks to this government's budget cuts. Catholic schools in Fort McMurray are cutting out one day of instruction per week to save money. Will the minister explain why his priority is an Education Act which may never be passed instead of making sure there are enough teachers in Alberta classrooms?

Mr. Hancock: Mr. Speaker, in government one has to always look to the horizon while they're doing today. One cannot choose between planning for the future, preparing for the future, and working on the legislative framework for the future while they're struggling with the fiscal issues of the day. In the end there will be enough teachers in the classroom because it's the quality of teachers we have in this province which makes a difference, not the time in front of the students and not the number of students in front of the teacher.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Mason: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Our teachers aren't

miracle workers, and they can't make up for this government's mismanagement.

Given that this new Education Act, of which this minister is so proud, will do nothing to restore needed resources to schools and given that Lethbridge public school division could lose 35 teachers thanks to this government's budget cuts, why can't the minister see that education isn't inspiring under his watch; it's expiring?

Mr. Hancock: Mr. Speaker, just another clever and very rude comment from the hon. member opposite. Nobody is impressed.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Mason: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure not impressed by this minister's funding of schools.

Edmonton school boards are short \$23 million, leading potentially to the loss of hundreds of teachers. Given that the Prairie Rose school division's kindergarten students will only get a half-day of class next year thanks to budget cuts, why won't the minister admit that the real problem with education is the shameful PC budget cuts?

Mr. Hancock: Mr. Speaker, had the hon. member been paying attention, he would know that there have not been budget cuts in education but, rather, a 4.7 per cent increase in education funding. Now, it is certainly fair to say that that translates through and that there has been no sleight of hand. It was clear from day one – I explained it to the boards' trustees on budget day – that some school boards have a little bit less money than last year, some school boards have a little bit more money, and all school boards have some increased cost pressures that they have to deal with. But we are well funded in this province. We have a tough fiscal budget this year. The school boards will do well. There may be some job loss, but it's not going to be a catastrophic disaster for one of the strongest educational systems in the world.

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

Payday Loans

Mr. Taylor: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In 2009 this government edited the rules that regulate payday loans in Alberta. The modifications included caps on fees and interest rates, eliminating rollover loan costs, and requiring lenders to clearly post their costs in their outlets. These measures were supposedly put in place to help prevent companies from preying on vulnerable Albertans. Now I want to see if they're working. To the Minister of Service Alberta. One of the most important commitments the government made was to educate the public on payday loan rules. Could the minister give an update to this House on the progress of those education campaigns?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Service Alberta.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. An excellent question. Since this regulation was passed, we've been able to regulate and follow up and have inspections of all the payday loan companies that are operating. Working within the rules, at any time – we do have investigations ongoing with some, but at the end of the day we know that consumers are much better prepared when they go in and choose to take a payday loan.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In addition to promising education campaigns, Service Alberta also committed to conducting random audits of payday loan companies to ensure that they are following these new regulations. Has the minister commissioned these audits, and what are the results, please?

2:20

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, indeed, we do audits on a regular basis of all the payday loan companies that are operating here in Alberta, and that goes from the larger companies all the way down to the smaller companies. At the end of the day we are looking into those, and I'd be prepared to follow up with some further information for the hon. member on that.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that offer from the minister. I will take her up on that.

Before these changes were adopted, a general lack of understanding of payday loan contracts, I think it's fair to say, was the norm. Can the Minister of Service Alberta offer any concrete measurement of how borrowers now have a greater understanding of the contracts they sign given Service Alberta's commitment to ordering companies to use plain language in contracts?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mrs. Klimchuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Another excellent question. At the end of the day consumers now know when they go in that all their rights have to be posted. They have to ask questions. We've had some concerns expressed about the rollover of cards and charging extra fees on cards. We are looking into that. We've also, with the homeless ID program that Service Alberta and Housing and Urban Affairs is working on, empowered people to get ID so they can open a bank account and perhaps not make a choice to go to a payday loan company.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for West Yellowhead.

Electricity Pricing

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The regulated price of electricity in Edmonton went from 7.09 cents a kilowatt hour in March to 11.76 cents in April. This created a lot of media excitement and headline news as well as questions here. The Minister of Energy said at the time that he expected power rates to go back down. My first question is to the Minister of Energy. Can he give us an update on the regulated price of power for the month of May?

Mr. Liepert: Yes, I can, Mr. Speaker. The Alberta Utilities Commission announced yesterday that the regulated rate for the price in May would be 6.3 cents in the city of Edmonton and between 6 and 7 cents across the province.

I know that the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood and the Member for Calgary-Buffalo do their daily research in the *Edmonton Journal* and rarely get past page 1. So at the appropriate time in the House I will table copies of the story on the front page of the *Journal* a month ago. I'll also table the very small story in today's paper, in the *Edmonton Journal*, because I doubt that they would have gotten to page B3 today.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My first supplemental is to the same minister. What has resulted in power prices coming down as quickly as they have?

Mr. Mason: Point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: There's a point of order from the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood. After QP we'll deal with it.

The hon. minister, then.

Mr. Liepert: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to that point of order. That'll be an interesting discussion.

You know, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of factors that go into the regulated price, including supply and demand and, you know, unexpected supply interruptions, which increase price fluctuations, but I think overall where we are for the month of May will be fairly consistent with the historical price that Albertans have had to pay for electricity.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My second supplemental is to the same minister. What options do consumers have with their power bills?

Mr. Liepert: Mr. Speaker, I have said in the past that consumers, like they can do with their home mortgages, can lock into a contract. But if they choose not to lock into a contract, we do have the regulated rate, which is set every month. It tends to go up and down but generally is fairly consistent with what the price will be in May.

Education Funding Initiatives

Mr. Hehr: Mr. Speaker, after talking to school trustees, parents, students, teachers, and support staff alike, it is apparent to everyone that these cuts to education funding will have a detrimental effect on our children's future. In my view, balancing our current budget on our province's future prosperity is foolish. Accordingly, here are three solutions that could provide our children with the future they deserve. Will the Premier allocate an extra \$110 million, the amount cut from the expected grants to school boards, from the sustainability fund to cover schools' shortfall funding?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Hancock: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. This afternoon we will vote on third reading of the Appropriation Act, which will put some finality on this year's budget. It's totally inappropriate to make any changes to a budget while it's in the House. You have to then refile the whole budget. I'm sure the President of the Treasury wouldn't want to do that. The hon. member ought to know through the two months of discussion we've had on the budget that the deficit that's projected for this year comes from the sustainability fund. The deficit that's projected for next year comes from the sustainability fund. When we balance the budget in a fiscal trajectory over the next three years, we will utilize that sustainability fund. It cannot be utilized twice.

Mr. Hehr: Mr. Speaker, all I know is that he's shortchanging Alberta's students.

Will the Premier reduce his cabinet to the economical size of 17 from 24 to free up money to cover school funding shortfalls?

Mr. Hancock: Mr. Speaker, this just goes to show the difficulty that some people have actually in understanding budgets because

you'd never find \$107 million by reducing the size of cabinet from 24 to 17.

Mr. Hehr: Here is another suggestion. Will the Premier undo his panic flip-flop on alcohol taxes and reinstitute the proposed wine and beer tax that Albertans will be more than willing to pay to cover the cost of school funding shortfalls?

Mr. Snelgrove: Once again, this is why you have choices. You have parties that are absolutely willing and love to tax and spend. We've seen it in the federal election right now. There are some people that are not grounded in financial reality, and they can't help themselves from saying: well, if we just tax a little more and spend a little more, it'll get a little better. And it never ends. That's the choice, Mr. Speaker.

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

Emergency Preparedness

Mr. Bhardwaj: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In this province volunteers are a key part of fire services. In many rural areas in this province we face a shortage of volunteers who can provide fire and rescue services. My questions are to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. How is the minister helping municipalities get the volunteers they need so they can provide emergency services?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Goudreau: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We support all Alberta's volunteer firefighters. They make our communities better and safer places to live. That's why we've been working with the Alberta Fire Chiefs Association on a province-wide recruitment and retention plan. That's why we provided \$50,000 last year to establish a working tool for all departments and an additional \$36,000 this year to further develop these tools. That's in addition to the \$500,000 we provide each year to firefighters and their training programs.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Bhardwaj: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My next question to the same minister. During a disaster emergency responders are the first on the scene. Given that next week is Emergency Preparedness week, what steps can Albertans take to help emergency responders do their job?

Mr. Goudreau: Mr. Speaker, there are things that Albertans can do to help all of our emergency first responders so they can help the most critically affected and injured people first. All Albertans should have a family plan, so everyone knows what to do in case of a disaster, as well as a 72-hour kit and a ready-to-go kit in case they need to evacuate. This particular kit will give Albertans the items they need to keep their families safe until emergency responders can reach them. The Alberta Emergency Management Agency website will provide a lot of information on what can be useful in a kit.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Bhardwaj: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My final question to the same minister: what else are you doing to ensure all Albertans are prepared for emergencies throughout the year?

Mr. Goudreau: Mr. Speaker, it's very important to be prepared for an emergency. It takes more than just a single week in a year. It's a behavioural change that should be part of every Albertan's

daily life. The Alberta Emergency Management Agency works with stakeholders and continues to work with our municipalities to change behaviours so more Albertans are ready in case a disaster strikes.

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

Health Quality Council Review (continued)

Ms Blakeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Repeatedly this government has assured Albertans that those appearing before the Health Quality Council of Alberta are protected by the Alberta Evidence Act. In fact, the only protection that the act affords is against being asked a question about a health quality review in a subsequent court action; medical malpractice, for example. Nothing in the act protects those who have signed nondisclosure agreements from being sued in breach of contract and breach of confidentiality. To the minister of health: why does the minister continue to present the protection of the Alberta Evidence Act as something it is not?

2:30

Mr. Zwozdesky: Mr. Speaker, I'm not doing any such thing. In fact, there are protections under the Alberta Evidence Act. I've read them here in the House, and if you would like, hon. member, I'll read them to you again.

In addition to that, however, I also asked the Health Quality Council to make sure that they took into consideration any other protections of privacy or confidentiality that might be necessary so that people would feel encouraged and comfortable coming forward, and I understand that people are. So we'll wait to see what the report says.

Ms Blakeman: He's just wrong.

Back to the same minister: given that only a public inquiry can compel evidence and protect doctors from liability, why does the minister continue to refuse growing demand for a public inquiry?

Mr. Zwozdesky: Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to reiterate and keep the record straight that the Health Quality Council of Alberta has already indicated very publicly that their report will be based on fact, that it will be based on public input and on input from people in the practice, and that they are creating an atmosphere of participation. I hope that anyone with any information might come forward. Perhaps somewhere we'll get to the bottom of all of this if any evidence exists, if any proof exists to the allegations that were made. So far I'm not aware of any.

Ms Blakeman: Well, the Health Quality Council can offer whatever they want, but they cannot protect those doctors. So if the government is serious about getting to the bottom of allegations of government intimidation and a culture of fear, why does the minister persist in offering a process that will not allow those doctors with the information we need to speak out freely? Why is that?

Mr. Zwozdesky: Mr. Speaker, no one is denying anyone from coming forward with whatever information they want. In fact, the exact opposite is true. We on this side are encouraging doctors to come forward if they have issues that pertain to the allegations. What we've seen so far is a bunch of statements of claim that are basically disagreements between professionals and their employers. That's all that we've seen. A lot of it is not relevant to the points that were alleged in this House, and this hon. member knows that.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Whitecourt-Ste. Anne.

Range Road 20 Improvements

Mr. VanderBurg: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Within Whitecourt-Ste. Anne range road 20, located south of Onoway and south of highway 633, is a very busy industrial roadway. It sees a lot of commercial traffic and helps support the construction activities across this capital region. However, this roadway is not paved, and it's in bad shape. My questions are to the Minister of Transportation. When will you and the province step forward to support the improvements needed on this important roadway?

Mr. Ouellette: Well, I'd like to be able to tell this hon. member, who works so hard for his constituents, that the last mile of this important roadway is going to be upgraded. My department is providing Lac Ste. Anne county a grant of up to \$755,000 to pave the final stretch of this road. Funding comes from the resource road program, which provides a 50-50 cost share to rural municipalities for upgrading local roads. This funding is about supporting areas with increased activity because of economic development. We are building a better Alberta, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. VanderBurg: Well, that's great news. If you continue with those kinds of responses to my questions, I'm going to ask you more.

I'd like to know: when are you going to actually cut the cheque, and when is this work going to be done?

Mr. Ouellette: Well, Mr. Speaker, under the resource road program the province provides the grant funding to municipalities and the municipalities prioritize those road projects. The projects are then managed by the municipality. By providing this grant funding in early April, it's very possible that the municipality could have construction under way this year. But he'll have to check with the municipality.

Mr. VanderBurg: I'd like to thank the minister for that good response. [interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. members, before I recognize the minister, please lower your volume.

Hon. minister, respond to the question.

Mr. Ouellette: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek.

Questions about Government Accountability

Mrs. Forsyth: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. When asked about reports, pilot projects, and program reviews, the government is notorious for answering with, "Soon," "Very soon," "As soon as we can," or "It's forthcoming." Albertans are tired of being delayed and denied real answers to serious questions about their government and their vital programs. My first question is to the Government House Leader. When will your government stop the delay tactics and dodges and table reports that Albertans have been promised?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Hancock: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question is inappropriately directed to the Government House Leader. It's not within my purview, but I will answer the question. This government makes sure that all reports are made available at the most

appropriate time, after thoughtful consideration has been put into them and responses, if necessary, have been prepared.

Mrs. Forsyth: Okay. Well, now we'll add "most appropriate time" to that list.

Given that there are over 80 pieces of legislation passed by this House awaiting proclamation, that were debated for hundreds of hours, and that this government has the audacity to limit Bill 10 debate to five hours, will the government make sure to proclaim all of the other legislation before proclaiming Bill 10?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member would know, having been a minister in government, albeit for a short period of time, that once bills are passed in this House and receive royal assent, then a considerable amount of work goes into providing the regulatory framework. Sometimes, as the hon. member ought to know, preparing the regulatory framework which supports the bill and puts the rules and regulations in place in terms of how a bill operates also has to be the subject of public consultation and discussion because this government values the input from Albertans at every stage of the legislative process.

Mrs. Forsyth: This minister is full of gobbledegook, quite frankly.

Given that the Premier demonstrated a shocking lack of understanding around what is going on in health care, so much that his office had to make a statement on his behalf to get him out of trouble, how can Albertans have confidence in this government about our public health care system? Call a public inquiry, health minister.

Mr. Zwozdesky: Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you that the health care system in our province is absolutely excellent. If it were any different, we wouldn't have 400 more international medical graduates coming to us from around the world. We wouldn't have 460 more brand new specialists working in this province. We wouldn't have 23 additional cardiologists. We wouldn't have 3,000 more RNs, over 800 new doctors than we did just a few years ago. We're a magnet for wonderful health care experiences right here in Alberta.

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

Highway Signage

Mr. Kang: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We see them more and more. I'm not talking about dandelions or mushrooms; I'm talking about highway direction signs that don't talk about where you are going but, instead, talk about roads you are on and which roads they connect to. Most people don't navigate like this. I'm certain tourists don't look for highway 1 west; they look for the sign pointing to Banff. To the Minister of Transportation: has there been a change to highway signage policy to account for these changes?

Mr. Ouellette: Mr. Speaker, if I understand that hon. member correctly, I would have to say that, no, there hasn't been a policy change to highway signage. What I will say about highway signage, though, is that it's about creating a balance between clear and effective signage or having signs that have too much information on them. We want to make sure that our highway signage doesn't create distracted driving or doesn't create a problem for drivers. Alberta's highway signage policies and practices strive for consistency, and they mirror North American . . .

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Kang: I think that's exactly what the minister is trying to do. He's trying to confuse the travelling public here, Mr. Speaker.

To the minister again: given that most people won't be looking for a sign to Stony Plain Road west from Henday but, instead, for an exit to Jasper, why are signs pointing to Jasper absent from the Henday southbound exit? Why was it changed when it was working just fine?

Mr. Ouellette: Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to be able to tell you that Stoney Trail is a great addition to our highway system. I want to also say that Stoney Trail is an actual circle. We put our signage for Banff on there at the exit of it, not the beginning because otherwise people would go in a circle. We want to get them to their destination. Tourism is very, very important to us.

2:40

The Deputy Speaker: Before I recognize the hon. member, please, the volume of noise in this Chamber is so high that the Speaker cannot listen to the eloquence of the member.

The hon. Member for Calgary-McCall.

Mr. Kang: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that's exactly what the minister is trying to do. He wants people to go in circles instead of trying to give them directions. To the minister again: given that, is the government so lost that they can't even get highway signs right?

Mr. Ouellette: Mr. Speaker, I have to say that this hon. member isn't hearing very clearly. We're saying that the sign says at the exit where to get off at highway 1. It says Banff. It doesn't say it when you get onto the Stoney Trail because the Stoney Trail does go in a circle.

I will say that this hon. member always does try to do the very best for his constituents and Albertans, Mr. Speaker.

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

Education Funding

(continued)

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As someone that is concerned about the effects of Budget 2011 and the effect it may have on the classroom, my questions to the minister are whether or not the following ideas, that could possibly prevent cuts that affect students in the classroom, have been explored. First of all, Minister, have you considered reducing from 4 per cent to 3 per cent the amount of money school boards can devote to headquarter and trustee expenses?

Mr. Hancock: No, Mr. Speaker, we haven't at a provincial level considered changing the guidelines which provide for up to 4 per cent for urban boards and up to 6 per cent for rural boards. It is an area which could be looked at. Quite frankly, I would expect as minister and we would expect as a provincial government that each board would look at their administrative expenses and try to keep their administrative expenses as low as possible in order to direct as many resources as possible to the classroom.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My second question. Some claim that year-round schooling has the potential to reduce costs by requiring less capital and operational dollars. Mr. Minister, has that been explored further in these circumstances?

Mr. Hancock: Mr. Speaker, there are a number of projects around the province looking at different ways of doing schooling, and I think it's incumbent on school boards to look at and talk about issues within their communities as to how they might better provide an educational program for students in that area. I think that has to be first and foremost. Certainly, there are educational benefits to year-round schooling in terms of educational outcomes for some students. In fact, we do have a considerable amount of school capital around the province which could be better utilized, perhaps, if we could look at longer days and using it for more months. That wouldn't mean that every student would have to go all days in a longer day or that every student would have to go every month in a longer year, but you could use your capital better if you looked at those opportunities.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My last question to the same minister. Minister, although we have many different school boards, we have one taxpayer in the province. Have we explored the simple idea of bulk purchasing? For example, we spend about \$35 million on textbooks alone each year and large sums of money on technology. What have we done to pursue bulk purchasing at a provincial level?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through the Learning Resources Centre annually we not only buy textbooks in bulk, but we also to a certain extent subsidize the cost of those books for school boards across the province. I do think we need to do a better job, whether we do it as a provincial government or whether we do it through the School Boards Association or through just a conglomerate of school boards, of looking at how we purchase technology, how we purchase technology licensing, how we make a provision for cloud computing, those sorts of things, which could I think have incredible benefits for boards, not only in terms of the services that they get but also the cost of those services.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Lethbridge-East.

Occupational Health and Safety

Ms Pastoor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday we learned of yet another serious Calgary incident of falling work debris. Fortunately, no workers or the general public were injured. This is in a long series of construction safety incidents that have plagued Alberta. To the minister of Employment and Immigration: government efforts to increase awareness and improve job safety aren't working; why not?

Mr. Lukaszuk: It would be very presumptive of the member to say that they are not working. As the member knows, just a few months ago I had ordered a concentrated review and inspection of commercial construction sites, particularly in Calgary relevant to falling objects from construction sites. I have used some very strong language describing the outcome of that particular inspection. As you know, Mr. Speaker, we have enhanced enforcement, and we'll continue to do so. At this particular site we are investigating right now, if there is any culpability on behalf of either workers or the employer, we will deal with those proprietors or the workers accordingly.

Ms Pastoor: These at this point in time appear to be short term. It's increased work-site safety inspections, that we saw earlier this

year, but it still failed to achieve a long-term change in poor practices at commercial construction sites. I'm looking for outcomes. How do you evaluate good outcomes?

Mr. Lukaszuk: Well, Mr. Speaker, the member says that my recent actions have failed to achieve long-term goals. Well, how do we know what the long-term outcomes will be? Let's get there first, and then we can assess it. I can tell you that whatever it is that I'm doing, I'm doing it with the best intentions.

I have to tell you that we have the full co-operation of Alberta employers, Alberta organized labourers, and all industry safety associations. We're all in the same boat. All we want to do, Mr. Speaker, is make sure that the culture in the province changes, that it improves, and that it is unacceptable for anyone to either be provided with a place of employment or to create a place of employment that's dangerous to themselves or their co-workers.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Ms Pastoor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister making a commitment to increase the overall number of work-site safety inspections in Alberta? These short-term safety blitzes, again, are not having the desired outcomes.

Mr. Lukaszuk: Well, Mr. Speaker, I respect the fact that this member is sincerely concerned about occupational health and safety, but she mustn't have paid attention. Over the last few months I have more than doubled the number of safety inspectors, by 52 per cent, within this and the next budget year. In addition to our regular inspections of all work sites in Alberta, for example, we're now completing inspections of forklifts. We're starting with young and inexperienced workers, probably next month. After that, we will be spotlighting the residential construction industry. We have increased both inspections and the number of occupational health and safety officers.

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

High Prairie Health Care Centre

Ms Calahasen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On again, off again; on again, off again: that's how my constituents felt about their new proposed High Prairie replacement one-window-service health facility. The people in my area have waited patiently for many, many things and, most importantly, recently the new land agreement which was signed. I'd like the Minister of Infrastructure to please give my constituents an update as to what's been happening and what it means for securing that land for that specific facility.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Infrastructure.

Mr. Danyluk: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In fact, I'm glad to report that we have reached an agreement with the town of High Prairie and the Peavine Métis settlement for the location of the new hospital. The agreement expands the site from 14 acres to 20 acres. It provides new space for future hospital needs.

Also, the town and the Métis can better meet the future development plans . . .

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Ms Calahasen: Well, Mr. Speaker, that was a really good answer, but I'll give him another question. Given that my community and my constituents have worked hard to ensure the needs of our region are met and worked on a new design in 2008, can you please,

Mr. Minister, explain why new design work is being undertaken now?

Mr. Danyluk: Well, Mr. Speaker, the project is moving ahead at full speed. We have an aggressive schedule. However, we want to get this right from the start. We will make sure that this hospital meets the health needs of the community now and for years to come. This includes the incorporation of the latest technology innovation and expertise available. We also have to make sure that the design reflects the most up-to-date service delivery.

2:50

Ms Calahasen: Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations going on. We've done consultations in the past. Given that all these consultations have occurred, can the Minister of Infrastructure please explain the value of and why more consultations are needed in order for that facility to finally be realized, and what role is Northern Lakes College going to be taking in terms of making sure that their views are also addressed?

Mr. Danyluk: Mr. Speaker, I think it's critical that Alberta Infrastructure has consultation with the community. We need to ensure that we deliver the hospital that works for the High Prairie community. We rely on having active participation and local knowledge and expertise. In fact, we're having doctors and other stakeholders at the table to ensure that we get the most reliable information about their community and what they feel is necessary.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I will say to you that once the design has been built, we're going to go back to the community . . .

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

Corporate Tax Advantage for American Companies

Dr. Taft: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Reports from TD finance as well as data from Statistics Canada show that corporations make profits in Alberta at consistently double or more the rate in other provinces and the U.S., and a huge amount of that profit flows out of Alberta at very low tax rates, never to be seen again. At the same time Alberta public services are squeezed, teachers are laid off, and roads blossom with potholes. To the President of the Treasury Board: why does this government let unprecedented flows of wealth go from Alberta to Wall Street, where it's taxed by Washington at a rate of 35 per cent?

Mr. Snelgrove: Mr. Speaker, his statements aren't completely true. The article that he's trying to refer to wasn't able to differentiate between corporations that are run through Canadian subsidiaries or that are run through their American head office. If they are run through a Canadian subsidiary, they pay all of their tax in Canada. The only time there would be a double taxation or a drop in taxation is if they're operated through their American head office, which only applies in approximately 10 per cent of the corporations operating in Canada.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. member.

Dr. Taft: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Again to the same minister: given that the minister referred to Jack Mintz as a source of policy information on tax rates, is the minister aware that Dr. Mintz was paid \$130,000 in stock options last year by the largest energy corporation in Canada, Imperial Oil, to serve on its board of directors?

Mr. Snelgrove: Mr. Speaker, that's totally irrelevant to what goes on in this House. If they want to ask questions based on corporate tax law, that's terrific, but to somehow suggest that either Jack Mintz or this government would be making comments in a paper based on some of the boards they sit on is just simply not fair to Jack Mintz, and it certainly offers nothing to the discussion about the tax laws.

Dr. Taft: Well, then, given that this government relies heavily on Dr. Mintz for advice, why is the government ignoring his letter of June 2008, which he wrote as chair of the government's financial planning commission, advising that the government needed to have \$215 billion in net assets in 2008 to maintain current public services and tax rates? Why is that being ignored?

Mr. Snelgrove: Mr. Speaker, it's not being ignored. We get information. We consult with dozens of very respected financial consultants or business consultants. What he is simply saying is that to sustain the spending at levels we have without resources, we're going to have to have more assets, more money in the bank. It shouldn't be a shock to the hon. member. We cannot continue to spend on health care, with growth of 10, 12, 13 per cent year over year, when business is only growing at 2 or 3 per cent in good years or in many years at zero. To somehow suggest that Jack Mintz's report is contrary to what we're trying to do in growing the economic pie is also untrue.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. members, we just ended our question period. We had 102 questions and answers. We have a few seconds before we continue on.

Members' Statements

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

Dr. Lorne Tyrrell

Ms Woo-Paw: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to stand up today and express my utmost admiration and respect for Dr. Lorne Tyrrell, an icon in this province as well as the national medical community. Today marks a very special occasion for Dr. Tyrrell. Tonight Dr. Tyrrell will be inducted into Canada's Medical Hall of Fame, a truly inspiring accomplishment. He will be honoured for his outstanding dedication to medicine and acknowledged for a number of awards, too long to list in this House.

Dr. Tyrrell is truly a pillar in Canadian medicine. Upon receiving a medical degree with distinction from the University of Alberta and a doctorate from Queen's University, he propelled himself into the medical community. Dr. Tyrrell served as the chair of medical microbiology and infectious diseases from 1986 to 1994 and for the next 10 years as dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry at our very own University of Alberta.

While serving in these positions, he was also making incredible breakthroughs through his research in viral hepatitis therapy. In 1998 Dr. Tyrrell's lab licensed Lamivudine, the first-ever oral treatment for the hepatitis B virus, which helps 350 million people in 170 different countries. What an astounding achievement.

Among many other awards for his brilliant contributions he has received the gold medal of the Canadian Liver Foundation, the Alberta Order of Excellence, and has been named an officer in the Order of Canada. Dr. Tyrrell is also the chair of the Health Quality Council of Alberta as well as of the Institute of Health Economics and is director of the Li Ka Shing Institute of Virology at the U of A.

Countless Albertans, from students to patients, have benefited from and been inspired by this tremendous individual. I would ask the members of this Assembly to join me in recognizing a true Albertan hero and one of the world's most brilliant medical minds.

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

Western Cup

Ms Blakeman: Thank you very much. I'm very honoured to present this on behalf of my colleague the Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

Mr. Speaker, for nearly three decades the members of the Calgary LGBT community have hosted the Western Cup, one of the premier gay multisport events on the continent. When the Member for Calgary-Buffalo spoke about the Western Cup last year, he noted that Alberta has thousands of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered citizens, people who are doing incredible work every day to strengthen and grow all aspects of our social, cultural, and political progress.

Over the long weekend Calgarians celebrated the successful completion of the 29th Western Cup. This year the closing dance, Calgary's largest LGBT dance, was held at the beautiful Hotel Arts. For a second year in a row the Member for Calgary-Buffalo checked it out, and he had a wonderful time. I know how good he is at those social occasions.

Mr. Speaker, nearly 500 athletes participated in the Western Cup, North America's oldest LGBT multisporting event. This year athletes competed in curling, volleyball, bowling, and dodge ball. Events like this one demonstrate how Albertans in the LGBT community are really giving back to their province with events that draw tourists, promote physical fitness, encourage healthy competition, and promote universal human rights.

The Member for Calgary-Buffalo is very proud of the participants, and I join him in being proud of the participants, volunteers, sponsors, and organizers who made this event possible. Well done, everyone, and we all hope to see them again next year.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: It's 3 o'clock. The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given the time that was spent on the very appropriate and necessary statements with respect to the National Day of Mourning, might we request the unanimous consent of the House to continue the Routine notwithstanding the standing orders?

[Unanimous consent granted]

The Deputy Speaker: We will continue on with Members' Statements.

3:00

Literacy

Mr. Allred: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise today and speak about the importance of literacy in Alberta classrooms. Literacy is the foundation for continuous learning and a vital characteristic of the highly skilled population needed for Alberta's next generation economy. Literacy has benefits for individuals, society, and the economy. Stronger literacy skills are associated with higher income, better health, and greater social and civic engagement.

In the kindergarten to grade 12 education system students need to develop a broad and deep range of literacy skills so they can have the literacy future they deserve, optimize their lifelong learn-

ing potential, and become active, participating members of their communities and the wider society.

Literacy has always been the keystone of learning. Changes in society and the rapidly evolving technology of the 21st century have increased the intensity and complexity of literate environments. The 21st century challenges us to rethink what being a fully literate person means. In the 21st century literacy is more than reading and writing. Today and in the future learners must develop expertise with a range of literary skills and strategies to acquire, create, connect, and communicate meaning in an ever-expanding variety of contexts.

Alberta Education has developed Literacy First: A Plan for Action. This action plan has supported key Alberta Education initiatives, including Setting the Direction, Inspiring Education, and inspiring action on education. It also supports the vision, values, and goals of the provincial literacy framework, Living Literacy. This framework co-ordinates the efforts of the government of Alberta and our many partners to improve literacy levels for all Albertans. In addition, Literacy First supports the Council of Ministers of Education Canada literacy action plan and Learn-Canada 2020.

As you can see, literacy is an important priority across Canada.

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

Primary Care

Mr. Horne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to health care, a frequent comment I hear from constituents is that the care and treatment provided in Alberta is excellent once you get in the door. I would be willing to wager that colleagues on all sides of this House and in Legislatures across the country frequently hear similar feedback.

The door to which our constituents refer is primary care, the foundation of our publicly funded health system. I believe that what Albertans want from this House is a focus on helping them get through that front door. Primary care refers to a citizen's first point of contact within the health system. Traditionally this has been through a family physician, but today primary care increasingly means individuals, families, and communities accessing a broad range of health and, I might add, wellness services delivered by multidisciplinary teams dedicated to serving the community's needs over the long term. In Alberta over 2.7 million citizens, more than 70 per cent of our population, live in communities served by our 40 primary care networks.

Mr. Speaker, the value proposition for primary care teams is usually expressed in terms of better, more frequent access to front-line health providers. It is true that much progress has been made in Alberta on this over the last eight years, but the real challenge before us and the one that calls out for debate is how to open the door wider and use primary care as the powerful tool it is to improve care across the system and, in doing so, the health of future generations. Co-ordination of care in the local community, same-day access to physicians and other professionals, dedicated links to specialists, faster access to locally delivered home care and continuing care, and proactive screening and management of chronic disease are just a few of the possibilities within our reach right now.

This vision for primary care is not new, it is not unachievable, and it need not be costly. But it will only become possible when we as representatives make a conscious choice to engage in constructive, informed discussion with our constituents and with one another.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Education Act

Mrs. Sarich: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our Minister of Education with pride and thanks tabled the new Education Act yesterday. The proposed legislation represents a three-year journey and the contributions of thousands of Albertans to arrive at the current destination.

Looking back over the past few years, the government had set a very aggressive agenda to address a number of important education issues and undertook several significant initiatives such as Inspiring Education: A Dialogue with Albertans, Setting the Direction, the Speak Out student engagement, the Inspiring Education discussion paper, and the School Act review. All of these separate initiatives provided the basis for what could be referred to as an informed transformation in the education system.

Transforming a complex system such as education requires careful thought, research, analysis, and, above all, meaningful interaction with all Albertans. Just as local conversations with friends and neighbours build community, the public engagement initiatives that were undertaken have truly shown that teachers, school leadership, parents, students, and the public want a true voice in guiding the future transformation of education in our province. Albertans provided input through online discussion papers and facilitated online discussions, blogs, tweets, and videos as well as community conversations. All of these contributions, Mr. Speaker, helped in drafting a new Education Act.

As one of the four MLAs who served on the Inspiring Education Steering Committee, I feel that we can proudly acknowledge the significant contributions of all Albertans. We sought new ways to reach out to Albertans and involve them in meaningful, in-depth discussions about education. Community participation was extensive and essential in producing the new Education Act.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the next steps of our transformation are not ones that the government will take alone. That is why the dialogue will continue within our communities amongst Albertans who care about the future of education for children and youth in our province.

Thank you.

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

Education Funding

Mr. Mason: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The list of Alberta school districts in tough positions making decisions to deal with underfunding is growing. In the past few days we have seen reports from the Fort McMurray, Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge, Grande Prairie, Medicine Hat, and Battle River areas about some of these difficult situations.

When we talk about the Education budget, we are dealing with children and youth to whom we owe responsibilities. Young people will also ensure a strong and prosperous province for all the rest of us in the years to come. It is no cliché to say that we invest in children. What is spent to ensure they receive good education in safe and stimulating environments is creating our future.

This Progressive Conservative government has found billions of dollars to chase ideas like carbon capture and storage or to subsidize horse racing. They give big energy companies windfall profits from the oil sands through inadequate royalty formulas that cost us billions in lost revenue. But when it comes to schools, the PCs' inadequate funding means teachers and other skilled professionals

who work with our children will be losing jobs, and it means young people eager to be educators, who have invested in years of education, will not get jobs. It means class sizes will increase, vital local community schools will close, children with special learning needs will miss individualized attention, and rural children may be in more multigraded classrooms and spend more of their lives on long bus rides. These are all situations which harm the education of Alberta children.

It is shameful that we have a PC government and a Minister of Education wanting to talk about abstract ideas in legislation while walking away from real action to address the challenges our education system is facing. The children of Alberta deserve better, Mr. Speaker.

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

Emergency Preparedness

Mrs. McQueen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to talk about an important annual event that reminds Albertans and, indeed, Canadians about the importance of being prepared for emergencies. Next week is Emergency Preparedness Week across the nation. It is an opportunity to remind everyone that by preparing for emergencies and disasters, we can save time, reduce anxiety, and perhaps even save a life.

As we know, emergency response in Alberta is first handled locally by our municipalities, but just as important is the individual responsibility each of us has when it comes to emergency preparedness. During this year's Emergency Preparedness Week the government of Alberta is encouraging all Albertans to create a 72-hour kit. Having this kit will give Albertans and their families the essential items to keep them safe, and having a similar to-go kit will assist everyone in the event they need to evacuate.

Mr. Speaker, that's what emergency preparedness is all about: knowing the hazards and planning ahead. The planning we do now can save our own life or that of a loved one. Just as important, when we're prepared for an emergency, it means first responders will be able to help the most critically affected and injured people first.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that everyone will take the time during Emergency Preparedness Week to review their family emergency plans and stock up on their own 72-hour kit. Together we all have a role in enhancing this province's public safety, and together we can be a province prepared.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

3:10

The Deputy Speaker: May we revert briefly to Introduction of Guests?

[Unanimous consent granted]

Introduction of Guests

(continued)

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Rocky Mountain House.

Mr. Lund: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a great honour for me to have this opportunity today to introduce three constituents from the Rocky Mountain House constituency. They are Ray Ahlstrom from Alhambra; Gord Sanders from James River, Sundre; and Neil Godlonton. They are here to meet with the Minister of Sus-

tainable Resource Development. I would ask them to now rise and receive the traditional warm welcome.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to rise today and introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly an incredible group of people from the Department of Alberta Education who have committed themselves to public service. More specifically, this group has dedicated countless hours in numerous ways to the transformation of our education system through the Inspiring Education process and through the development of Bill 18, the new Education Act. Their task to this point has not been an easy one, and I have nothing but the utmost of respect and appreciation for each and every member of our department staff who offered their skills and talent in helping to create an education system in Alberta that will continue to lead the world and provide our students with every opportunity to find their own happiness and success in life.

We have with us today Rick Baker, Sheldon Bossert, Laura Cameron, Chelsea Evans-Rymes, Donna Fedoration, Bette Gray, Terence Harding, Keray Henke, Mark Kay, Amanda Krumins, Paul Lamoureux, Peter Malcolm, Allison Matichuk, Carol McLean, Rob McPhee, Caroline Nixon, Rakhi Pancholi, Greg Rudolf, John Rymer, Sandra Shepitka-Boyle, Lorraine Stewart, Carolyn Stuparyk, Kathy Telfer, Angela Town, and Maureen Towns.

There are many others, of course, who aren't able to join us, but I want to on behalf of all of us in this Legislature say thank you to these individuals and through them to all staff in Alberta Education, in fact all of our staff in the government of Alberta, who do so much every day to make it work for the people of Alberta. I'd ask them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of our Assembly.

The Deputy Speaker: The chair wishes to use this occasion to recognize that April 28 is a special day for the hon. Member for Calgary-Nose Hill as it is his birthday.

Notices of Motions

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to give oral notice of a motion for leave to introduce a bill, being Bill 19, the Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2011.

I would also rise pursuant to Standing Order 34(3.1) to advise the House that on Monday, May 9, 2011, written questions 14, 19, and 20 will be accepted, and written questions 15, 16, 17, and 18 will be dealt with.

Also, on May 9, 2011, motions for return 13, 14, and 16 will be accepted and motions for return 12 and 15 will be dealt with.

Tabling Returns and Reports

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

Mr. Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table the required number of copies of the blog post *The Towering Cedars of Lebanon* from Gillian Berg's blog, posted on January 8, 2011. I quoted this blog entry in my member's statement yesterday to highlight the impact that volunteer firefighters can have in someone's life.

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

Mr. Chase: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated, I have three tablings. My first is the required number of copies of an April 26, 2011, media release from the Sierra Club, CPAWS, the Castle-Crown Wilderness Coalition, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and the Alberta Wilderness Association calling for a boycott of lumber products from the Crowsnest forest until the government and the sawmill in question have reformed forest management to protect the watershed.

My second tabling is a March 22, 2011, newspaper article from the *Missoulian* addressing a judge's decision to block selective thinning in the Kootenai national forest because Montana Forest Service was unable to show it had properly assessed how the projects would affect grizzly bear populations. It's a shame, Mr. Speaker, that grizzlies don't require passports to cross our endangering border. My final tabling is from 25 individuals who are concerned about the upcoming June fate of the Castle-Crown area, when clear-cutting is set to begin. They are as follows: Susan Ellis, Judy Wright, Linda Martens, Casey Brennan, Nicholas Engelmann, Devon Smead, Rebecca Haynes, Dennis Francis, Marilyn Goode, Gail Matwichuk, Nancy Cooley, G. McElree, Peter Morgan, Erika Sullivan, Bella Zimbalatti, Allison Forsythe, Chris Lee, Mona Gudjurgis, Armand Boisjoli, Annie Ryan, Gaile Carr, Eric Edwards, Mary Rausch, Camille Gilbert, and Brian Gibbons.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Energy.

Mr. Liepert: Yes. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my answer to a question earlier today, I'm going to table the required number of copies of the *Edmonton Journal* front-page article of a month ago, April 3, which talks about power bills increasing, and today's copy of the *Edmonton Journal*, page B3, a three-paragraph, fairly buried article about electricity prices that are dropping sharply. I would strongly encourage the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood to take a look, and maybe he'll have a question on May 9.

Mr. Mason: Mr. Chairman, point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: Point of order?

Mr. Mason: Yes. It is not permitted to table newspaper articles in the House. It may be his research, Mr. Speaker, but it's not in order.

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

Ms Blakeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of my colleague the Leader of the Official Opposition I would like to table copies of court documents that he referred to during his questions in question period today specific to the case of Dr. Qureshi against the Northern Lights health region.

Thank you very much.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Airdrie-Chestermere.

Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table five copies of a letter received from a Marion Leithhead. She is from Bawlf, Alberta. It's a very good letter. She talks about her displeasure with regard to Bill 50 and the fact that the government voted down a motion from this hon. member to repeal that bill.

Mr. Liepert: One letter.

Mr. Anderson: This is just one, but it's very much worth . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. member, please continue.

Mr. Anderson: Well, I think the hon. Energy minister wants to hear the letter, so I think I'll read it.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. member, just table it.

Mr. Anderson: Are we not allowed to do that?

The Deputy Speaker: Just table it.

Mr. Anderson: Sometimes those Q-tips fall in the ears, you know. You've got to read these things for him to understand.

The Deputy Speaker: This is tabling time, so just table enough copies.

Mr. Anderson: Okay. Well, we'll table five copies of that for his viewing enjoyment. Maybe I'll come in next week with a few more just to help him understand how serious his silliness is.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood, do you have some tablings?

Mr. Mason: Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table copies of 35 different reports from individuals who work in long-term care. They've been collected by the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees, and they indicate specific problems in caring for elderly patients on shifts when they were short-staffed. These reports indicate that residents often missed bathing, did not receive their meals on time, and bells, when they called for help, were not able to be answered in a timely manner. I'm happy to table these, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

Tablings to the Clerk

The Clerk: I wish to advise the House that the following document was deposited with the office of the Clerk: on behalf of the hon. Mrs. Jablonski, Minister of Seniors and Community Supports, responses to questions raised by Ms Pastoor, hon. Member for Lethbridge-East, and Mrs. Forsyth, hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek, on March 8, 2011, Department of Seniors and Community Supports main estimates debate.

3:20 Projected Government Business

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

Ms Blakeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. At this point according to Standing Order 7(6) I would ask the Government House Leader to share with us the projected government House business for the week following next – next week is a constituency week – so the projected government business for the week commencing Monday, May 9.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Monday, May 9, under Government Bills and Orders in the evening we anticipate dealing in Committee of the Whole with Bill 8, Missing Persons Act; Bill 15, Victims of Crime Amendment Act; Bill 16, Energy Statutes Amendment Act; for third reading Bill 6, Rules of Court Statutes Amendment Act; Bill 7, Corrections Amendment Act;

Bill 12, Alberta Investment Management Corporation Amendment Act; and Bill 14, Wills and Succession Amendment Act.

On Tuesday, May 10, 2011, under Government Bills and Orders in the afternoon Committee of the Whole on Bill 16 and third reading of Bill 1, Asia Advisory Council Act; Bill 10, Alberta Land Stewardship Amendment Act; Bill 15, Victims of Crime Amendment Act; in the evening third reading of Bill 1, Asia Advisory Council Act; Bill 10, Alberta Land Stewardship Amendment Act; and as per the Order Paper.

On Wednesday, May 11, 2011, in the afternoon third reading of Bill 1, Bill 8, Bill 10; Bill 11, Livestock Industry Diversification Amendment Act; Bill 16, Energy Statutes Amendment Act; and as per the Order Paper; in the evening third reading of Bill 10 and Bill 11 and as per the Order Paper.

On Thursday, May 12, 2011, in the afternoon third reading of bills 10 and 11 and as per the Order Paper.

The Deputy Speaker: Now the chair will deal with the point of order. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood on a point of order.

Point of Order Allegations against Members

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I will cite Standing Orders section 23(h), (i), and (j). That is to say that the rules state that members would be called to order by the Speaker if in the Speaker's opinion the member

- (h) makes allegations against another Member;
- (i) imputes false or unavowed motives to another Member;
- [or]
- (j) uses abusive or insulting language of a nature likely to create disorder.

Now, as unlikely as that may seem given the hon. Minister of Energy's history, he claimed that I and the hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo used the *Edmonton Journal* as our source of research. I just want to correct the record here, in particular, and I hope that the hon. minister will recognize the error of his ways and, hopefully, stand up and apologize.

First of all, we employ top-rate research staff in our caucus, and we have plenty of sources of information beyond the newspapers. In fact, often on this subject the newspapers are covering what we say rather than the other way around. I just want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that we have tabled documents from the organizations Alberta Direct Connect and the Industrial Power Consumers Association, both of which have made it very clear and have given considerable analysis, which we have used, which shows that this minister and this government's plans to impose transmission infrastructure on this province will make Alberta industry uneconomical and will result in a 65 per cent increase in the transmission component of everyone's bills.

This information is what we've been asking the minister about. It's been very clear and we've made it clear that we got this information from our own research and from these organizations. We've also been in touch with RETA, which I think is the Responsible Electricity Transmission association as well as the Consumers' Association of Canada. They are all reputable organizations that do good research and with whom we are in contact on matters relating to this and other things to do with electricity deregulation.

When the minister tables, against the rules, by the way, in this Assembly newspaper articles in an attempt to illustrate his point, which is false, that we in fact get our research from the newspaper, he is doing a disservice to this Assembly. In fact, in

suggesting that we get our research from the newspapers, he is misleading the Assembly.

I would ask, Mr. Speaker, that you rule that the minister should stand up and apologize for his attempt to besmirch the reputation not only of myself but of my caucus and, of course, all of our excellent staff.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Energy.

Mr. Liepert: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, some targets are just too easy.

Let me very briefly respond to this member. I go back to *Hansard* of April 14, where the member asked me a question and stated, "Yesterday the Minister of Energy claimed that after a massive 62 per cent jump in April," and he goes on. Now, going further through the front-page article of the *Edmonton Journal*, it didn't say 62 per cent. It actually said 66 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, I want to also reference the fact that in that same *Hansard* of April 14 this particular member said, "I will certainly put my position as critic on the line." That was followed up by my comment: "I think I heard the member say that if the price of electricity in the city of Edmonton averages 6 or 7 cents a kilowatt hour in the month of May, he'd be prepared to put his job on the line."

Mr. Speaker, it's obvious, because the question quoted a 62 per cent increase and the *Edmonton Journal* story says a 66 per cent increase, that he's done his research elsewhere, so I would withdraw the comment that the member does his research on the front page of the *Edmonton Journal*. But I do want to ensure that the member is prepared to uphold the other commitments that he made to the House as we proceed through this session.

The Deputy Speaker: Well, I think the chair shall now make a ruling here. First of all, I think this is a point of clarification. You had the floor. You have already explained. Then we also have the withdrawal of the statement by the minister.

So let's go on. Let's continue.

Orders of the Day

Government Bills and Orders Second Reading

Bill 18 Education Act

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with great pleasure that I ask for leave to introduce Bill 18, the Education Act, for second reading.

The course of history turns on events both large and small. Often no one can truly understand the significance of what has been achieved in the past until long after events have occurred. For example, more than 570 years ago Johannes Gutenberg perfected movable type, and we are all beneficiaries of the revolution in access to learning that his invention helped to initiate.

More than 290 years ago Wapasu, a Cree trader, brought a sample of bituminous sands to the Hudson's Bay Company post at York Factory on Hudson's Bay. That was indeed a small event, Mr. Speaker, but 84 years ago it resulted in Karl Clark of the University of Alberta perfecting a process for separating bitumen from the oil sands, that has become one of the pillars of Alberta's economy today.

Fifty years ago this month Yuri Gagarin was rocketed into space and orbited the Earth. His 108-minute journey signalled that technology was going to drive the future. We can show now how these events set the stage for many things to come. But at the time they occurred, just what they meant to the future wasn't immediately clear. Today we're witnessing far more than just the mere tabling of legislation. We are witnessing an event that has the potential to change the lives of generations of Albertans to come.

3:30

When the School Act of 1988 was introduced, it was intended to bring education into line with the world that existed at the time and to provide Alberta and its students with an effective foundation for the future. The current success of our K to 12 system and the acknowledgement that it is one of the best educational systems in the world shows the wisdom behind the changes that were made to the School Act in 1988.

However, the world of 1988 was a much different place than the world in which we exist today. In 1988 one of the important technological announcements was the release of an advanced scientific calculator. Technological advancements have turned that much heralded calculator into not much more than a battery-operated paperweight. In 1988 the Internet was six years old, and it was not nearly the Internet that we know today. Personal computers were just starting to be available. Mobile phones were still in their infancy. In 1980 there were about 11.2 million mobile phones in the entire world. Now there are more than 3 billion mobile phones. The world has changed dramatically since 1988. Alberta has changed and is changing still.

One of the things our education system must do now is to respond effectively to a far greater diversity in the native languages and cultures of our student population. Alberta has drawn newcomers from Africa, India, Pakistan, China, and indeed all parts of the world. These newcomers rightfully expect Alberta to educate their children in a way that equips them for success in their new province and country.

In addition to responding to newcomers, we must also better respond to the needs of our First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples. This is the fastest growing segment of young people in Alberta. We must ensure that they, too, have the same opportunities for success and are equipped to perform at the same level of achievement as the rest of the population.

Our system is doing well now, but we must ensure that it does well by every child and that all children are provided equal opportunity for success. Given the rapid changes that we're seeing in Alberta and in the world generally, we cannot be complacent about our education system and the role that it will play in our future prosperity. The world of tablet computers, smart phones, Smart boards, text messaging, video chat, and Internet-connected game consoles was the stuff of science fiction in 1988.

As Daniel Pink, the noted American author, has said, it is our responsibility to educate our children for "their future, not our past." Though we cannot predict the future, we can help shape the future through education. Our education system must continue to evolve if we are to continue to be leaders in education today and tomorrow. That is why we've introduced the new Education Act.

Alberta has experienced tremendous economic development through the past decades since the School Act was introduced. Fundamental changes are occurring in the global economy. Our province must change, too, if it's to flourish in the new economy just as it did in the old. As was stated in this year's throne speech, "Of all of Alberta's natural resources, none is more valuable than our people. It is our ethical citizenship, engaged thinking, and entrepreneurial spirit that have made Alberta prosperous today"

and which must be the foundation of education if the children of today are to realize their promise tomorrow.

Ethical citizenship, engaged thinking, and entrepreneurial spirit are the qualities of our education system that must be instilled in our children as they grow into young adults. It is those qualities that will enable them and our province to reach our full potential. Though Alberta's education system leads the world today, we must not be complacent. We must redouble our efforts to maintain and remain a world leader in education.

Through the Education Act we will equip the education system to offer students more flexible, engaging, and personalized learning. We will continue to build the teaching profession. We will recruit, prepare, and support the best and brightest in becoming and remaining teachers. We will continue to build an education system in which all students have value, a system that recognizes that all children have some capacity for success regardless of their ethnicity, place of birth, or the physical or psychological challenges which they may realize in reaching their full potential.

When looking at the achievement of Yuri Gagarin, it is important to remember that it was not a rocket that took him into space. It was his education, an education that allowed him to identify and follow his passion and enable a man who was only five foot two to become a giant of achievement and to take on the mantle of Columbus of the Cosmos.

Through the new Education Act we are making a commitment to all Albertans' children that they, too, will be able to find and follow their passion. We will create schools that are safe, caring, and respectful places in which to learn and grow. This will be the responsibility not only of communities, boards, schools, and teachers but of the students as well. Students will be required to refrain from, not tolerate, and to report bullying directed towards others in the school, whether or not it occurs in the school, online, or during the school day.

One significant change of the Education Act that will also affect students is the school leaving age being changed to age 17. This change sends a clear message about the importance of education and the need to complete high school if one is to take full advantage of the opportunities Alberta has to offer, and it implements a portion of a private member's bill brought forward by the Member for Little Bow a number of years ago.

Another change is that our young people will have access to a high school education until the age of 21. This acknowledges that not all students work at the same pace and that many students who now leave high school early find themselves blocked on the basis of age when trying to return to complete their studies. This change, too, acknowledges the importance we place on education and our willingness to support those who leave and want to come back. Their being able to do so will not only be a benefit to them but to Alberta.

The new Education Act also creates residency for students based on where they live rather than on where their parents live. This change is based on the belief that an eligible student who is a resident of Alberta and who has a parent who is a resident of Canada is entitled to an education here. In essence, the new education system will adapt to the student and not the student to the system. As we have seen through successive generations, it's education which will enable our children to recognize their maximum potential.

Though the Education Act was drafted here in the Legislature, its content actually comes from the people of Alberta. The Education Act is the result of almost three years of unprecedented dialogue with Albertans about how our K to 12 system needs to be transformed for it to equip our students for success in the 21st century. All school jurisdictions in the world, including the top-

performing systems in Finland and Singapore, have recognized that their models for education must be changed and their systems must be transformed.

We can be proud of the fact that Alberta is taking a bold step forward when it comes to transforming our education system. There is something that I must make clear, however. It is not legislation that will transform our education system; it is people that will do that. Our success will be based on the engagement in education of trustees, teachers, students, parents, and the broader community. The Education Act is predicated on the basis that education is of benefit to all and requires the support of all for its success.

Mr. Speaker, it is not by chance that we are not introducing a new School Act. The School Act of 1988 was about the operation of the system of education. The new Education Act changes the focus from the system and the buildings to the student. The focus moves beyond seeing learning as only taking place in the school and will allow learning to take place at any time, in any place, and at any pace. We will also continue to build capacity for local decision-making and foster broader community engagement.

The Education Act, unlike the School Act it is replacing, is less prescriptive and is more descriptive, or enabling. The education system does not tell students what to be; it enables them to be what they can, want, and need to be. In the same way, the Education Act won't tell stakeholders exactly what to do but will enable them to do what needs to be done. The Education Act describes the desired destination; it does not describe the specific route for arriving there.

It provides boards with natural person powers that they have said are critical for their success and enables them to act as true leaders in the quest for educational excellence. Boards will be able to do any legal thing a person can do that is consistent with board responsibilities as outlined in the act. Natural person powers will enable boards to be more responsive, nimble, and adaptable in meeting the needs of the communities they serve. If anyone believes that these powers will somehow unduly politicize school boards, I only need to remind them that trustees are elected every three years precisely to ensure that the views of the community shape the work of the school boards.

It will also create the conditions that will allow boards and the ministry to work together with all educational stakeholders to transform education. The act clearly indicates the responsibilities of boards, parents, teachers, and students in creating educational success. The responsibilities of boards reflect a student-centred focus and the principles of inclusiveness, diversity, and excellence. Because education is foundational to the future, it matters to the whole community, and the whole community has a responsibility to engage in the education of its children. The new Education Act makes engagement possible across the system.

3:40

Though many things have changed in the new Education Act, some things remain the same. The act still shows a commitment to a publicly funded education system that provides a choice of educational opportunities – public, separate, francophone, charter, and private schools as well as home-schooling options for parents – and it continues to honour the rights guaranteed under the Constitution of Canada with respect to minority language and minority denominational education via public, separate, and francophone schools.

But we should be clear that our transformation neither begins nor ends with legislation. Make no mistake. School boards and teachers are already changing their work to fulfill the vision of inspiring education and the needs of our students. No one can

reasonably expect that a large, complex system like the education system of Alberta, with a \$6.4 billion budget, 600,000 students, over 40,000 teachers, thousands of support staff, and almost 1,700 schools, is going to change overnight because of the passing of an act.

That's why as we transform the education system, our conversations will continue. Albertans are shaping the changes we're making, and we welcome their continued involvement in shaping this legislation. Every Albertan who has a comment or suggestion about this act can join the discussion at www.education.alberta.ca/engage or learn more about this act at www.education.alberta.ca/educationact.

It's an exciting time for education in Alberta, a time when we have a clear direction that we need to take and a willingness and ability to travel there. Today, Mr. Speaker, in a small way we are making history in Alberta. Just as Yuri Gagarin showed us that we are no longer limited to this planet and could explore amongst the stars, we are now showing that our education will be bound only by the possibilities we create for ourselves.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would move that we adjourn debate.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

Government Bills and Orders Third Reading

Bill 17 Appropriation Act, 2011

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move Bill 17, the Appropriation Act, 2011, for third reading.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Airdrie-Chestermere on Bill 17.

Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, as this is our last opportunity to stand in the House and talk to the budget, essentially, I'd like to stand on behalf of the Wildrose Alliance caucus and explain again why our caucus does not support this budget. We feel that this government has over the last several years severely damaged the economic standing of Albertans.

There was a lot of work done prior to this administration to establish a heritage fund and to establish a sustainability fund. We did those things. Should more money have been saved during that time? Yeah, it should have. Should spending have been controlled more during that time? Absolutely, it should have. No doubt about it. But what has happened since then over these last several years has been an absolute non-Albertan, frankly, way of doing things. This is not the Alberta way.

There have been billions and billions of dollars in cash shortfalls: this year \$6.6 billion; last year \$7.6 billion – in other words, that's how much money is going out compared to how much money is coming in – and close to \$8 billion over the last two years in actual deficit numbers on the books according to the government's own numbers. There is no excuse for this.

The government can say all they want – and they do – about how the economy is in the tank, et cetera. The economy in Alberta is not in the tank. Our unemployment rate is very low, not necessarily compared to where it was in 2006 or 2007, but certainly historically it is very, very low. If you want a job in Alberta, generally speaking, you can get a job in Alberta.

That's not to say that things are always wonderful for everyone, but things are good. We have near record royalties coming into the

coffers. There have been one or two years when overall royalties have been as high as they are now, yet here we are with a \$6.6 billion cash shortfall and a \$3.5 billion deficit. It's a shameful display of fiscal irresponsibility by this government.

Albertans deserve much better than this. We have over and over again stood in this House and explained that if we had begun earlier to cap program spending and operational spending and capital spending to the rate of inflation plus population growth, if we capped it at that amount, we would not be in the situation we're in today, where in order to balance the budget, we would have to essentially freeze spending, frankly, in order to do it at the rate we're going right now, and we wouldn't be able to account for those increases in inflation plus population. That's because this government failed to control their spending even in the last few years. If they had started back in 2004-2005, yeah, we'd have huge surpluses even today. But even if they had started at the beginning of this current Premier's administration to increase spending by only the rate of inflation plus population growth, we would have a balanced budget today. It shows a complete lack of ability to prioritize.

Why are we building new museums when we have a \$6.6 billion cash shortfall? Why are we building new MLA offices and offices for civil servants when we have a \$6.6 billion cash shortfall? Why are we giving cabinet 34 per cent raises when we have a \$6.6 billion cash shortfall? Why are we doing these things? Why can we not spend on capital the same amount as B.C., Ontario, and Quebec do on average per person? Why can we not do that? How is that unreasonable? That's a right-wing idea? Are you kidding me? That's a fiscally responsible idea. That's what fiscally responsible or at least fiscally competent governments do. But here we are, spending bucketloads more money than any province in the country per person on capital, and here we are, in the cash shortfall position that we find ourselves in.

This government is not conservative. I challenge anybody in this House to identify something conservative that this government has done over the last three years of their administration. Look at their property rights record. Look at their record on the budgets. Look at their record on health care: the centralization, the top-down, the lack of democracy. It's ridiculous, and it needs to change.

There are many priorities that Albertans have. We need to build the schools that our kids need. We need that. We need to build the roads that we need. We need to finish twinning that road to Fort McMurray. We need to finish those ring roads. We need these things. Absolutely, we need them. But can we not do so in a way that will not fiscally mortgage our children's future? The Wildrose says that we can do that. I think that we can do it. I know there are members over there that probably in their heart of hearts know that they can do it.

We can't mortgage our kids' future anymore. What are we going to say to them in the year 2020 or 2030 when they come to us? What are we going to say if the heritage fund is still worth, as it is today, as much as it was in 1981? At that time, let's say, there's a replacement for oil, or the price of oil isn't nearly as high as it is today, and we're not able to fund the social programs and the things that we fund because we refused to be fiscally responsible and to put a little bit away so that that ocean of nonrenewable oil and gas in the ground could be turned into a mountain of permanent investment capital, replenishing the books of the government every single year with interest.

We could do that. We could have started it long ago. We could start it today, but we're not. I just fear that, you know, when we're long gone, out of this Legislature anyway, our kids will look at us when the price of oil is at 20 bucks and say: "What on earth were

you guys thinking? You had the chance to save. You had the chance to give us a legacy fund to allow us to keep taxes low and keep people coming up here to start new businesses and new industries. We could have had that seed capital to do that, perpetuating over and over every year regardless of what oil and gas does. That's what we could have had, yet you didn't." That's what they could say to us if we don't get our fiscal house in order.

3:50

The government says that centralizing health care has saved money. It hasn't. In the last two years there's been another double-digit increase in health care: 6 per cent this year, and I believe it was 17 per cent last year. It's just an absolute falsehood that centralizing health care has delivered any kind of efficiencies in the health care system, and because that's such a large part of the budget, that is why we find ourselves in the fiscal hole that we are in today.

We have not controlled our costs. We have not signed appropriate contracts. The teachers' contract: do we want highly paid teachers? You bet we do. We want to have competitively paid teachers. We want to attract the best to Alberta. But you cannot in the middle of a recession give a 9 to 10 per cent increase to teachers over a two-year period when the cost of living goes up during that same time by less than a third of that. You can't do that and balance your books. If you do do that and try to balance your books, you're going to be cutting teaching positions.

That's exactly what has happened. Even with the 4 and a half per cent increase in education spending the boards around the province have to cut teaching positions because of the blinking contract that the Minister of Energy signed with the teachers when he was Education minister. When we sign contracts that are not sustainable, we have to pay. Our kids have to pay. It's wrong. We can make sure our teachers are paid well. We can make sure that there are cost-of-living increases.

I met with the ATA table officers yesterday, and we got to talking about this. I said: "Wouldn't you rather have a sustainable, gradual funding increase so that you knew you could make sure that you hired teachers each and every year and could keep your teachers and not have cuts? Or would you rather have these unsustainable pay increases and then have the government not giving you the money to fund the contract and then you having to lay off teachers?" Guess what? It was an easy answer for them. But they also said: why should we be expected as teachers to keep our pay increases to the rate of the cost-of-living index, inflation, when the government MLAs' salaries are tied to the average weekly wage index, which greatly outstrips inflationary costs? That's a good point. How can they? Teaching is every bit as important as being in this Assembly. That's for sure.

So how can we do that? Well, not only did this government tie our own salaries to the average weekly wage index, which is wrong – it should be tied to the rise in inflation – but furthermore, aside from that, it gave us a 34 per cent pay increase as its first order of business when it got back after the 2008 election. We all know in this House, specifically us new members, what that was. That was a wake-up call.

Mr. Hinman: Tell us about it.

Mr. Anderson: Well, it's another story for another day. It was shocking, but what do you do?

Mr. Hinman: Wasn't that the Premier's promise to individual candidates?

Mr. Anderson: Yes, it was, hon. member.

The point I'm getting at is this. If we want to have a sustainable budget, if we want to be able to save, if we want to be able to bring our budget into balance, we have to make tough decisions. That doesn't mean we have to slash and burn. What it does mean is that we have to prioritize. We cannot have everything right now.

I've got four little boys. They want everything right now. Everything. It's all good stuff. They want ice cream. They want a baseball glove. They want a hockey stick. They want this book, that book. They want the candy and the pop, and they want everything. Guess what? As a parent you've got to make sure that you give them what they need and that you give them the best that you can give them, but you don't give them everything all the time, whenever they want it. You prioritize. You make sure that they're registered for their baseball and for their hockey so that they can have some sports to play. If that means not getting them a whole bunch of new toys, then that's what it means. You prioritize. You make sure you've got food for them and heat and that the mortgage is paid. You make sure those are done first before you go to Hawaii for a \$10,000 vacation, right? Is that not what you do?

You make sure that you can afford to pay the mortgage and the car payment before you go off and upgrade to a Mercedes or something, right? You make sure you can pay your bills. You look at your income, and you make sure, and you plan for the future.

But this government doesn't do it. They just keep on throwing around money like candy at a parade. Whatever you need. If you're going to vote for me, here's some money. That's all it is. It's not conservative; it's not fiscally responsible. I expect the Liberals and the New Democrats to be more fiscally responsible than these guys right now.

Mr. MacDonald: We are.

Mr. Anderson: Yeah. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar sure seems to be. I like some of the ideas in his alternative budget. He seems to have it down.

The Liberals: are they extreme right wing, too? I guess they're extreme right wing because they want to control spending. Good grief. Get a grip. When the Liberals and the New Democrats are running to the right of you on fiscal issues, isn't that a sign? Of course it's a sign. When you go back, you're probably going to have one more budget before the next election. Maybe. I don't know. Who knows when the next election is? But if you are going to have one more budget, please – please – whoever the new Premier is, hopefully that Premier will be truly fiscally responsible. I'm looking at the group you've got there right now, and I'm not very hopeful on that.

Let's hope that that occurs. If it does, make sure to hold that person's feet to the fire. Make sure that they show leadership and get our books balanced and put a savings plan in place that is going to make sure we can save and build that heritage fund over the next 10 to 20 years to a hundred billion, to a hundred and fifty billion so that when the oil and gas goes back down to 20 bucks and when we're sitting in our armchairs enjoying our grandchildren, we can enjoy our grandchildren because they'll still be here in Alberta, because they can still get a job, because we can keep the Alberta advantage here instead of having to talk with them at Christmas by Skype because they're down in some other jurisdiction out east or out west or down south because Alberta blew it, spent all the money, had to raise their taxes, and drove all the business out of Alberta so the place isn't a very good place and not a land of opportunity like it is today.

That's what we're risking. It's pretty easy for us to sit here in this Chamber and say: oh, well, we'll be long gone by then. Yup. You're right. The Minister of Energy will certainly be long gone

by then. In 2030, I would hope – meaning out of this Legislature, of course. But what legacy will he have left? What legacy will this Premier have left? What legacy will the next Premier in this party, the PC Party, have left? Will they be the party that bungled the future prosperity of Albertans, or will they be the party that did the right thing and got their spending in check, reconnected with Albertans, and went forward?

I'll tell you that if you don't reconnect with your fiscal conservative side, you're going to see a new government sitting over there at the next election. That is what will happen. When you don't stick to your principles, when you get all wishy-washy and try to be everything to everybody, you're not going to be successful. It didn't work for Paul Martin. It didn't work for a whole bunch of different leaders and different parties in this country and across the provinces. You need to stand for something. You need to stand on your principles. Fiscal responsibility used to be a principle of this PC government, and it's not anymore. Please find it in the next year for the good of all Albertans, and if you don't, the Wildrose will find it for you. I'm sure the New Democrats will try to help out and be fiscally responsible since you are more fiscally responsible than this crew is over here from all indicators right now.

With regard to this budget, again, we would ask the government to please not just balance the budget but balance the cash shortfall. Let's not spend anymore of our sustainability fund, which is down to something like \$6 billion this year from \$17 billion just a few years ago. Let's have a savings strategy put in place, once we do get the books balanced, to grow that heritage fund by controlling spending to the rate of inflation plus population growth and investing those surpluses, or large chunks of them, into the heritage fund, not just for inflation-proofing it, like you've been doing the last 10 years, but growing it to where it can be a mountain of permanent investment capital, replenishing our province with compound interest each and every year. That's important.

4:00

We can prioritize. We can be responsible. We can make sure that our health care needs are taken care of, that our education needs are taken care of, that vulnerable Albertans are cared for, but we have to get rid of the things that we don't need. The carbon capture and storage fund: we've got to get rid of it. We've got to get rid of those ridiculous pay raises for cabinet ministers and so forth. We've got to make sure we stretch that capital plan, even just another year, and stretch that over a little bit longer. We can have everything we want. We just can't have it today, right now, and that's okay. [interjection] Yeah, we do need a school in Airdrie. Absolutely we do. We need a school in Beaumont, too. We don't need \$2 billion in carbon capture and storage spending being pumped under the ground. We certainly don't need today a new museum or new MLA offices. We can wait for those things because, yeah – that's right – Airdrie needs a school, and so does Beaumont, and so do a few other places.

This is obviously going to pass third reading, this budget. I hope that next budget this government will find its courage, will find its principles again, hopefully, if they ever had them, and that they will put forward a budget that is the Alberta way of doing budgets, which is balanced, which is saving for a rainy day, which is saving for our kids and caring about more than just our own political aspirations, our own political health for the next election but caring for the financial health and well-being of Albertans and our children for generations to come.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

Mr. Zwozdesky: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I listened carefully to the inaccuracies of the former speaker here from Airdrie-Chestermere. We've corrected a lot of those things already in our estimates debate, and other speakers have already spoken to some of the facts that are in this budget, so I'm going to support third reading of the Appropriation Act when the vote comes.

With that, I would like to move adjournment of debate on this Appropriation Act.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

Government Bills and Orders

Second Reading

(continued)

Bill 16

Energy Statutes Amendment Act, 2011

[Adjourned debate April 26: Mr. Kang]

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

Ms Blakeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This is weightwise probably the second-heaviest bill we've had this session. There's a lot of stuff in this. Just given a number of different factors and timing of schedules, my caucus has not been able to get a briefing yet. I've worked with the sponsor of the bill, and I appreciate her flexibility in still trying to provide us with a technical briefing, and we will take advantage of that. I've tried to read her notes in comparison with the bill.

I just want to note for everybody that this is an omnibus bill. This is amending every act that has anything to do with energy. Here are some of the things that are getting amended: the Alberta Utilities Commission Act, the Coal Conservation Act, the Electric Utilities Act, the Gas Utilities Act, the Oil and Gas Conservation Act, the Oil Sands Conservation Act, and the Pipeline Act. This is no small stuff. This is the energy sector in Alberta. There's a lot going on here.

I know the government is in a hurry and wants to get this all tied up with a bow by the end of the next week that we're in session here, but I think we have to be careful. We need to understand this really well and understand what the consequences are that roll out from these changes. I'm going to walk my way through some of the questions that I have, and the sponsor has kindly agreed to either provide me with answers or to bring them up at the very beginning of Committee of the Whole here. I apologize if the sponsor has answered that in her notes that she's provided to me, but she hasn't structured her notes in the same way that the bill is structured, so I was having a bit of trouble going back and forth between the two this afternoon.

I'm going to walk through the bill and ask the questions based on that. I'm going to start with the Coal Conservation Act, which starts on page 2 of this omnibus bill. Now, part of what's happening here in section 2 is that it's changing the definition of coal, and it essentially is redefining it as "sedimentary rock that contains at least 50% by weight organic matter formed from plant or algal matter." I apologize for pronunciation on that.

What it's dropping out of that definition includes "manufactured chars, cokes and any manufactured solid coal product used or useful as a reductant or energy source or for conversion into a reductant or energy source." There's quite a difference there. What it essentially does is drop out, as I mentioned, the manufactured stuff. It's possible now that with the redefinition you're going to have some regulations that no longer apply that we think will apply, but if you've changed the original definition of coal, they may not.

I'm wondering if the changing of this definition changes the ownership of the lower quality coal under the mineral rights, so the stuff that you sort of crush together to make something that burns. I'm sorry. I'm using layperson's terms here, so I hope I'm not offending anyone. I'm wondering if redefining it changes the ownership of that under the mineral rights, and I'm wondering how this affects the classification of the pore space. That pore space is getting more and more important, and I wonder how this change in definition is going to affect or be affected by the change in the definition of coal.

In the same bill under subsection 14, which appears on page 7 of the original bill, the entire section 14 has been repealed. I'd like to know why the sponsor or why the Minister of Energy felt that it was necessary to remove the industrial development permit and if the sponsor of the bill could describe how similar objectives are going to be met under other existing regulations. Or do we just not have them anymore?

Moving on to the Electric Utilities Act amendments on page 17 of the new bill, in section 3(2)(a) it's adding a new ground under which the Market Surveillance Administrator could object to the Independent System Operator rule. I'm wondering why the government felt the need to allow the Market Surveillance Administrator to object to rules that are not in the public interest. Is it coming out of this?

Mr. MacDonald: Well, that's part of it, but that's a really skimpy document.

Ms Blakeman: Okay. What I've just had plunked in front of me is the MSA, Market Surveillance Administrator, report to the minister in 2010, which the sponsor of the bill has been kind enough to supply to us. It is quite thin. Oh, my God, look at the typeface. Crikey. This is, like, seven-point font. The actual report itself is 14 pages long.

4:10

It strikes me as really odd that you would have the one talking about the public interest. "The Market Surveillance Administrator may object to an ISO rule . . . on one or more of the following grounds," and then "that the ISO rule may have an adverse effect on the structure and performance of the market" or a ground set out in a different subsection. You think: what on earth is going on here? "Does not support the fair, efficient and openly competitive operation of the market" or – here's the one – "that the ISO rule is not in the public interest": I'm looking for an explanation of that.

I'm wondering how this relates back to those public-interest hearings at the Alberta Utilities Commission. Was removing those a problem, and are they now finding a way to put them back in again through this amendment?

Moving on to the Gas Utilities Amendment Act, which appears on page 20 of this new act, it's removing ministerial regulator power and replacing it with a section that empowers the Alberta Utilities Commission to make rules in its place, so rules on standards, on service outages, maintenance requirements, customer care, billing in call centres, et cetera. It's actually quite a long list. I'm wondering: does the minister believe that the rule-making capability on customer care and call centres covers outbound calls to sign customers into long-term contracts, for example, to entice people to switch gas distributors? How does that get covered? Is it in fact covered under that section? That actually does appear under 28.3(1)(e) on page 21 of the new act.

I'm also wondering if the maintenance and repair standards of gas utilities will improve given the rule-making capability, or is it more about setting uniform standards across the province?

To the Oil and Gas Conservation Act, which starts on page 22.

The section I'm looking at is on page 23, which is section 5(3), empowering the Energy Resources Conservation Board to exempt in situ coal scheme wells from specific provisions in the existing regulations, which indeed it does, "exempting wells that are included within an in situ coal scheme from the application of specified provisions of the regulations." Why does the government feel it's necessary to give the board power to exempt in situ coal schemes from regulations, essentially as it sees fit?

I would have thought that it should set regulations that are proper for in situ coal schemes . . .

Mr. Liepert: Why don't you read the answers we gave you?

Ms Blakeman: Well, because this is what I was given an hour ago, and I just can't read that fast. It's fair for me to put these on the record.

Mr. Liepert: You got it long before then.

Ms Blakeman: Well, she has not given it to me in any way that relates back to the act.

Mr. Liepert: It was how it came up in questions. You asked the same questions as your partner there.

Mr. MacDonald: No. Her questions are totally different.

Ms Blakeman: That's what this is for, to ask the questions. If you've got a problem with answering them, deal with your person. Thank you.

Under the Oil Sands Conservation Act amendments, which start on page 27, changing the definition of oil sands products: with the use of the oil sands derivatives to produce ethane, are the products produced from the ethane, including polyethylene, now considered oil sands products? Does this change the potential tax class of the assets that produce this? Could it affect the payoff period for future oil sands products if they're to include petrochemical facilities that use oil sands derived products as feedstock? Those are tiered questions, that hook into each other.

Government Bills and Orders Third Reading

Bill 17 Appropriation Act, 2011 (continued)

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. member, it's 4:15. I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member, but pursuant to Standing Order 64(5) the chair shall now call the question on Bill 17, the Appropriation Act, 2011.

[The voice vote indicated that the motion for third reading carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 4:16 p.m.]

[Ten minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

| | | |
|----------|----------|------------|
| Ady | Horne | Oberle |
| Benito | Johnson | Prins |
| Bhullar | Johnston | Quest |
| Blackett | Klimchuk | Rodney |
| Brown | Knight | Sarich |
| Campbell | Liepert | Snelgrove |
| Danyluk | Lukaszyk | VanderBurg |

| | | |
|----------|---------|-----------|
| Fritz | Marz | Woo-Paw |
| Goudreau | McQueen | Zwozdesky |
| Hancock | Mitzel | |

Against the motion:

| | | |
|----------|-----------|-------------|
| Anderson | Hinman | Mason |
| Blakeman | MacDonald | Taft |
| Totals: | For – 29 | Against – 6 |

[Motion carried; Bill 17 read a third time]

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

Mr. Zwozdesky: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Given the considerable progress that has been made today and over the last several days, I would move that the House stand adjourned now until 1:30 p.m. on Monday, May 9.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 4:29 p.m. to Monday, May 9, at 1:30 p.m.]

Bill Status Report for the 27th Legislature - 4th Session (2011)

Activity to April 28, 2011

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 Asia Advisory Council Act (Stelmach)

First Reading -- 6 (Feb. 22 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 132-33 (Mar. 1 aft.), 189-95 (Mar. 3 aft.), 553-62 (Mar. 24 aft.), 618 (Apr. 12 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 862-73 (Apr. 26 eve., passed)

2 Protection Against Family Violence Amendment Act, 2011 (Brown)

First Reading -- 18 (Feb. 23 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 133-34 (Mar. 1 aft.), 380-82 (Mar. 15 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 408-16 (Mar. 16 aft., passed)

Third Reading -- 438-39 (Mar. 17 aft., passed)

Royal Assent -- (Mar. 18 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2011 c4]

3 Engineering, Geological and Geophysical Professions Amendment Act, 2011 (Rogers)

First Reading -- 18 (Feb. 23 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 134-35 (Mar. 1 aft.), 313-14 (Mar. 10 aft.), 382-83 (Mar. 15 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 416 (Mar. 16 aft., passed)

Third Reading -- 439-40 (Mar. 17 aft., passed)

Royal Assent -- (Mar. 18 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2011 c3]

4 Securities Amendment Act, 2011 (Brown)

First Reading -- 18 (Feb. 23 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 135 (Mar. 1 aft.), 383-84 (Mar. 15 aft.), 416-17 (Mar. 16 aft.), 440-41 (Mar. 17 aft.), 618 (Apr. 12 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 858-60 (Apr. 26 aft.), 861-62 (Apr. 26 eve., passed)

Third Reading -- 947 (Apr. 27 eve., passed)

5 Notice to the Attorney General Act (Rogers)

First Reading -- 18-19 (Feb. 23 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 136 (Mar. 1 aft.), 618 (Apr. 12 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 797-99 (Apr. 20 eve., passed)

Third Reading -- 947 (Apr. 27 eve., passed)

6 Rules of Court Statutes Amendment Act, 2011 (Olson)

First Reading -- 19 (Feb. 23 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 136 (Mar. 1 aft.), 618 (Apr. 12 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 799-801 (Apr. 20 eve., passed)

7 Corrections Amendment Act, 2011 (Oberle)

First Reading -- 73 (Feb. 28 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 137 (Mar. 1 aft.), 618 (Apr. 12 aft., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 801 (Apr. 20 eve., passed)

8 Missing Persons Act (VanderBurg)

First Reading -- 73 (Feb. 28 aft., passed)

Second Reading -- 137 (Mar. 1 aft.), 618 (Apr. 12 aft., passed)

- 9 Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2011 (\$) (Snelgrove)**
First Reading -- 113 (Mar. 1 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 185-86 (Mar. 3 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 244-47 (Mar. 8 aft.), 254-57 (Mar. 8 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 305-08 (Mar. 10 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Mar. 14 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force March 14, 2011; SA 2011 c1]
- 10 Alberta Land Stewardship Amendment Act, 2011 (\$) (Knight)**
First Reading -- 122 (Mar. 1 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 247-54 (Mar. 8 aft.), 257-58 (Mar. 8 aft.), 618 (Apr. 12 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 877-85 (Apr. 26 eve.), 910-17 (Apr. 27 aft.), 919-37 (Apr. 27 eve.), 937-46 (Apr. 27 eve., passed)
- 11* Livestock Industry Diversification Amendment Act, 2011 (Prins)**
First Reading -- 208 (Mar. 7 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 313 (Mar. 10 aft.), 552-53 (Mar. 24 aft.), 618-27 (Apr. 12 aft.), 661-62 (Apr. 13 aft.), 790-97 (Apr. 20 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 826-27 (Apr. 21 aft.), 873-77 (Apr. 26 eve., passed with amendments)
- 12 Alberta Investment Management Corporation Amendment Act, 2011 (Dallas)**
First Reading -- 208 (Mar. 7 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 364-65 (Mar. 15 aft.), 675-79 (Apr. 14 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 802-04 (Apr. 20 eve., passed)
- 13 Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 2011 (\$) (Snelgrove)**
First Reading -- 328 (Mar. 14 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 365-67 (Mar. 15 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 403-08 (Mar. 16 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 432-38 (Mar. 17 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (Mar. 18 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force March 18, 2011; SA 2011; c2]
- 14 Wills and Succession Amendment Act, 2011 (Drysdale)**
First Reading -- 328 (Mar. 14 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 365 (Mar. 15 aft.), 679-680 (Apr. 14 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 804 (Apr. 20 eve., passed)
- 15 Victims of Crime Amendment Act, 2011 (Oberle)**
First Reading -- 329 (Mar. 14 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 363-64 (Mar. 15 aft.), 680-684 (Apr. 14 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 827-28 (Apr. 21 aft., amendments introduced), 853-58 (Apr. 26 aft., adjourned)
- 16 Energy Statutes Amendment Act, 2011 (McQueen)**
First Reading -- 482 (Mar. 22 aft.)
Second Reading -- 552 (Mar. 24 aft.), 820-26 (Apr. 21 aft.), 852-53 (Apr. 26 aft.), 969-70 (Apr. 28 aft., adjourned)
- 17 Appropriation Act, 2011 (\$) (Snelgrove)**
First Reading -- 818 (Apr. 21 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 841-52 (Apr. 26 aft., passed on division)
Committee of the Whole -- 904-10 (Apr. 27 aft.), 937 (Apr. 27 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 967-69 (Apr. 28 aft.), 970-71 (Apr. 28 aft., passed on division)
- 18 Education Act (Hancock)**
First Reading -- 898 (Apr. 27 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 965-67 (Apr. 28 aft., adjourned)
- 201* Health Insurance Premiums (Health Card Donor Declaration) Amendment Act, 2011 (Sandhu)**
First Reading -- 55 (Feb. 24 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 73-86 (Feb. 28 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 464-68 (Mar. 21 aft.), 579-88 (Apr. 11 aft., passed with amendments)
Third Reading -- 704-05 (Apr. 18 aft., passed)
- 202 Legislative Assembly (Transition Allowance) Amendment Act, 2011 (Anderson)**
First Reading -- 55 (Feb. 24 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 209-24 (Mar. 7 aft., defeated on division)

- 203 Alberta Get Outdoors Weekend Act (Rodney)**
First Reading -- 152 (Mar. 2 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 588-89 (Apr. 11 aft.), 705-10 (Apr. 18 aft., passed)
- 204 Justice System Monitoring Act (Forsyth)**
First Reading -- 304 (Mar. 10 aft., passed)
- 205 Municipal Government (Delayed Construction) Amendment Act, 2011 (Taylor)**
First Reading -- 362 (Mar. 15 aft., passed)
- Pr1 Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties Amendment Act, 2011 (Rogers)**
First Reading -- 550 (Mar. 24 aft., passed)
- Pr2 Galt Scholarship Fund Transfer Act (Pastoor)**
First Reading -- 507 (Mar. 23 aft., passed)
- Pr3 Auburn Bay Residents Association Tax Exemption Act (Johnston)**
First Reading -- 515 (Mar. 23 aft., passed), (Apr. 26 aft., not proceeded with)
- Pr4 Cranston Residents Association Tax Exemption Act (Johnston)**
First Reading -- 516 (Mar. 23 aft., passed), (Apr. 26 aft., not proceeded with)
- Pr5 New Brighton Residents Association Tax Exemption Act (Johnston)**
First Reading -- 516 (Mar. 23 aft., passed), (Apr. 26 aft., not proceeded with)
- Pr6 Tuscan Residents Association Tax Exemption Act (Johnston)**
First Reading -- 516 (Mar. 23 aft., passed), (Apr. 26 aft., not proceeded with)
- Pr7 Hull Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2011 (Rodney)**
First Reading -- 516 (Mar. 23 aft., passed)

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