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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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Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Thursday, December 1, 2011

[The Speaker in the chair]

Prayers

The Speaker: Good afternoon.

Let us pray. Guide us all in our deliberations and debate that we may determine courses of action which will be to the enduring benefit of our province of Alberta. Amen.

Please be seated.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Cao: Hon. members, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize a group of individuals in the galleries today who play a key role in the democratic process in our province of Alberta. The staff who work in our constituency offices often provide a first point of contact for our constituents and represent our offices and this Assembly. These special individuals are here today participating in the winter constituency employee seminar, which provides an opportunity for them to network with other LAO staff and obtain an overview of the numerous programs and services available through the LAO. Each year the service and contribution of these individuals is celebrated with the employee recognition dinner, which the Speaker will be hosting this evening. Today over 70 constituency office employees are here with us from all corners of the province, and I would like them to now please rise and receive the warmest welcome and recognition from the House.

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Human Services.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour today to bring two introductions. First, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly three representatives of the Edmonton YWCA Rose Campaign. The Rose Campaign is a national advocacy campaign to end violence against women and girls. It takes its name from the original rose button, created almost 20 years ago to commemorate the 14 young women who were tragically murdered on December 6, 1989, at École Polytechnique in Montréal. Each year December 6 marks Canada's National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women. On this day and every day we need to acknowledge the horrible harm that violence does to our families, communities, and society and take a stand against violence and abuse. By wearing a rose button, Canadians can help raise awareness about violence against women and show their support.

I'd ask these three guests to rise as I call their names: Amanda Vella, president of the YWCA Edmonton; Julianna Charchun, vice president and chair of the advocacy committee of YWCA Edmonton; and Jackie Foord, chief executive officer of YWCA Edmonton. Please give these women the traditional warm welcome. In accordance with your directions the rose buttons are available at the doors for members, and I would ask them to proudly wear them.

Mr. Speaker, I'm also pleased to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly four young community leaders from Alberta's Youth Advisory Panel. These enthusiastic and inspiring youth provide our government with valuable advice that helps shape programs that make a difference for Albertans. I'm excited to meet with all 18 panel members in the new year

along with the newly appointed Youth Secretariat chair, the hon. Member for Calgary-Mackay, who is incredibly passionate about Alberta's youth and deeply committed to reinvigorating the panel's important role in shaping social policy. We look forward to hearing the panel's perspectives, learning from their experiences, and working to promote their innovative ideas for creating positive change.

With us today: Nicole Baker is working towards a bachelor of science degree and mentors young women about pursuing postsecondary education and careers in science. Samantha Sperber is in her second year of a bachelor of science degree at Grant MacEwan University. She plans to transfer to the doctor of optometry program and one day help improve the visual health of people in developing nations. Joseph Kubelka is a political science and business student at Grant MacEwan University. He's passionate about governance and volunteering, evidenced by his participation on the student council, the UN Club, and the Academic Policies Committee. Loryn Marcellus studies business administration at NAIT. He's a strong advocate for at-risk youth, serving as chairperson of a committee dedicated to ending youth homelessness in Fort McMurray. Nicole, Samantha, Joseph, and Loryn, please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome and thank you from this Assembly.

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

Mr. Horne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly staff here today from the Mental Health Patient Advocate Office. The Mental Health Patient Advocate Office is the only provincial investigative body in Canada created specifically to look into complaints and concerns from or relating to persons under certificates in mental health facilities or under community treatment orders. The advocate office works to promote and protect the rights of mental health patients and those acting on their behalf by ensuring that they are informed about their rights under the Mental Health Act. The office is a valued resource to patients, families, and health care providers and helps Albertans navigate the mental health system by providing referrals and links to all other programs and oversight bodies.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that each guest rise as I say their name: Fay Orr, Mental Health Patient Advocate of Alberta; from Fay's office, Carol Robertson Baker, Beverly Slusarchuk, Ryan Bielby, and Ronda Gauthier. I'd ask all hon. members to join me in welcoming these guests.

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

Dr. Sherman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly the future MLA for Stony Plain. His name is Arlin Biffert. He's a bright, young individual who works in public relations. More importantly, he has been knocking on doors for the better part of the year, listening to the constituents of Stony Plain. He wants to improve the lives of the First Nation groups and all of those who live in Stony Plain with better health care, better education, better opportunities for men and women in his future constituency. He's accompanied by Wade Izzard, another hard-working, young volunteer who has been getting to the doors with him. I ask all members of the Assembly to give them the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

The Speaker: The hon. Deputy Premier.

Mr. Horner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do indeed have an introduction today on behalf of the hon. Member for St. Albert. It's an honour to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly Mr. Liam Connelly, a resident of St. Albert. Mr. Connelly instructs a business course at Concordia University College. He wanted his students to have a chance to see government at work, tour the Legislature Building, and to visit the library as well and see for themselves what a great Alberta treasure they have. With him today are some of his students. They are Drew Koning, Margaret Batty, Matt Jones, Chris Aloy Mora, John Panas, and Cara Kahlke. They are all seated in the members' gallery this afternoon. I would ask that they rise and we give them a warm Alberta Legislature welcome.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton Centre.

Ms Blakeman: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. It's no surprise to members of the Assembly that I have been bringing the views of a number of my constituents into the Legislature during the debate on Bill 26, the Traffic Safety Amendment Act. A number of those people are small- and medium-sized business owners in the hospitality sector that are in my fabulous constituency of Edmonton-Centre. I know that a number of them have joined us today. I'm just not sure how many and which ones actually came. Rather than introduce them by name, I'm going to ask that any people that are here representing that hospitality sector and concerned about their livelihood and the effects of Bill 26 on their livelihood, please rise and accept the warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

Mr. Anderson: Hello, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to this House a great Albertan and a great business leader in Calgary, Mr. Chris Challis. Chris is the former president and CEO of Phoenix Oilfield Hauling, a public company, and also the former president and CEO of EnQuest Energy Services, also a public company. He's a great Scout leader, and he's on the board of the Tuscany Residents Association. He's married with two kids, speaks fluent French, German, and English, and is the Wildrose candidate for Calgary-North West. If he could stand and receive the warm applause of this Assembly, that would be great.

1:40

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

Mr. Mason: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm very pleased to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly two special guests. Our first guest is Amee Barber, who is a PhD student in political science at the University of Alberta. She works now for the Alberta NDP caucus as a research officer and has been with us for several months, and we're very, very pleased to have her on our team. Sitting next to her is her grandmother, Dorothy Ritchie, who is a leading member of the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service, that is the WRENS, and served in the Second World War. I would like now to ask Amee and Dorothy to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of our Assembly.

Members' Statements

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

Youth Secretariat

Ms Woo-Paw: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta is home to thousands of inspiring and talented children and youth whose enthusiasm, new ideas, and leadership in their communities help make our province to be a better place to live every day. Youth are Alberta's future, but they are also our present. There are no limits to what we can learn from our young people when we truly listen to their opinions and experiences and when we work side by side with them to find solutions to challenges we face together as a society.

Mr. Speaker, I'm so honoured that the hon. Minister of Human Services has given me the opportunity to serve as the new chair of Alberta's Youth Secretariat. As chair it is going to be my duty to help ensure young people continue to play an important role in contributing to social policy in effecting positive changes and in creating the vibrant and prosperous Alberta that they envision for their future children and grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, in the new year I will have my first opportunity to meet with members of Alberta's Youth Advisory Panel, 18 young Albertans between the ages of 15 and 22 who provide advice to our government about programs and services that help young people. Created in 2000, the panel has made key contributions in the development of the Alberta mentoring partnership, Alberta's gang reduction strategy, the Premier's Council for Economic Strategy, and Inspiring Education: A Dialogue with Albertans.

I look forward to meeting with these inspiring young leaders, hearing their ideas, drawing from their experiences, and reporting back to this House through the hon. Minister of Human Services to highlight their contributions to our province.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Fundraising for Leadership Campaigns

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you very much. There is still no legislation in Alberta governing fundraising rules for political leadership campaigns. This has allowed some practices that many consider unethical. Over the course of the last few days I've attempted on behalf of concerned taxpayers to find out just how much taxpayer subsidized cash our Premiers have received and are receiving from the PC Party through the benefit plan trust scheme.

The government has evaded these questions, but a little digging reveals some troubling facts. True Blue Alberta was set up in 2005 as a legal vehicle for raising money and paying expenses for the former Premier's leadership campaign. According to a 2007 investigative report by the Ethics Commissioner True Blue Alberta had no other purpose than this. Yet according to the member disclosure statements of the former Premier under the category of Income, Other he received taxable allowances of at least \$5,000 from True Blue Alberta in 2008. His spouse received taxable allowances of at least \$5,000 in 2008 and '09.

If True Blue Alberta had no other purpose than fundraising and reimbursement for the 2006 leadership campaign, why were these individuals still being paid two and three years later? Where did this money come from, and why, interestingly enough, does a corporate registry search show annual returns are outstanding for True Blue Alberta for the last five years even though they are paying out taxable allowances during that time?

My job as a member of the Legislature is to ask questions, sometimes tough, uncomfortable questions. I'd submit that the current Premier and the ministers responsible for the laws

governing these issues are compelled to and should answer my questions.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Ms Evans: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Saturday, December 3, is International Day of Persons with Disabilities, a day of celebration both here in Alberta and around the world. It is a day committed to celebrating the lives of persons with disabilities and those who support them.

In 1992 International Day of Persons with Disabilities was proclaimed by the United Nations as a way to promote understanding of disability issues and the rights of persons with disabilities. Mr. Speaker, nearly 15 per cent of Albertans over the age of five have one or more disabilities.

This year International Day of Persons with Disabilities will be celebrated across the province with special events and presentations of awards from the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, of which I am proud to be a part. Presenting these awards helps us realize the positive impact persons with disabilities have on every aspect of the political, social, economic, and cultural life in our communities.

This year's awards are: an award of excellence in public awareness for Janine Halayko and John Collier for the You Can Ride Two program in Edmonton, an award of excellence in employment for Champions Career Centre in Calgary, an award of excellence in education for Sandra Hukalo of St. Gabriel school in Edmonton, an award of excellence in community for the Medicine Hat accessible playground initiative, and the Dr. Gary McPherson leadership award for Dr. David Legg in Cochrane.

Increasing awareness of the issues that affect the lives of persons with disabilities is an important first step in removing barriers in society and in our communities. December 3 also provides a great opportunity to learn more about the need in our communities for people to be included because they're part of our society and who also have a disability. They have so much to offer.

Mr. Speaker, as part of our efforts to promote this day, I invite all members to participate in their community.

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

Human Rights Day

Mr. Sandhu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to discuss international Human Rights Day. For the last 63 years the international community has recognized December 10 as international Human Rights Day. It commemorates the day in 1948 that the United Nations general assembly adopted the universal declaration of human rights.

The declaration arose directly from the experiences of the Second World War and represents the first global expression of rights to which all human beings are entitled. Since that time this declaration has become the most translated document in modern history. It's available in more than 360 languages, and new translations are still being added.

The declaration set out for the first time in history fundamental human rights to be universally protected and provided a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations. It has enabled remarkable progress in human rights and has inspired human rights frameworks across the globe, including Alberta's human rights legislation, the Alberta Human Rights Act.

The United Nations office of the high commissioner for human rights has proclaimed this year's theme for Human Rights Day: Celebrate Human Rights. It pays tribute to all human rights defenders and encourages others to get involved in the global human rights movement.

December 10 is a day to reflect on the meaning, importance, and need for human rights and to recognize the work of human rights defenders world-wide, who act to end discrimination. Progress is made by the people, Mr. Speaker, and each one of us has the potential to make a difference. On December 10 I encourage all Albertans to do just that.

Oral Question Period

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

Public Health Inquiry

Dr. Sherman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier decided to appoint a judge to review MLA pay, and, presto, in just two weeks a Supreme Court justice miraculously appeared. Yet we have been asking for a judge . . .

Speaker's Ruling MLA Compensation Review

The Speaker: Hon. member, please sit down. You're absolutely wrong, and that question is out of order. The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly appointed the panel as per the direction of the Members' Services Committee.

Go on to your next question.

1:50

Public Health Inquiry (continued)

Dr. Sherman: Yet we have been asking for a judge to lead a public inquiry under the Public Inquiries Act into what are incredibly serious problems in our public health care system, some of which are actually life-threatening. What's more, we've been asking for this for more than one year. What does the Premier see in MLA pay that is so much more important than saving Albertans' lives and protecting our public health care system?

The Speaker: Second question. Go on.

Mr. Horner: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the clarity around who actually appointed the judge to the MLA review.

It's a singular review versus something that we want to have as an ongoing protection for Albertans around the health care system. The Health Quality Council has been investigating issues as they related to the allegations that have been brought forward, in fact, by this member, again without a lot of proof. Again, we have a piece of legislation in front of this House which will allow a judge-appointed inquiry to be held.

The Speaker: The second supplemental on that first set, leader.

Dr. Sherman: Can the Premier simply tell us why it's more important for MLAs to get a pay raise than to keep her promise to conduct a public inquiry into the financial mismanagement of AHS, cancer deaths, the ER crisis, and physician intimidation?

Mr. Horner: Well, Mr. Speaker, as you very well know and will probably admonish the hon. member, this government doesn't

give MLAs pay raises. The Members' Services Committee does that in consultation and in an open and public process. I think that it's almost shameful the amount of politicizing this hon. member has made of some very serious allegations which we take very seriously and will move to investigate.

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

PC Party Benefit Plan Trust

Dr. Sherman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What's really a shame is that it's been a sad week for democracy in this province as Albertans have witnessed government stonewalling at its finest. First, the Minister of Justice refused to answer very basic questions regarding taxpayer funds used to top up the Premier's salary. Now the Premier has jumped into the act by intentionally confusing the issue in this House.

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

Dr. Sherman: Will the Premier be honest and tell Albertans how much taxpayers' money is being used by the PC Party to top up her salary?

Mr. Horner: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is trying to mislead Albertans by stating that these are taxpayer dollars. The actual fact is that these are donations to the Progressive Conservative Party. They are listed in the members' disclosures, and I note that the unelected leader of the Wildrose Party gets paid by her party. I note that even members' disclosure statements for the hon. leader of the fourth party, the NDP, have made disclosure in which his party reimburses him for expenses, a perfectly legitimate thing to do. [interjections]

The Speaker: We have another point of order.
The hon. leader.

Dr. Sherman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. These are donations that are tax receipted, and the hon. leader of the Wildrose Party at least disclosed what she's getting paid.

Given that the Premier, who is leader of the PC Party, can at any time she wishes inquire about her party's use of tax-credited public funds, will the Premier agree to release all the details regarding the PC Party benefit plan trust that uses taxpayer dollars to top up her \$300,000-a-year salary? [interjections]

The Speaker: A third point of order.
The hon. Deputy Premier.

Mr. Horner: Mr. Speaker, the hon. leader should really utilize the resources that are available to him in this House because the reality is that we all disclose the revenue which we receive, and the former Premier and this current Premier will follow those rules and did follow those rules. In fact, the members' public disclosure statements listed the amounts, which is where they got their research from. It was based on a public disclosure that will continue to be done as per the rules of this House.

The Speaker: The hon. leader.

Dr. Sherman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that Alberta's Premier is already the highest paid in the land and given that many Albertan families – Albertans with PDD, Albertans on AISH, and seniors on fixed incomes – are struggling just to put food on the table this Christmas, can the Premier please tell the people of

Alberta and the people on AISH why they're still waiting for the \$400-a-month increase in benefits that she promised them, when all this taxpayer money is going to top up her \$300,000-a-year salary and benefits.

Mr. Horner: Mr. Speaker, the hon. leader should really do his homework. He should actually present facts in the Legislature. He's good at doing the innuendo. He's good at doing the politicizing of some very serious issues.

Mr. Speaker, all of the revenue or income that we receive as Members of the Legislative Assembly and from other sources as part of the rules are in the members' disclosure statements. The Premier and I and you and he, I hope, although he doesn't list any expenses reimbursed to him by his party, which is odd – that's what we would do as Members of this Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: Hon. members, from what I can discern from these first two sets of questions, we have three points of order arising thereof.

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

Mr. MacDonald: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Justice: why are the Premier and the Minister of Justice refusing to answer this very important question? How much money in tax credits is being used to finance the PC Party's benefit plan trust for the Premier?

Mr. Olson: Mr. Speaker, our party is committed to openness and transparency. That's why we have this legislation. That's why we use it. It's working well. We have no plans to change it. Everybody has to make disclosure. Again, I say that it's working well.

Mr. MacDonald: It's working well for some.

The Speaker: Member, question please.

Mr. MacDonald: Now, again to the same minister: how much money will the Premier receive under the PC Party's benefit plan trust that is being set up now and is being subsidized by the taxpayers of this province through the political tax credit process?

Mr. Olson: Mr. Speaker, as I said, the legislation is working well. I don't need to know how much money his party is paying his leader. I don't know if it is. It's not for me to find out, and it's certainly not for me to disclose. Every party can disclose it if they wish. I know the third party discloses it. That's fine. Others disclose it. All leaders have to show what they're receiving. It's being done now. It's fully open and transparent.

Mr. MacDonald: To the same minister: if this is all working so well, why did a standing committee of this Assembly compel or order the Minister of Justice and Attorney General to bring back to that committee a detailed discussion paper to include issues about how the legislation around this is working, how it is to be implemented, and how it is to be recommended? If this is working so well, why was this recommendation made to your department?

Mr. Olson: Mr. Speaker, we're always open to improving legislation. But if there are concerns about political contributions, that's what the independent Chief Electoral Officer is for. So if somebody wants to raise some issues about impropriety, let them speak to the independent Chief Electoral Officer.

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

Critical Electricity Transmission Infrastructure

Mr. Hinman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last Tuesday the Energy minister refused to confirm that the cost overruns for the three transmission lines under Bill 50 have reached half a billion dollars. He avoided saying what the government was doing about it and said that we are just speculating. Now we've heard that the spending is over \$1 billion, all of which falls on Alberta ratepayers if the minister continues to deny and delay. To the Energy minister: are you still going to say that we're speculating when you know that this is the truth?

Dr. Morton: Mr. Speaker, how would I know that that's the truth when the source of their information is: we've heard. That's a terrific source.

What I can tell the Assembly is that we continue to work with the review, respecting the independence of the AUC. We look forward to appointing a review committee next week.

Mr. Hinman: Well, this is the problem about misleading the public. We have the documents here, and we will table them.

Given that I have a copy of the newest monthly report from the Transmission Facility Cost Monitoring Committee, showing that these companies have now spent \$1.03 billion on three projects, and given that these power line companies have a guaranteed rate of return on their approved capital investments, will the minister please inform this House on whether they have a guarantee of \$103 million to AESO, or have you and your cabinet, behind closed doors because of Bill 50, authorized the \$1.03 billion that's been spent 10-fold?

Dr. Morton: Mr. Speaker, I'm quite confident that when these documents are tabled, the word "spent" will not appear in those documents.

2:00

Mr. Hinman: It's disgusting that this government doesn't stick up for the taxpayers.

The Speaker: Okay. Let's ask the question, please.

Mr. Hinman: Sure. Given that the Alberta ratepayers need you to act now in their interest, not in your party's interest, and given that a lot of this spending is on contracts that could still be cancelled, will the minister and the Premier set aside their pride and do the right thing and tell these companies that Albertans will not fund the billion-dollar overspending and that they should cancel all their contracts until your review of those lines is completed? You've given them authorization.

Dr. Morton: Mr. Speaker, for months we've listened to the members of the third party talk about the sanctity of contracts and property rights. Now they're running around saying: let's cancel contracts. They'd better make up their mind.

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

Electricity Prices

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Since deregulation electricity rates have continued to rise for the average Albertan. In December about 70 per cent of residential users in Alberta will pay 13 and a half cents per kilowatt hour, the highest monthly rate since 2002. Will the Minister of Energy admit that deregulation is a failure that allows large corporations to gouge homeowners and small businesses, and will he undertake to

reregulate power rates in this province in order to protect those consumers?

Dr. Morton: I know this will come as a surprise, Mr. Speaker, but no, I will not say yes to the hon. member's allegations. What I will say yes to is that when fairly compared, the electricity rates in this province compare middle of the pack with other nonhydro-based markets. I'm also happy to repeat – I don't know; they must never listen to the answers we give – that unlike Quebec with a \$36 billion debt or Ontario with a \$62 billion debt, there is a zero-dollars debt in this province for generation.

Mr. Mason: Mr. Speaker, will this minister admit that since power companies in Alberta are private, there is an equivalent amount of private debt that is still supported by the ratepayers of this province through their electricity bills? Will he admit to this House that he is using a complete red herring in order to confuse the matter so that he can get out of answering the question of why the people of Alberta are experiencing extremely high electricity rates that just keep going up?

Dr. Morton: Mr. Speaker, the red herrings and the confusion are coming from that side, not this side.

As I repeat yet again – yet again – in Alberta, fairly compared to nonhydro jurisdictions, the cost of electricity is middle of the pack.

Mr. Mason: Will the minister admit that power rates in Alberta are higher than they need to be? Will he admit that the power rates in this province are too high and that they're going higher, and will he admit that deregulation and this government's single-minded, ideological bent on privatization and deregulation has caused this situation and that government is to blame and no one else?

Dr. Morton: Mr. Speaker, I think it's quite evident from that question that the single-minded ideology, the anti free-market ideology, is on that side of the aisle, not this side.

True Blue Alberta Ltd.

Dr. Taft: Mr. Speaker, despite the comments from the Minister of Justice it is time the Conflicts of Interest Act was amended. For example, True Blue Alberta, the company set up to support the former Premier, is 100 per cent owned by Allan Farmer, a senior partner in the law firm Reynolds Mirth Richards & Farmer. This firm also receives lucrative government contracts. So while True Blue is benefiting the Premier, the government is benefiting the sole shareholder in True Blue. To the Minister of Justice: why doesn't government policy define this as a conflict of interest?

Mr. Olson: Mr. Speaker, we do believe in transparency and openness. This legislation provides for that. Every member of this Assembly has to provide information and disclosure about what they receive. I don't know what more I can say than that. It's obvious that the disclosure is there, so this member is beating a dead horse.

Dr. Taft: Well, again to the same minister: given that the value of government contracts paid to this law firm, which is closely linked and, in fact, partly owned by the sole shareholder in True Blue, soared from \$780,000 in 2006 to \$1.3 million to \$1.8 million to \$2.4 million to \$2.6 million in 2010, how can Albertans know that these huge increases weren't facilitated by an inside track to the

Premier's office unless there really are stricter controls on leadership funds?

Mr. Olson: Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to answer for private business and how they make their money. This organization is not within the purview of the Justice minister. If there are problems with electoral impropriety, then we have a Chief Electoral Officer to whom people can complain.

Dr. Taft: Well, Mr. Speaker, to the same minister. The laws are clearly inadequate, and a committee of this Legislature has found it that way. Given that the Standing Committee on Public Safety and Services formally requested that the Minister of Justice – that's you – prepare a discussion paper on leadership disclosure legislation more than a year ago, why has the minister stalled on this request?

Mr. Olson: Mr. Speaker, there was a report that was received. It is being considered, and it is being worked on.

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

Builders' Liens

Mr. Quest: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've spoken with a number of home builders, and they've all said that the Builders' Lien Act is not fair to home builders. I've been told that builders' liens stop construction on work sites, and they're also reported on the builder's credit rating. My question is to the Minister of Service Alberta. Given that liens have the effect of stopping construction, why does the government also allow liens to be reported against the credit ratings of construction companies? Is this not punishing the builders twice, Minister?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Builders' liens are actually registered against the property. The government does not apply them to a builder's credit rating. However, a credit agency may in fact look at that particular lien against a property and make their own decision. So, hon. member, yes, it may be applied against a builder; however, the government has no specific role in that.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Quest: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The first supplemental to the same minister: given that this act is now 30 years old, when will the minister review and update this act to fairly represent and balance the need of the builders, subcontractors, and homeowners?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are always willing to engage with stakeholders to see how we can make our policies, our procedures, and our legislation better. I would be happy to meet with stakeholders, hon. member, and if there are specific stakeholders that bring forward valid concerns, I would be happy to move forth and possibly review the act.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Quest: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. What types of checks and balances do we currently have to protect the builders from receiving liens when a subcontractor is actually the one that's at fault?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have protections in place to protect builders and the public from frivolous liens. If the registering of an invalid lien causes damage to a property holder, section 40 of the legislation makes them civilly liable. I'll say that my department and our investigations unit would be willing to work with folks to see if, in fact, there have been frivolous and vexatious liens that have been placed on people. Quite frankly, that could result in criminal charges of perjury.

Regulated Rate Option for Electricity

Mr. Hehr: Mr. Speaker, Albertans see electricity prices spike, and we hear that the minister is not happy about it. But what does he do about it? Nothing at all. The minister could make simple changes to the regulated rate option to protect consumers without distorting his beloved market, but he refuses. This reminds me of a famous queen saying, "Let them eat cake" when the peasants were short on bread. If the minister is not happy and homeowners and small businesses aren't happy, why does he refuse to act?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Dr. Morton: Well, of course, Mr. Speaker, we are acting. It's the reason that we're reviewing the AESO proposals for two new north-south lines. One of the concerns on that is the cost and the pass-along costs both to commercial users and residential users. To say that we're not acting is absolutely not true.

Mr. Hehr: Well, given that Sheldon Fulton of the Industrial Power Consumers Association of Alberta has suggested two changes to help consumers without harming the market the minister loves so much, will the minister consider the suggestion of a change to the economic withholding-of-power rule and allow utilities to sign power purchasing agreements beyond 45 days on behalf of regulated-rate customers?

2:10

Dr. Morton: Mr. Speaker, I guess most of us know that the opposition usually gets the material for their questions out of the morning newspapers, which is obviously the case this morning. The article that I know is the source of this has some confusion in it. There are two different electrical markets. There is the residential market and the wholesale market. Some of the comments by the individual he referred to apply to the wholesale market but not to the retail residential market.

Mr. Hehr: Mr. Speaker, I also heard that the minister wasn't happy about this from the paper. Hopefully, that was correct.

Given that the minister is not happy, that I'm not happy, our constituents aren't happy, and even industry groups aren't happy, will the minister in this House commit that by this time next year the regulated option will be changed to even out the peaks and valleys for families and small businesses so that our province isn't once again visited by the electricity Grinch at Christmas.

Dr. Morton: Mr. Speaker, finally we find something we agree upon. He's not happy with higher prices. I'm not happy with higher prices. I suspect nobody is happy with higher prices. We all like lower prices. What we're happy about is that we have a province with zero – zero – public debt on electricity whereas other provinces have tens of billions of dollars of debt.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Lacombe-Ponoka, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

Gasoline Prices

Mr. Prins: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are also for the Minister of Energy. Most Albertans drive a vehicle for personal use or for agricultural purposes or for commercial reasons. We all have to pay for gasoline regardless of the price. With all the volatility in the marketplace and the constant shift in supply and demand it can be challenging to keep up with the price changes. To the minister: where does Alberta currently rank in terms of gasoline and diesel fuel prices across the country?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Dr. Morton: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. What an appropriate question to come after all of these other ridiculous questions from the other side.

Lo and behold, the price of gasoline in Alberta this week is lower than in any other province. That darn free market: it just keeps pushing the price lower.

Mr. Prins: To the same minister. It seems that Alberta is blessed with an abundance of oil and refineries, yet for the past several months prices have been above and sometimes well above a dollar a litre for gas. Why is it that when the resource is literally beneath our feet, the prices are so high?

Dr. Morton: Well, it's that darn free market again. That darn free market. Refineries here do buy oil at North American or global prices. When the price goes up globally or in North America, the price of oil goes up here, too. But might I remind the Assembly that higher oil prices mean higher royalties. It means more jobs, and of course it keeps the gas tax in Alberta the lowest of any province in Canada.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Prins: Thank you. I'm glad that prices of fuel are going down a little bit. Will the government ever consider regulating gasoline prices, similar to that which other provinces do, if we see the prices go higher again?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Dr. Morton: Yes. Will the government consider regulating the price of gas? Well, the gentleman with his hand up in the back row there obviously would like that approach, government regulation. The answer on this side is no. There are currently five provinces that do regulate it. Studies show that their prices are no lower than the others. What regulation gets you is less volatility but not lower prices, so this government has absolutely no plans to interfere in the marketplace when it comes to gasoline prices.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View, followed by the hon. Member for Rocky Mountain House.

Emergency Medical Services

Dr. Swann: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Emergency medical services is the canary in the mine of the health care system. EMS workers have never had lower morale than since their mismanaged takeover by Alberta Health Services in 2009. Disturbing reports of serious delays in response, potentially preventable deaths along with frequent red alerts – a red alert is when no ambulance is available in the city – undermine safety as well as prevent professional morale from improving. To the minister: will the minister table in this House the cost of the

transition of the EMS services to Alberta Health Services? What is the annual budget for EMS in the province?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated to the hon. member, I don't have that information at hand with me today.

I'm not aware of a serious morale problem among EMS workers, generally, in the province. I am aware that there have been a number of changes in the last two years which have resulted in the consolidation and in some cases the change of operator in specific communities. As I've told the hon. member, I'll be pleased to get whatever information I can and provide it to him either through question period or outside the House.

Dr. Swann: Indeed, we did raise this question earlier. Since the minister's shallow reassurances what has he actually found out about the dire straits in emergency medical services?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, we don't conduct reviews of operations in the health care system in my ministry by asking questions about dire straits. What we do is attempt to communicate on a regular basis with stakeholders both through Alberta Health Services and externally. We collect data where we can, and we provide that data in a forum that allows us to continuously improve the system. As I said, I'd be pleased to get the hon. member any information that I can and provide it to him.

Dr. Swann: Mr. Speaker, given that the Airdrie city council recently passed a motion and has been forced to keep its fire department responding to EMS calls because Alberta Health Services ambulances cannot meet the demand – I'm tabling their document today: 196 calls in six months; 50 per cent of the time the fire department arrives before the EMS team – will the minister admit that the EMS system is broken?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, what I will do is that I'd be pleased to consider the information that the hon. member is going to table today. I will take it at face value. I will investigate, and I will reply to him.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Rocky Mountain House, followed by the hon. Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo.

LEED Standard for Buildings

Mr. Lund: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I asked questions relative to the leadership in energy and environmental design rating system, known as LEED, and whether it discriminated against regionally grown wood. To the Minister of Sustainable Resource Development: could you please assure me that this process is not discriminating against locally produced forest products through government contracts?

Mr. Oberle: Well, I thank the hon. member for his question, Mr. Speaker, and for his concern in this area. The LEED standard really demonstrates excellence in modern business practices. The LEED standard does in fact allow for the use of locally sourced wood. It provides points for the use of locally sourced wood, presumably because of the reduced carbon impact associated with the lower transportation distances. The province adheres to LEED, but this does not conflict with our desire to use locally sourced wood. We will do that wherever we can.

Mr. Lund: Well, to the same minister: why is it that the industry is required to use certified wood?

Mr. Oberle: Mr. Speaker, in fact, the industry is not required to use certified wood. The LEED standard does give points for FSC certification, not for other schemes which we think are also legitimate certification schemes. But it also gives points for the use of locally sourced wood, regionally developed wood. Whether or not industry wants to certify is individual choice according to their own market conditions. We encourage industry to make that choice. The FSC is interpreted, not required in the LEED standard.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Lund: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My second supplemental is to the same minister. Given the economic pressures facing Alberta's forest industry over the past half decade or so, are you contemplating any other measures that will help strengthen this sector in the future?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Oberle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, indeed we are. These are tough times for the industry. The lumber and OSB prices are tied to the U.S. housing market, and that is in dire straits right now. I believe the future is bright for the forest industry. We are working with them on market development and new product development, and we'll continue to do that.

Mr. Speaker, this is Alberta wood cut from sustainably managed forests. It supports 18,000 Alberta workers and their families. We will stand behind this industry locally, nationally, and internationally.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Airdrie-Chestermere, I take it.

Impaired Driving Legislation

Mr. Anderson: Mr. Speaker, in 2007 the now Solicitor General was contacted by an individual who had given a roadside breath sample of over .08. The Solicitor General testified as a witness for the defence that this person's Charter rights had been violated during this process, which, if true, would have allowed this driving-impaired friend of his to walk. To the Solicitor General: given that the new impaired driving law presumes someone who blows between .05 and .08 is guilty until proven innocent, why would you help defend the Charter rights of your friend, who blew above .08, but not the rights of those who blow below the legal limit? Kind of inconsistent, don't you think?

2:20

Mr. Denis: Mr. Speaker, this member is a lawyer and, for all of the six months that he did practice, I'm sure he knows that it's inappropriate to bring up private legal matters here. He also is incorrect in the fact that this drunk driving legislation does not presume people guilty. Rather, there are two levels of appeal process. If he'd read the legislation – I'm sure he's able to – I'm sure he'd see that as well.

Mr. Anderson: Given that the Solicitor General, by testifying for his friend who blew over .08, clearly understands the police time and resources that get tied up when we enforce our drinking and driving laws in court, doesn't the minister think that instead of using these scarce resources on pursuing those below the legal limit, we should instead be spending police time and resources on the drivers over .08, who are the ones actually killing and maiming people on our streets? Go after the right people, Solicitor General.

Mr. Denis: Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago I took a drinking test with the Calgary Police Service, in which I drank four glasses of alcohol within 45 minutes. Going to .10, I wasn't able to drive, and when I fell below .08, I still didn't feel able to drive. Perhaps this member should take this test himself.

Mr. Anderson: Well, your actions speak louder than your words, Mr. Minister.

Given that the real solution to eliminating drinking and driving is clearly stiffer penalties and more enforcement of existing impaired driving laws for those who are over the .08 limit and given that you have a better chance of seeing a sasquatch in Alberta than you do a checkstop, outside of Christmas, will the minister please commit to actually doing something that will save lives, like increasing the number of checkstops on our streets, and send this new impaired driving bill to an all-party committee so that we can amend the law into one that actually saves lives? Your bill does not save lives, sir.

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Denis: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This member, unfortunately, is incorrect. If he actually just refers to Robert Remington's article in the *Herald*, it focuses on the fact that 20 per cent of all traffic fatalities involving alcohol were of drivers between .05 and .08. And you know what, Mr. Speaker? We have checkstops, and it is downright insulting to our police officers in this province to say that they're not enforcing the law.

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

Labour Relations Code Review

Mr. Chase: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government recently had two Edmonton lawyers quietly conduct a review of the Labour Relations Code at the urging of a coalition of antiunion employers in the construction sector. It was reported that the findings of that review were supposed to be provided to the relevant minister by the end of October. I take umbrage with the term "relevant." It's "appropriate." To the Minister of Human Services: can he confirm receipt of that report and advise this Assembly on its principle finding?

Mr. Hancock: Mr. Speaker, I'm offended that he doesn't consider me to be relevant anymore. I've just about had 15 years in this Assembly, next March 12, and I've always considered myself to be relevant if not always on point.

To answer his question: I haven't received it yet. I had a meeting arranged to meet with the two gentlemen in question. It turned out to be on a day when I was going to attend a Remembrance Day ceremony at a school in my riding, so we postponed the meeting. I anticipate meeting those two gentlemen, actually, Monday of next week.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Chase: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister – and I do appreciate his relevance, and I know he considers me irrelevant – will he table the report in this Assembly so that Albertans can draw their own conclusions as to the validity of its claims and the objectivity of its authors?

Mr. Hancock: Mr. Speaker, I can't make a commitment to table any report right now. What I'm anticipating is some advice to a minister with respect to a number of questions with respect to

productivity issues that may or may not be raised in the labour code. I have no idea at this point in time whether any action will be taken relative to that. If action is taken relative to issues that have been raised by any party in respect to productivity issues relative to the labour code, there will be a full discussion with the affected parties.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Chase: Thank you. To the hon. Minister of Human Services: can you provide us with any type of a timeline when this report might be tabled or discussed in committee? Before the election? After?

Mr. Hancock: What I can tell the hon. member is that I have just actually received today the first report that the two gentlemen were engaged to produce on MERFing, and I have anticipation of perhaps even reading that today. Once I read it and determine whether or not the policy that was put in place by this government with respect to MERFing is actually effective or not, I will be able to bring forward some changes if we need to with respect to MERFing.

With respect to the brief that was presented by Merit Contractors and others relative to productivity, that was one that bore looking into. We looked into it, and when I get the report, I'll advise the hon. member what we're going to do with it.

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

Peter Lougheed Centre Emergency Services

Mr. Amery: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The delay in the construction of the new addition to the Peter Lougheed hospital caused a delay in relocating the lab to the new building, which, in turn, created a space problem at the emergency department. My questions are to the hon. Minister of Health and Wellness. Could the minister advise as to when the construction will be completed and the lab will be moved to the new area?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Horne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. member for the question. There are a few facts here that need to be clarified. There has not, in fact, been a delay in relocating the laboratory at the Peter Lougheed Centre. There is shelled-in space available at the centre for the move to occur sometime in the future, but at the moment this is not an approved capital project and, as such, has not been identified by Alberta Health Services. The timing for the approval of this project as well as other projects is obviously dependent on the availability of provincial capital funds, although government has made a considerable capital investment in the Peter Lougheed over the past two years, investing approximately \$285 million in capital funding.

The Speaker: The hon. member, please.

Mr. Amery: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once the lab has moved, the emergency department is scheduled to expand. When will this expansion occur to ensure that the emergency department can better accommodate the needs of my constituents and all other patients?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Horne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Appreciating the concerns of the hon. member's constituents, I need to point out once again that the expansion of the emergency department at the Peter Lougheed is not yet an approved capital project. There is not presently a time frame for that approval.

Again, we've made a considerable investment in improved emergency services in Calgary. Within the next three years people can expect a new emergency department to be opened at the Rockyview general hospital, and urgent care services will be opened at the Sheldon Chumir health centre in downtown Calgary.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Amery: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the same minister: since the emergency room at the Peter Lougheed hospital is not large enough to accommodate the growth in northeast Calgary, would the minister consider adding the emergent care services to the east Calgary health centre similar to the Sheldon Chumir and the south centre clinic?

The Speaker: Go ahead, hon. minister.

Mr. Horne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While I can't make a specific commitment with respect to the east Calgary health centre, I can tell the hon. member that the availability of emergency room services in Calgary is a major concern for myself and my ministry. We will look at northeast Calgary on a global basis, determine the impact of the opening of the other emergency room facilities I just mentioned, and then be in a position to talk with the hon. member about what else, if anything, may be needed in his specific community.

Funding for Private Schools

Mr. Hehr: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Education indicated that I was against choice in private schools. I want to make it clear that I am all for choice in private schools. In a free society if people do not wish to go to the public education system, go nuts. Go to a private school. Just don't ask the taxpayer to fund your adventure.

To the Minister of Education: given that the Webber Academy only accepts students in the 75th percentile and charges parents up to \$16,000 a year – and this is just one of so many examples – why are we using taxpayer dollars to subsidize these elite private schools?

Mr. Lukaszuk: Well, Mr. Speaker, I have to start by saying that calling the thousands of parents who choose to send their kids to private school nuts is simply inappropriate. I hope that the member withdraws that statement.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, we pride ourselves in choice in this province, and if these parents choose to send their children to private school, pay the tuition or the fees that are associated with it, they can do that. The fact is that the Alberta government does not fully fund private schools nor do we contribute to the infrastructure for private schools.

Mr. Hehr: Given that many private schools charge large tuitions and make children take, essentially, IQ tests to establish a baseline of the type of student they want, clearly eliminating those students they don't feel are up to their calibre, why are we funding these institutions whose sole interests are to provide education to only a very specific segment of the population?

2:30

Mr. Lukaszuk: Mr. Speaker, again incorrect. There are at least a dozen private schools that actually focus and specialize in children with learning disabilities and other disabilities. There are schools that are focusing on gifted children. There are schools that are focusing on kids with sports abilities or interests. There are schools that are focusing on religious or linguistic requirements. There is a vast array of choices, and that's what we pride ourselves on. These parents are neither nuts, nor are their choices limited.

Mr. Hehr: Given the Premier's concern for the rise of private and charter schools and given that private schools have smaller class sizes while charging parents astronomical fees, when will the minister implement the Learning Commission's recommendations on class sizes in our public education system, a promise that is eight years overdue?

Mr. Lukaszuk: Mr. Speaker, we're working with all school boards on meeting the guidelines that have been put in the Maskell report on classroom sizes. As a matter of fact, the Premier has very recently, just a few weeks ago, announced an additional \$107 million that was intended to go into classrooms and alleviate some of the pressures.

We are now working through our budgeting process, and I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that both school boards and parents and this government are working on creating the best environment for children to learn in.

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

Education Concerns in Lethbridge

Ms Pastoor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're very proud of our schools in Lethbridge, but I have some concerns that I've heard from my constituents regarding the future of the education system in Lethbridge. To the Minister of Education: how will the minister ensure that the people of the Lethbridge have a voice in the future of education in Lethbridge and, in fact, Alberta?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Lukaszuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are currently holding a number of education forums today. This morning I actually opened one up in Calgary that some 300 parents, teachers, students were in. We will be heading to Lethbridge. I know the hon. member will be joining me, and we will be speaking with a large number of educators, parents, students, grandparents, and community leaders in Lethbridge. Also, there will be speak-outs led by students in Lethbridge, and we're using Twitter, Facebook, e-mail, phone lines, you name it. You can even send us a letter.

Ms Pastoor: Thank you to the minister for that answer. There are lots of people that actually don't use Twitter, believe it or not.

Another concern that I've had raised is: how will the local Lethbridge school boards not be left out of the current Education Act consultation process? How will the minister address these concerns? I really don't think they want to twitter.

Mr. Lukaszuk: Mr. Speaker, they won't have to twitter if they choose not to. They can use any means.

With school boards I pride myself on developing a really good relationship. I will be meeting personally with the school boards in the area. I'm meeting with school boards zone by zone right now,

so both of the school boards in Lethbridge will have the ability to sit down with me one-on-one and have a good conversation about the success and challenges that they may be experiencing.

Also, Mr. Speaker, we're meeting with parents, and I have to tell you that I had some 1,800 parents on the telephone line just two days ago, and some of them were from Lethbridge.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Ms Pastoor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The final question to the same minister: given that in Lethbridge our public and private boards work together with our city and have shared high school building facilities in addition to a public library which separates them, will the minister be looking at this model, that we're so proud of, when you visit?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Lukaszuk: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes. You know, this is an experience that extends from my home to work. I always tell my three-year-old daughter: share, share, share. The message is to everybody, all the stakeholders. Sharing is great because it maximizes some taxpayers' investment in education. At the end of the day we have to focus on children, so wherever there are synergies between school boards, the private sector, and others, I strongly encourage the concept of sharing.

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

Climate Change

Ms Blakeman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The reality of this government's climate change initiatives is quite different from what the minister has painted: an emission reduction strategy that won't see reduction until 2020 at the earliest, a \$15 carbon tax when experts insist that a tax has to be \$75 to \$150 to make a difference, and we have no plan to increase even that \$15. We ask only the largest emitters, not all emitters, to reduce intensity, not emissions. Mandatory targets for large emitters are twice as weak as the federal ones. To the minister of the environment: how does any of this show us as a world leader?

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Environment and Water.

Mrs. McQueen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I'll say to the hon. member and to all in the House that Alberta is a leader with regard to this. We were the first to do this. What we have continued to say and what we've said in the House before and this week is that Alberta is committed to taking more action on this file, but Alberta is also making sure that when we do, as with Canada, all the large global emitters are part of that solution.

Ms Blakeman: Well, Mr. Speaker, how can the minister claim that this government supports federal climate change goals when Canada will never reach its emission reduction targets with Alberta's plan in the mix?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mrs. McQueen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What Canada and Alberta have both said with regard to that is that we are committed to having a common-sense plan that will reduce our emissions and meet those emissions, but it's got to be a common-sense plan that has real direction and has all large global emitters at the table. Canada is 2 per cent of global emissions. The oil sands are one-

tenth of 1 per cent. Between the United States and China that makes up 40 per cent of the GHGs. We have to have a global plan.

Ms Blakeman: Well, that's not leadership.

Back to the same minister: given that a decade of government resistance and inaction on health impacts has resulted in just barely signing a letter of intent, how will the minister respond when asked about health impacts from development in communities such as Fort Chip?

Mrs. McQueen: I'm very happy to answer that question, Mr. Speaker. With regard to some discussions that I've brought forward in this House and discussions that I've had with the federal Environment minister, Minister Kent, we are working on a first-class monitoring system. We'll be meeting and having some time together with regard to that, and when we're in South Africa, we'll have some time. I would like to say to the hon. member and to this House and to all Albertans: "Stay tuned. That will be coming very shortly."

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

Provincial Diploma Examinations

Mr. Bhardwaj: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A study conducted by a University of Saskatchewan researcher concluded that, on average, Alberta high school graduates are best prepared for postsecondary experience, with a substantially smaller reduction in their grades as compared to their peers from other provinces. That's good, but there are a lot of questions. To the Minister of Education: what is the process for developing your provincial diploma exams, and how do we ensure that these exams are fairly testing our students' cognitive skills so that our students have a fair chance at postsecondary institutions?

Mr. Lukaszuk: Well, Mr. Speaker, for those who have a degree in education, they would know that there is a whole subset of skills in developing a test. There are experts within the Ministry of Education that develop tests, and these tests are designed to test not only the curriculum but in grade 12 the students' ability. That study that came from the University of Saskatchewan is another positive report card for Alberta because it shows that not only are our kids attaining the information that they should according to curriculum, but once tested, they are at par, and their mark only drops by 6 per cent.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Bhardwaj: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Given that so much of a high school graduate's grade hinges upon a diploma exam worth 50 per cent of a student's grade, is the minister completely confident that that exam is balanced, constructed soundly, and completely reflective of the curriculum objectives?

Mr. Lukaszuk: Well, Mr. Speaker, a twofold answer. I am confident that the exam is doing what it is designed to do because now this study from Saskatchewan again reconfirmed that our students, once they receive a mark, let's say 70 per cent, actually have earned 70 per cent, and it shows in postsecondary education. In some provinces their mark drops by as much as 20 per cent. But on whether the balance should be 50-50 or 40-60 or another combination, I'm always open to this discussion.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Mr. Bhardwaj: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A final question to the same minister. The fact remains that 80 per cent from Ontario is considered by many postsecondary institutions the same as 80 per cent from Alberta. What will the minister do to encourage his other provincial counterparts so that we have consistent standards across the country?

Mr. Lukaszuk: Mr. Speaker, as you know, education is exclusively a provincial area of competence, but there is a national table at which all education ministers meet. At the next table I will be bringing this topic forward and encouraging other provinces to look at the Alberta experience and to adjust their testing practices to make sure that they don't artificially inflate their graduates' marks and so that we have a level playing field.

The Speaker: Hon. members, that concludes the question-and-response period for today. There were 18 members recognized, with 108 questions and responses. In 30 seconds from now we will continue with the Routine.

2:40

Members' Statements

(continued)

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods.

Edmonton Southside Primary Care Network

Mr. Benito: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today to recognize the Edmonton Southside primary care network. Located in my constituency of Edmonton-Mill Woods, the Edmonton Southside primary care network, or PCN as it's also known, was first opened in 2005. For six years now the Edmonton Southside PCN has allowed my constituents in Mill Woods to receive professional and compassionate primary care health services locally. The approximately 138 family physicians and 53 nurses, dietitians, and other health specialists have also provided care for patients with chronic diseases and mental health issues.

Mr. Speaker, evidence shows that PCNs are altering the health care landscape in our province through positive changes in the delivery of primary care. Among them, increased patient screening for disease and illness have seen significant increases. Specific to this Edmonton Southside PCN, the annual average number of patient visits to the geriatric care program has risen from 2.8 to nearly 3.4 in recent years.

Primary care networks are contributing to the improvements across the entire health system. However, the impact of any one network still remains uniquely local. I can tell you that the positive impact that the Edmonton Southside primary care network has had in my community has been amazing, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much.

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

Support for the Homeless

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The self-congratulatory communication from this government regarding its record on homelessness is both shameless and shameful. In fact, the government's milquetoast efforts to date will leave tens of thousands of Albertans either without homes at all or living in dangerous, unhealthy, insecure, or overly expensive homes. By talking only about the 10-year plan to end homelessness, the government distracts people from their inaction on the many other facets of what is truly required to address the overall crisis in

housing in Alberta. Moreover, even that plan includes only about one-third of the resources this government's own task force stated were necessary to get the job done.

At noon today a new piece of public art was dedicated beside Edmonton city hall. Sculptors Keith Turnbull and Ritchie Velthuis worked with over 20 artists who have experienced housing problems. This sculpture is intended to get us thinking about how to end homelessness in this wealthy province.

There is a tremendous shortage of affordable, secure housing in this province. Most of the dollars for construction of affordable housing come from federal government transfers, and even as that work goes on, the overall number of affordable spaces decreases as private developers continue converting affordable units to luxury homes for the wealthy, with no government action taken to discourage this trend.

Earlier this fall I raised the crisis being faced by 1,300 Alberta families who are about to lose their rent supplement. The minister responded by saying that they would be covered under the other rent subsidy programs. What he didn't say is that those other rent subsidy programs already have wait-lists thousands of families long and many years long, wait-lists to receive money, Mr. Speaker. The reality is that those people who will be moved to a wait-list will no longer receive the supplement, and they will lose their homes, and the minister does not even have the courage to be straight with Albertans about this decision.

Without action to address other issues such as more low-income rental housing, programs to access near-market housing for others, and good support services for those needing more than just a physical space, there will always be more people becoming homeless than leaving it. We are a rich province, Mr. Speaker, and we can afford more than meagre funding and rich public relations strategies. Housing and homes are a basic human right, and it's about time this government started acting that way.

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

Intercultural Dialogue

Mr. Elniski: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last evening along with the MLAs for Edmonton-Decore and Edmonton-McClung I attended the Harmony Dialogue Group Intercultural Dialogue Institute friendship dinner. The Intercultural Dialogue Institute was founded by Turkish scholar Fethullah Gülen and is dedicated to the promotion of understanding amongst the various cultures, religions, and ethnicities.

Its cornerstone is the belief that civilization is far more than bricks, mortar, science, or technology. It is an undertaking to give value to common interests. A civilized world where a person or group is not threatened by others or threatening to others is profoundly common and remarkably rare. We easily accept the familiar; we have a harder time accepting the unknown. We seek an answer or a personal truth and then look for others who share what we've found or believe. We are not solitary animals, so this makes sense.

The challenge, Mr. Speaker, is to accept that differing or contradictory beliefs do not take away from your own beliefs, that you cannot give away more than you receive, and the acceptance of others' thoughts and opinions does not threaten or diminish. Recognition of and respect for another's rights is at the basis of the philosophy of Gülen and the Intercultural Dialogue Institute. They show a genuine commitment to civilization.

They are bold in their approach and they have good reason to be.

Türkiye, the land of Rumi, is a land of Divine love . . . where diverse faiths and cultures have lived in peace for a millennia: it is a land of dialogue and tolerance, it is the land of Abraham – spiritual forefather of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Our hosts came from the cradle of civilization, Mr. Speaker, and this is why they treat it with such profound seriousness. Their message, like many messages, is often lost in the white noise of our world, but they believe us to be more familiar than we may know so long as we are prepared to give each other a chance, certainly a civilized message often lost in times like these.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Notices of Motions

The Speaker: First of all, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood on a notice of motion.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Later today I intend to introduce a question of privilege pursuant to Standing Order 15(2). I provided written notice to your office of my intention to raise this matter, which I will do later today, with respect to "the government's consistent use of late-evening sittings this fall," which, in our view, "interferes with the ability of members of the House to fulfill their duties."

The Speaker: Such notice will be circulated at the appropriate time.

The hon. Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Mr. Olson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise pursuant to Standing Order 34(3.1) to advise the House that on Monday, December 5, 2011, Motion for a Return 21 will be accepted, and motions for returns 18, 19, 20, and 22 will be dealt with.

Thank you.

Tabling Returns and Reports

The Speaker: The hon. Minister of Human Services.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege today to table the appropriate number of copies of a letter to the hon. Member for Calgary-Varsity. Attached to it is a report called *Cancer in Alberta: A Regional Picture 2006*. You'll recall that the other day in the House the hon. member had raised Motion for a Return 17, and we rejected the motion because it related to an analysis done with respect to a particular part of a report, and that report was inaccurate. I'm now providing the hon. member with the information he was actually wanting to get, which wasn't quite what was in the question.

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

Mr. Horne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased today to table the requisite number of copies of the 2010-2011 annual report of the Alberta Mental Health Patient Advocate office. This report highlights the key accomplishments and issues addressed by the organization. It also profiles individuals affected by mental health concerns and key individuals in the mental health system. As we work to continue to increase our focus on mental health, I would encourage all hon. members to take an opportunity to read this most important report.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood, do you have a tabling as well?

Mr. Mason: Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table the appropriate number of copies of an online news story concerning the valuation by Forbes of the Edmonton Oilers. The proposed downtown arena, according to Forbes, would be worth an extra \$20 million in revenue per season for the Edmonton Oilers.

I would also like to table a web page from Forbes concerning the valuation of the Oilers.

Thank you.

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

2:50

Dr. Taft: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm tabling correspondence received from Marina Elena Tungland and Anna Muze, who own and operate the Il Forno restaurant, one of the really wonderful businesses in my constituency. The correspondence concerns Bill 26. I'll very briefly quote from the letter.

We also feel that the Alberta government needs to take a much closer look at the negative results observed in British Columbia. This would in turn require a longer period of time to dissect this issue. If after proper consideration and time, the Alberta government chooses to implement these changes, we suggest there be a strong educational component to the message being delivered to the public."

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have five copies of the Provincial Court judgment which I referenced today in question period, where the Solicitor General on behalf of the defence is testifying as to the breach of Charter rights of an individual who had blown over .08.

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

Mr. Chase: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm tabling an e-mail from Gail Wilkinson, who I introduced to this Assembly through you yesterday, asking what the Seniors minister is going to do to fix the PDD appeal process, that was found unfair by the Court of Queen's Bench. Among the questions Gail asks is, "Why is it that families are having to spend their retirement savings to go to court to prove that government processes are unfair?"

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Hinman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table three reports that have been submitted to the Transmission Facility Cost Monitoring Committee: one, the western Alberta transmission line; two, the heartland transmission project; and the third is the east DC project. These show that these companies have had an overrun in spending and have now spent \$1.03 billion when they've been authorized only at \$103 million.

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

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have four tablings today. The first is research, a sheet that I have done on the Alberta PC Party constituency association annual expenses between 2006 and '10, and it is noteworthy that Edmonton-

Whitemud, Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock, and quite a number of constituencies here have expenses that are significant. For the five years in total it's over 7 and a half million dollars. I won't bore you with the complete list.

I've also done the ND Party as well, and it's available for all to see. The New Democrats have over the five years spent \$142,000 on annual association expenses.

The Alberta Liberal Party constituency association for the same time period had total constituency expenses of \$302,000. That's very interesting reading. I didn't do the Wildrose Alliance because, of course, they're just getting started.

The Speaker: Okay. Let's get on with the tabling. It's not a debate.

Mr. MacDonald: My last tabling is a letter dated September 9, 2011, to the former Alberta employment and immigration minister regarding the Workers' Compensation Board 2010 special dividend to Alberta employers.

Thank you very much.

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

Ms Blakeman: Thank you very much. Four tablings today. The first is five sets, the appropriate number of copies, of various letters and phone messages that I referred to during the debate on Bill 26 last night: Mike Yasinski, Jim Thornton, Dan Peet, Jonas Van Ginhoven, Joyce Ingram, Nathan Kyler, Vivien Jonathan. These were all people that wrote to me, and I referenced them during the speech last night.

The second tabling I have today is from Inger Bartram, who's a resident at Lions Village Railtown. She is urging the government to produce legislation on life-lease contracts, please.

The third tabling that I have is a report, Mr. Speaker, from myself to you that I'm tabling on behalf of citizens that wrote to my office with regard to the future of Catholic education in Alberta. The message they wish me to convey is: "As one of your constituents, I ask you to ensure that the constitutional guarantee of Catholic Education in Alberta is preserved in the new Education Act." They look to me to include in this legislation "the right of Catholic schools to be governed . . . by elected Catholics." My report includes all of the names of those people that wrote to me on that subject.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Hehr: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I have three tablings today, all with the correct number of copies. The first is a letter that I wrote to the hon. Minister of Energy regarding further questions we had on the incremental exchange program. You will recall that we had some information regarding that program that we want to clarify. In our view, we'd like some further clarification on that.

A second thing. I did make an error the other day in a tabling from a Lethbridge private school; I stated the wrong website. It's dot-org, not dot-ca. Needless to say, I have the correct Lethbridge website now referencing what, in fact, they say on their website.

My third tabling is from two concerned citizens, Gina Shimoda and Dimitria Fields. They're concerned about Wi-Fi wiring in our schools. They have a very interesting package of materials that suggest there may be better ways for us to be going about providing Internet services for our children in school.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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. Mr. Berger, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to the Farm Implement Act the 2010-2011 Farmers' Advocate office annual report and Farm Implement Board financial statements.

Projected Government Business

The Speaker: The hon. Official Opposition House Leader.

Ms Blakeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Under Standing Order 7(6) I would ask the Government House Leader to now share with us the projected government business for the week commencing December 5.

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I anticipate that when we adjourn this afternoon, we'll adjourn to Monday, December 5. In the afternoon, of course, it will be private members' business; in the evening we would anticipate being in Committee of the Whole on bills 21, 24, and 26 and as per the Order Paper.

Tuesday, December 6, in the afternoon Committee of the Whole on the same three bills – 21, 24, and 26 – and as per the Order Paper; that would continue into the evening in committee and then third reading on the remaining bills, being bills 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, and 26, and as per the Order Paper.

We would anticipate bills 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, and 26 remaining in third reading until completed Wednesday afternoon, Wednesday evening, and Thursday afternoon.

The Speaker: Hon. members, we have four additional matters to deal with. It seems to be a daily event now. We have a point of order; I'll recognize the Government House Leader for that, first. Then we'll have another point of order, and I'll recognize the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood to proceed. Then we'll have another point of order with the hon. Government House Leader. Then we'll have a point of privilege application by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

Because this, I'm sure, will take a considerable amount of time, the normal opportunity for members to access a refreshment drink, water or tea or something like that, please proceed now before me even having called Orders of the Day because I do expect that we'll have a leisurely afternoon now.

Hon. Government House Leader, please, your first application.

Point of Order

Factual Accuracy

Questions about Political Party Activity

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the interest of time I'll try to be brief. I rise under 23(h), (i), and (j) with respect to an exchange with respect to one of the questions raised by the hon. Opposition House Leader, but it carries on a matter that's been present in the House for the last two or three days. In particular I refer to the use of the words "taxpayers' dollars" when describing payments that they were asking about, payments from the party to past Premiers and, I think, to the current Premier.

3:00

Now, first of all, it should be clear from the context of the question that the hon. member was violating rule 410(17) on page

122 of *Beauchesne*, sixth edition, which prohibits questions with respect to party matters, and you've ruled on that before. Indeed, my second point of order deals specifically with that question of party matters.

But in this point of order I want to particularly draw your attention and the House's attention to *Erskine May Parliamentary Practice*, 22nd edition, page 297, halfway down the page, where it refers to factual basis:

The facts on which a question is based may be set out as briefly as practicable within the framework of a question, provided that the Member asking it makes himself responsible for their accuracy, but extracts from newspapers or books, and paraphrases of or quotations . . . are not admissible. Where the facts are of sufficient moment the Speaker has required prima facie proof of their authenticity.

I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that it's obvious on the face of it that the hon. member was using the term "taxpayers' dollars" when he knew or at least ought to have known that he wasn't in fact talking about taxpayers' dollars. He was talking about political party funds, which, as I've mentioned earlier, he shouldn't have been talking about in any event. If he wants to investigate party funds and party fundraising, as we discussed in the House the other day, he has a perfectly valid way of doing that through the Chief Electoral Officer, an officer of this Legislature.

He repeatedly refers to taxpayers' dollars. By doing so, Mr. Speaker, and knowing that he's not talking, in fact, about taxpayers' dollars – he's talking about party dollars – he is actually leaving the wrong impression with the public. He's giving the wrong idea. He's giving the public the idea that they're paying taxes to a government and that the only people who can spend taxpayers' dollars is the government with the approval of this Legislature. That, in fact, even on the basis of his question was not what he was talking about.

The hon. member should know that. He has a duty to be factual in the basis of his questions. He has a duty to make sure under this rule that the facts may be set out provided that the member makes himself responsible for their accuracy. I would suggest that we have seen that rule violated time after time after time, and in this particular situation it's particularly egregious.

The Speaker: The hon. Opposition House Leader.

Ms Blakeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm sorry. Government House Leader, could you give me the page number for *Erskine May* again?

Mr. Hancock: Page 297.

Ms Blakeman: What edition are you looking at?

Mr. Hancock: The 22nd.

Ms Blakeman: Oh. I've got the 23rd. Okay. Mine is showing "extraordinary adjournments," which probably isn't what you're trying to tell me. I'm sorry. I'm at a loss as to actually responding to what you have there. I have a newer version than you do.

I think this is a really interesting point, Mr. Speaker, because we have had a number of exchanges and understandings or misunderstandings on language around the money that is donated to political parties by Albertans; therefore, those Albertans are eligible for and, one assumes, receive a tax receipt as a result. Depending on the amount of money that is donated, that individual would receive a tax receipt in which they are not taxed on a specific portion of that money. For example, if they are under the allocation of the 75 per cent tax receipt, if they donated \$100, then they would not be taxed on \$75 of the \$100.

Now, that revenue that would have come to government to spend on government programs is no longer going to do that. It stays with the individual. As a result, citizens have lost that money from going into programs. So it's forgone revenue; it's forgone money. That tax-receipted money is forgone revenue into government coffers and, therefore, not available to citizens. But that money donated is going into party business, so they are intrinsically attached. It's very difficult to pull this out without a long-winded explanation, a question which, of course, the Speaker would never allow. So the shorthand that has been adopted is "taxpayers' money."

Now, I can certainly advise the Leader of the Official Opposition and I will undertake to advise the Leader of the Official Opposition that using the phrase "taxpayers' money" is confusing, and we should seek another brief choice of words that would convey the longer description that I have given as to exactly what this money is. It is money that would have come to government coffers but for being donated to political parties. Therefore, because it's forgone revenue, as the Auditor General has told us many times, there should be an evaluation of whether that forgone revenue achieved its purpose. That is the transparency that we seek. Did it achieve its purpose? That's why the questions are directed as to how the party is using that particular section of money. The rest of the money is not our interest, but that money is in particular.

I will certainly undertake to advise the leader that the phrase "taxpayers' money" is creating confusion and that he should avoid it in the future. We will seek another descriptive term to describe that particular exchange of financial interests.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar, your House leader has spoken.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes, and I have something to add on this matter, Mr. Speaker, as well.

The Speaker: Citation, please.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes, certainly. After hearing from the hon. Government House Leader and his concerns around 504 . . .

The Speaker: Page 504 of what document, please?

Mr. MacDonald: *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, sir.

The Speaker: Proceed.

Mr. MacDonald: Yes. Okay. Now, when we look at the annual financial statement under the Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act for the Progressive Conservative Association of Alberta, you will find a lot of financial details but none clearly outlining what the hon. Leader of the Official Opposition was looking for. But if you flip over to the second page – and this is done on an annual basis. I have the last five or six years of the Progressive Conservative Party's annual financial statements. You will see where the documents to be attached to this financial statement include the Auditor's report, which is required by the Election Finances and Contributions Disclosure Act, copies of all official receipts issued for the calendar year. That's where this matter of tax dollars or tax credits certainly comes into play with official receipts because that is what the tax credit is based on. The tax credit is significant. It could be up to \$5 million in taxes that is

not collected as a result of this tax receipt, the issuance of an official tax receipt.

Now, there's a reconciliation of official receipts here, a list of contributors over \$375, detailed lists of transfers received and transfers paid. There's a lot of information provided here, and there's a lot of information that supports the idea that we're getting less tax dollars because of these official receipts and these contributions made. So I really don't think there is an issue here.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, whenever we look at the private disclosure statements that were discussed in the hon. leader's question, as I heard it, certainly there is direct reference made to the Progressive Conservative Party of Alberta leader's expense reimbursement and the benefit plan trust.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you very much for that illusive explanation. When I asked the hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar what citation, he said page 504. I read page 502 and it says, "Furthermore, a question should not . . ." Then 504 says: ". . . concern internal party matters, or party or election expenses." So I have no idea what the citation has to do with what has just been stated.

The hon. Minister of Sustainable Resource Development.

3:10

Mr. Oberle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's really quite a simple matter we're dealing with here, and the hon. House leader, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre, zeroed right in on it. There is not a single dime of taxpayers' money in the party coffers. Those donations come from individuals. Now, if they want to argue that we shouldn't provide tax credits, that's another argument. The fact of the matter is that there are no taxpayer dollars within the party coffers.

Taxpayer dollars arrive in the government's general revenue fund, and they are spent in accordance with approval of this Legislature and accounted for in the annual reports and audits by the Auditor General. You will notice that not one line of our annual report or of the Auditor General's report refers to anything about party expenditures because there is a very clear separation between party funds and taxpayer dollars. That is the very point of order that the hon. House leader brought up, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Are there others?

Well, first of all, Government House Leader, you intertwine point of order 1 with point of order 3, which we haven't heard from. Can I assume that both are one and same?

Mr. Hancock: Sure. Why not?

The Speaker: For the sake of brevity and the sake of dealing with this matter, they're both the same.

Mr. Hancock: Well, the second one, Mr. Speaker, was to do with PC Party matters, but you've ruled on that over and over again.

The Speaker: Okay. Point of order 3 doesn't exist, so we're going to deal with point of order 1. We've heard from several members, including the Opposition House Leader, who basically said that there's need for some review of the appropriate terms or words or usage, which seems to be the major concern in the item raised by the Government House Leader.

Look. Clarification is an important thing. It would just really be wonderful, though, if we'd ever get back to a question period where we actually deal with policy. That would be just a wonderful approach, that we would deal with policy. Anyway. Okay. That

one's dealt with.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood.

Point of Order Clarification

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. During question period in response to a question the Deputy Premier referred to questions of expenses of other party leaders. The question was in reference to suggestions made by the Leader of the Official Opposition that the Premier had received payments from the Progressive Conservative Party through a third organization.

The Deputy Premier – and I don't have the Blues, but my recollection is that he. . .

The Speaker: I'll help you, hon. member, if you sit down. Then I'll help you.

Mr. Mason: Okay.

The Speaker: The hon. Deputy Premier said something about somebody else, and then he said: "I note that even members' disclosure statements for the hon. leader of the fourth party, the NDP, has made disclosure in which his party reimburses him for expenses, a perfectly legitimate thing to do." At that point in time the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood rose. I presume it has to do with that.

Mr. Mason: Well, then, Mr. Speaker, I don't think I have a point of order because what I thought I heard – and I appreciate your doing that – was that I was getting payments in the same way that the Premier was getting payments, and that is like a salary, which is absolutely untrue. Any expenses that I claim are extremely modest and extremely intermittent. I just want to set the record straight.

I misheard the hon. member, and I raised a point of order inappropriately. I'll apologize and sit down.

Mr. Horner: Mr. Speaker, just for clarity for the House, the point that I was making was exactly that. The leader of the New Democratic Party receives reimbursement for expenses from his party, his association, which he rightfully and legitimately – and good on him for doing it – puts in his disclosure statement the same way that our leader does. That's what I was suggesting. It is the same, and that's what I was saying. Well done.

The Speaker: Okay. So that's clear, too, now. Everybody is cool? What an adolescent expression that is. Everybody is happy? Okay.

Now, hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood, your purported point of privilege, which all members should pay careful attention to.

Privilege Late-evening Sitings

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that. Pursuant to Standing Order 15(2) this morning I provided written notice to the Speaker of my intention to raise a matter of privilege in this Assembly today. In my view, the government is interfering with the ability of members of the Assembly to fulfill their duties by continuing the daily sessions well into the night and well past the traditional hours of this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it's the earliest opportunity for me to make a motion of privilege on this matter. This is a question of judgment. Perhaps on the first day we could have assumed that the

government was going to continue the process of driving its legislative agenda late into the evening at the expense of the members of the Assembly. But in my judgment, the completion of two weeks of this Assembly, last night being the fifth night that we proceeded past midnight or close to midnight in the agenda, at the beginning of the session was the point at which I felt that I needed to stand up and raise the question of whether or not the government's actions are in fact interfering with members of this Assembly's ability to do their job.

Mr. Speaker, although Government Motion 26, which allows evening sittings, was adopted on November 22, it is the consistency with which the government has adjourned the House late in a sitting of short duration that is the basis of my argument.

Maingot at page 13 states that

if someone improperly interferes with the parliamentary work of a Member of Parliament – i.e. any of the Member's activities that have a connection with a proceeding in Parliament – in such a case that is a matter involving parliamentary privilege.

Beauchesne's 92, on page 25, makes the same point.

Mr. Speaker, this is clearly a matter related to the parliamentary work of members of this House, and I believe it is a matter which constitutes improper interference. I believe that the late adjournments we have seen in this session are extraordinary and constitute improper interference with the ability of members of this House to carry out their duties. In the past we have seen the government bring forward a motion for evening sittings towards the end of a sitting. That is normal, and that is not the question that I'm referring to. In this fall sitting notice of such motion was placed on the Order Paper the first day following the long November break, and Government Motion 26 was moved and adopted on the second day, November 22.

Mr. Speaker, in and of itself the motion for evening sittings is not extraordinary. However, it is the use that the government has made of that motion since it was passed that is extraordinary. What we usually see with evening sittings is the House sitting until 10 p.m. or maybe a little bit later. Later adjournment times have in the past only been used by the government in response to opposition tactics to lengthen debates such as filibustering. This is quite different. This is the government introducing this at the beginning and continuing the practice even though normal debate and progress were being made with respect to the bills.

Mr. Speaker, this fall we've seen the consistent use of very late adjournment times, the effect of which is to push the government's legislative agenda through in a very short time. This has a number of effects. It has some impacts with respect to the ability to do our job in that you have a compressed sitting, first of all, which means fewer question periods and fewer opportunities to hold the government to account. It means that opposition members are prevented from properly researching and discussing with constituents and other citizens the impact of the bills that they are expected to debate in this House. It means that the quality of the debate, therefore, is substantially lowered. It means that small caucuses become overstretched and are unable to respond as well as they should to the debate on the government's legislative agenda.

The debate becomes compressed, and it reduces the ability of the citizens of this province to accurately understand what is happening in their Legislature. Their ability to learn about the bills that are put forward is constrained, and this hampers the ability of the opposition to consider all points of view on the proposed legislation.

Mr. Speaker, we've also seen the government bring forward a number of amendments to its own bills, which indicates that they

have not had sufficient time to ensure that their proposed legislation is well thought out.

3:20

Mr. Speaker, I know that the government is going to say: the opposition wanted the fall session, demanded the fall session, and now they don't want to do the work. I want to strongly suggest that it was this government's initial intention to cancel the fall session altogether, and until it was brought to their attention by yourself that the Legislature had already passed a motion setting the date for its return, they were prepared to do that.

It was the government's decision to meet for the first two days and then adjourn for nearly a month in order to return with a number of bills. It is the government's decision to withdraw the legislation that could have been considered by this Assembly during that time, including the Education Act and a number of private member bills, including Bill 208, which I would have loved very much to debate. That's my bill with respect to public health care in the province.

The government had options, and the government made clear decisions with respect to how it wanted this fall session to proceed. In the end they chose a lengthy adjournment, leaving very short time in order to debate the bills. They chose the bills that would be brought forward, and they determined the amount of time that would be available in order to consider those bills.

Those are all decisions made by the government. In no way does that obligate, in my view, the opposition to work relentlessly overtime hours in order to accommodate that to the point that members become tired, exhausted. In fact, I would submit that members often late at night considering these bills are impaired in their ability to function as a Legislature. I've seen it, Mr. Speaker. I have seen the results of these long hours on the debate: members sleeping and members getting involved in acrimonious discussions that aren't very productive and that don't further the public interest.

Mr. Speaker, the government has made a great deal of its legislation with respect to impairment of drivers who have blood-alcohol content of .05 to .08, and that is a legitimate subject of debate. Nevertheless, what we do in this House is consider legislation that affects millions of Albertans. The things that we do in this place affect how much people pay for electricity, how much they pay for tuition. It affects what they have to pay for insurance. It affects the quality of their health care system. It affects the quality of their schools for their children. It affects their ability to have representation in court. In other words, it's extremely important and affects the daily lives of millions of Albertans in many, many different ways.

For the government to expect very tired opposition members and, for that matter, very tired government members to debate key pieces of legislation for long periods of time late at night, which may impair their abilities to make those decisions, is in fact a violation, in my opinion, of the rights of the people in this Assembly, who are elected to represent their public.

This is clearly a government strategy to wear down the opposition. Repeated late evenings are leaving members of the House deprived of sleep and not doing a good job scrutinizing the legislation. The government is forcing us to debate bills – well, I can shorten it up, Mr. Speaker. I think you're sending me some signals in that regard.

The Speaker: Well, we're talking about a brief thing, really about 10 minutes, but we are a little beyond that now.

Mr. Mason: Yeah. Okay. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll just conclude. Given the manner in which the government has been pushing its legislative agenda through the House and the effect that this has had on the ability of members to fulfill their duties, I would ask you to find that a *prima facie* case of breach of privilege exists. Nothing is more important. There are rules as well with respect to nothing in the standing orders or the rules of the Assembly can be considered with respect to a breach of privilege.

It's my submission, Mr. Speaker, that it is not the rules of the House that are at question in this privilege but the decisions made by the government in the use of those rules that have in fact prevented members of this Assembly from doing a proper job on behalf of the people who elected them, and therefore a *prima facie* case of privilege exists.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms Blakeman: I'd like to support the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood's privilege motion. I'll just give a few examples of why I think his bringing this privilege motion forward is important.

I like to do a good job. That's important to me. Whether other people know I've done a good job or not is less important, but I like to be prepared and on top of my material and be aware of what others have said in the House and not repeat questions that have already been asked and answered. That's why I read *Hansard*, so that I don't do that. I haven't been able to do that this entire session. I caused the Minister of Justice's staff to have to give me an additional briefing because I raised so many questions in debate. Although a technical briefing had been given to our research staff, they had not had the time to be able to give that briefing to the critic, and he had not been able to brief the rest of us. So we all came in here essentially blind even though there had been an attempt to have us at least be aware.

Mr. Speaker, I'm still going to do the job of analyzing exactly what's being proposed and comparing the bill with the legislation as well as looking at what the government has told us. That's my job, and I was not able to do that in this sitting. We have sat five nights and now, likely, more nights next week, most times for a six-hour time span, which is the equivalent of two afternoon sittings. We've essentially, by sitting in the nights, put in an extra three weeks of time, which we should have just done during the day because there are only so many hours in a day, and we are all expected to keep up our constituency work. I, particularly when I'm in the House, like to be able to take the time to get feedback from my constituents. I was able to do it with only one bill this time. I haven't been able to do a feedback loop on the other bills that are in front of us.

We have all been in a position in the opposition of having to prioritize how our time is spent and, as a result, have had to edit out some of the jobs that we normally would have done while we were in session: invited more people into the gallery, for example, done more private members' statements, raised additional points during debate. I, too, have noticed that this particular government's strategy at this time has had an effect on my ability to both complete work as a member of the opposition and also to do a good job doing that work. I resent that, frankly. I like to do a good job, and I don't like being put in the position of not being able to do that. So I will support the point of privilege that has been raised.

The Speaker: Are there other members that wish to participate briefly on this subject?

Mr. Chase: Yes. Extremely briefly, Mr. Speaker. The effect is not only on Members of this Legislative Assembly. There's a ripple effect. It affects our researchers, it affects our support staff, and it affects our families. It's not fair.

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

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be very brief. I think that one of the things that happens when we are here at 12:30 or 1 o'clock in the morning discussing bills – serious bills like Bill 26, serious bills like Bill 25, some of those kinds of initiatives which clearly have engaged the interest and the intellectual investment of Albertans – and when we're debating at that time is that it's not only a question of how tired we are, which other members have identified impinges on our ability to do our best job, or what it does to the ability of Albertans to engage, but ultimately, to me, it appears as though it's almost a sense of unprofessionalism, that we deal with issues that are so important so late.

3:30

I think that it reflects very poorly on the import of the work that we do here in this Assembly. I think that in sending a message to Albertans that that's what we think about the Assembly, that it's an inconvenient impediment for government to get through as quickly as possible, we undermine this institution to Albertans and, in so doing, therefore interfere with our ability as individual members to do our job the best way we can. So I think that's an additional element that I would like to have considered.

As well, the federal House of Commons often sits well into December. The proposal was given very early on that we just begin this process by going well into December and that we could have then engaged in normal hours and that would have ensured quality of debate. So it's not one of these things that was unavoidable.

Having been here myself and having observed members on both sides of the House struggling to focus, to stay awake, to make the best arguments possible: it's a problem. Many members of this Assembly have young families, have children, and quite frankly having to engage in these hours also interferes with our ability to meet our obligations at home and to meet our obligations to the people of this province and to our colleagues in this Assembly.

For all those reasons, I think the hours that have been insisted upon by the majority members of this Assembly have interfered collectively with all of our abilities to function as well as we can as members of this Assembly.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Airdrie-Chestermere, briefly please, and then Calgary-Currie, and then we're going to ask the Government House Leader for a comment on this, and then we're going to have to move forward.

Mr. Anderson: Very good, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to stand and on behalf of the Wildrose caucus just quickly say that we support this motion brought forward by the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood. We feel very strongly that one of the – you know, I have noticed that the Government House Leader from time to time will express frustration that we take so long in going through some of the amendments. Two days ago, when we were looking over the Health Quality Council of Alberta Act, there was a lot of running around chaotically, and unfortunately I feel kind of guilty in that we were putting so much tremendous pressure on counsel to come up with amendments and subamendments and so forth essentially on a minute-to-minute basis as things were changing so fast.

Again, it is so difficult to adequately prepare when we have stuffed so many bills into such a constrained period of time. Although I do understand that the government wants to get things done and get on with things – and I respect that – as an opposition we need to have the time to prepare to facilitate an actual constructive discussion rather than being forced into a situation where we're, you know, into the night and trying desperately to figure out not only what's in these bills but to get feedback from constituents and do a thousand other things in what should have clearly been a three-month process, not a three-week process.

So on behalf of the Wildrose caucus I certainly would like to support this member's motion.

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

Mr. Taylor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, will be supporting the motion for privilege . . .

The Speaker: It's not a motion. It's a statement on privilege. Go ahead.

Mr. Taylor: . . . put forward by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood. Frankly, I agree with everything that the speakers thus far on this point of privilege have had to say, and I want to add this. Whether by design or by default – and I certainly would hope that it's by default – the effect of having these repeatedly very long, late-into-the-night sittings to deal with legislation that may be rushed to begin with, that may be not properly thought through on that side of the House, as we're seeing some evidence of by virtue of amendments that correct typos in the original bills and things like that, has the effect of holding the people we serve, the people of Alberta, to contempt.

This is important work that we do in here. There are important roles for everyone in this House. There is an important role for the opposition to play and an important function for the opposition to fulfill in holding the government to account, not just so that the opposition can try and make the government's lives miserable but so that we can, working together, produce better laws on the floor of this Assembly on behalf of the people of Alberta.

It takes time to prepare things properly. We are not taking the proper time. We are putting ourselves under too much stress, and we are going to screw this up monumentally, Mr. Speaker, if we don't change our ways.

Thank you.

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members of this House on all sides have put in yeoman service over the last two weeks. In fact, I would suggest they've put in yeoman service for much longer than the two weeks because the work of the House depends on work being done before we get here, and it certainly depends on us being able to consult our constituents. Some of us have additional roles and obligations, whether it's as an opposition House leader or a member of cabinet, that require additional hours.

We get paid at a level of senior executives. Sometimes we wonder if we're getting paid an appropriate amount on a per-hour basis. Nonetheless, that's the nature of the job, and I would suggest to you that senior executives work hard. When people complain about executive compensation, often they have no idea of the level of responsibility or the time that people put into their jobs. Anybody who's earning more than a hundred thousand dollars a year, if they think they're going to work a 40-hour

workweek – I haven't met one yet. When you're earning over a hundred thousand dollars a year, you're working long hours.

When I was in the private sector, I worked long hours, not every day of the year but when the job needed to be done, I needed to be there, and the people who worked with me needed to be there. When I was closing a corporate deal of large magnitude, we worked to get it done. We did the work in the period of time it needed to be done, and sometimes it was two weeks or three weeks of long hours; sometimes it was well into the night. That was what we did because that was the job, and we were being paid well to do the job.

Members on this side of the House have families. I know personally: my wife has a career, and it's not convenient for her when I come home late at night and leave early in the morning because it's disruptive to her, but she understands that that's the nature of my job. It doesn't happen every day. She'd like it to happen less, but that's the nature of the job.

Members opposite complain about jamming substantive business into a short session. It was only a month and a half ago when members opposite were concerned that there wasn't going to be a fall session, and they were calling on the Premier to have a fall session. The Premier had indicated that maybe we wouldn't have a fall session. The House could have been prorogued, and we could have gone without a fall session. That was an option.

I believe I'm quoting, well, not quoting but paraphrasing perhaps, the hon. member who raised this point of privilege that it was necessary to have the government come to the Legislature to deal with issues on education funding, the judicial inquiry, and fixed election dates. We have seven bills before us. One of them is supplementary estimates, and a substantial portion of the supplementary estimates is education funding, exactly what the hon. member wanted to have this fall in the House. He got what he wanted.

He wanted a judicial inquiry. The Health Quality Council of Alberta Act sets the framework for the appropriate authorities for the Health Quality Council to do its work independently and to hold a public inquiry with appropriate parameters with respect to the protection of patient information, exactly what the hon. member wanted debated in this House. He wants a different type of inquiry, but he wanted a judicial inquiry.

Fixed election dates. There's a bill before the House that deals with the issue of when we should hold elections. It's not a big bill, Mr. Speaker. It's a one-page bill. It deals with a very simple, straightforward issue: fixed election dates. It's not hard to comprehend. It's not hard to research. It's not hard to understand. In fact, the hon. member for years has been putting forward debate on this issue. He needs very little, I would suggest, preparation and very little discussion. It's a matter of putting the opinion on the table. It's not a matter of putting the opinion on the table over and over and over again. It's a matter of putting the opinion on the table.

Now, it's not up to me to determine how the opposition wishes to debate any particular bill, but I can say that if one goes and reads *Hansard*, the length of the debate could be shortened if it wasn't so repetitive. In fact, the Member for Airdrie-Chestermere has made almost the identical statements with respect to matters which aren't actually even a part of the Health Quality Council act at least three times that I can think of.

3:40

Mr. Speaker, I can say that because I've been here for virtually all of the hours, not quite all of the hours but virtually all of the hours, that the House has been in session this fall, and I will be here for the rest of them. I'm doing my job. I'm also doing my job

as Minister of Human Services, and I'm also doing my job as a member of Agenda and Priorities, and I'm also doing my job as the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud. These are important jobs, and I can do them, and I can do them well. Sometimes it's tough, and sometimes we do it with a little bit less sleep than one might like to have, but we can do it. We're doing it this fall because it's important work, and we're doing it this fall because members of the opposition believed that it was important that we be here in the Legislature doing these jobs.

Seven bills, Mr. Speaker. Seven very straightforward, relatively simple bills. Important, straightforward, but simple. The first bill is the Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2011. I don't think I need to go into that too much. It has two points – I'll wrap it up very quickly – two points in the appropriations bill that really were the bulk of the spending: Slave Lake, education funding. The opposition wanted to be here to talk about education funding, and they can get back to it in about five minutes or less, depending on how long I continue, which will be short, and on how long you continue.

The second bill is fixed election dates. It's about a two-line bill, and it's very easy to understand. It's a very simple concept. It doesn't take much work.

The third bill, the Health Quality Council of Alberta Act, I've dealt with already. There are really two main portions to it: improving the authorities and the powers and the independence of the Health Quality Council and giving it the powers of a public inquiry with some mandate around how they keep important information that should not be made public separate so that they can hear from a full variety of witnesses. I won't debate that one.

The Child and Youth Advocate Act, really, has two simple concepts in it. There are actually five concepts in it, but they're not hard to comprehend. Full briefings were provided.

The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2011, again, is not hard to comprehend. We've dealt with over and over and over again exactly the same concept: whether there should be the sanctions that we're proposing with respect to over .05 instead of just the criminal sanctions at over .08. Most of the debate, I would suggest, has centred around whether or not there should be more enforcement of the .08 and not on the tenets of the bill.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that if you were to read the bills, which I'm sure you have, you'd agree with me that there are seven bills, very simple concepts, very substantively important, not hard to comprehend, full briefings to the opposition. We proposed to proceed with the break, which was necessary to prepare these bills, because the new Premier wanted to put forward the new agenda. It takes time to develop the bills and to draft them, so there was a need to start later than normal. But there was a full signalling as fast as possible about what was going to be the subject of the session, full briefings on the subject of the session. Very simple concepts and, yes, some night sittings, which go until midnight or a little bit later.

It's not usual to have five night sittings or six night sittings, but we have had lots of night sittings in the 14 and some years that I've been in this Legislature. Some of them have gone all night. Sometimes we've had several nights. We used to sit as a matter of routine during the evening, and we used to go quite late as part of those sittings. In fact, it was not unusual to adjourn at or around 12 o'clock.

Mr. Speaker, I understand the concern the opposition members have. Certainly, in terms of quality of life we'd all like to have evenings where we could go home to our families. We would all like to have an easier opportunity to do the job. We'd all like more resources, quite frankly. I wouldn't mind having about double the resources I've got to be able to do all the jobs that I've got to do.

The fact of the matter is that we've got a tough job. We asked for the job, and we're here doing the job, and it's what the public expects us to do. It's not unusual for senior executives, people who are paid at the senior executive level, to work hard from time to time and to put in long hours to get the job done.

The Speaker: I've asked the question previously about who wanted to participate.

Hon. members, I am prepared to rule on the purported question of privilege brought by the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood. Notice of this particular question of privilege application was received in my office at 11:07 this morning, so the requirements of Standing Order 15(2) have been met.

As the chair understands the submissions made by the member and others, he and they are arguing that his and their ability to perform their duties as members has been hindered by the late-night sittings of the Assembly. I must state that the argument put forward by the member is rather unique as I do not recall hearing a similar question of privilege in the 32 years that I've served in this Assembly as a member. I found it of considerable interest when it arrived on my desk this morning.

On the issue raised by the member, the chair agrees that there have been evening sittings of the Assembly. For instance, the Votes and Proceedings for yesterday, November 30, 2011, indicated that the Assembly adjourned at 11:52 p.m., and I've noted the times of adjournment on the other previous four occasions during this fall sitting.

Hon. members, Standing Order 10 in your Standing Orders is clear. "Every Member is bound to attend the service of the Assembly..." but there are still some other words as well, though. It says, "...unless notification has been given to the Speaker in accordance with the rules of the Assembly." We are bound to be here by our own rules. The Canadian House of Commons has a similar standing order as discussed in the *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, 2nd edition, page 213.

Under our Standing Order 3 sittings of the Assembly conclude at 6 p.m. Monday to Wednesday and at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday. The standing orders provide for the possibility of a government motion for meetings of the Assembly on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings. Some discussion has occurred in recent years about evening sittings, what length they might take and how frequent they might be. The government brought forward Government Motion 26, which provided for evening sittings on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays for the remainder of the fall sitting. The motion was approved by this Assembly on November 22, 2011. Accordingly, the Assembly passed a motion to sit three evenings a week for the remainder of the fall sitting as permitted by the standing order.

In order to find a prima facie question of privilege, the chair would have to find that the decision of the Assembly to have night sittings was somehow a violation of the member's rights and immunities. The chair cannot imagine how sittings of the Assembly could be found to violate a member's rights. In doing so, the chair would have to find that Government Motion 26 and perhaps the standing order somehow violated the member's privileges as they allow for evening sittings.

I wish to acknowledge, however, that an opportunity was given to the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood and other members to express their views and, perhaps, some frustration with respect to the hours currently under way in this fall sitting. But there is no prima facie question of privilege. That, in essence, concludes the matter.

I would like to add several additional statements. Many other parliaments count evening sittings as separate days of sitting. So

when we say that we sit 70 days a year but sit 30 evenings per year as well, in their jurisdiction, their nomenclature, that would be 100 days a year. We sell ourselves short in this Assembly by counting an afternoon sitting and an evening sitting as only one, and we must be very, very careful with that definition when members meet with parliamentarians from other jurisdictions in the country of Canada.

Number two. I listened very attentively to what the members were saying here in this discussion. I know that I've had many, many other discussions with other members. I actually implore you, before we return in the spring, to basically take a good look at this question because the question of fatigue is an important one. The question of clarity of mind is an important one. The question of family is an important one. The question of travel is an important one.

We all know, within all of the groups that members may belong to, that there are some who say: "Well, listen. If we could be here a few days shorter, that's better, so can't we just sit a few hours longer?" But I would suspect that most would conclude that the brain probably functions best earlier in the day rather than later in the day. I'm just guessing out loud on this one. I can't quantifiably say that for certain, but I would suspect that the more time there is to think and to read and to be prepared, the better off we all are as legislators in the province of Alberta.

The matter is now concluded.

3:50

Orders of the Day

Government Bills and Orders

Third Reading

Bill 27

Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2011 (No. 2)

The Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader on behalf of.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move Bill 27 for third reading.

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview on third reading of Bill 27.

Dr. Taft: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Actually, my...

The Speaker: I'm sorry. Hon. member, could I just, please, beg your indulgence?

Dr. Taft: Sure.

The Speaker: One hon. member has had a number of guests here for a period of time while we've dealt with this other matter. Could we revert briefly to the Introduction of Guests?

[Unanimous consent granted]

Introduction of Guests

(reversion)

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

Mr. Vandermeer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my great pleasure to introduce to you a gentleman who has kept us safe in this building for many, many years in the past, who has now retired and who resides in the beautiful constituency of Edmonton-Manning, just a short walk away from where a former Premier of this province, Ernest Manning, used to live. His name is Nick

Kutash. He is accompanied by his wife, Genevieve, and I'm going to assume that it's his two grandsons, Ryley and Brody. I'd ask them to rise and receive a very warm welcome.

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

Mr. Prins: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me also a great honour and a pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members and all Albertans a great friend of mine, Dr. Cliff Soper. Dr. Soper is the former dean of health sciences at Red Deer College. He is a councillor for the Lacombe county. He was a colleague of mine for many years there and encouraged me to run for MLA at some time. He's currently the president of the Lacombe-Ponoka PC Association. He's here visiting today and watching us do the wonderful work of government. I'd like him to stand and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

Government Bills and Orders

Third Reading

Bill 27

Appropriation (Supplementary Supply)

Act, 2011 (No. 2)

(continued)

The Speaker: I'm sorry. Now the hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview.

Dr. Taft: All right. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, I just need to clarify. Do I have 10 minutes or 15 at this point?

The Speaker: Under our rules you have up to 20 minutes according to Standing Order 29(2)(a).

Dr. Taft: Yes. Thank you.

I heard a groan from the government members, so I'll try not to take full advantage of that time, but I do want to speak. I do need to get some comments on record.

Actually, it's interesting, Mr. Speaker, I don't want to belabour the previous discussion that occurred on the point of privilege, but one of the challenges I've had in addressing the issues around this bill are the time constraints. In particular, when we have all of this legislation, all of the background and so on, dumped on us at once, it's easy for important details to get lost. A particular detail in this bill came to my attention today. I wish it had come to my attention in second reading because I would have brought forward an amendment, but there was just simply too big a rush with all the bills coming forward.

[Mr. Zwozdesky in the chair]

The particular detail I'm referring to – and I would invite the minister of advanced education to follow along with my comments – is on page 26 of the supplementary supply estimates 2011-12. This is, I think, the attached schedule. On page 26 it provides some detail for the amounts we're voting on today. This one in particular is for Culture and Community Services. I need to raise a concern about a specific amount of money in here for a project that is actually going into my constituency, Mr. Speaker, and which causes me some torn feelings. That project is the GO Community Centre.

In this allotment today there is a further \$3.295 million being voted on for the GO Community Centre. Certainly, the GO Community Centre provides wonderful opportunities for basket

ball players and volleyball players and the Ortona Gymnastics Club and various others to undertake their activities. I'm a big fan of physical activity and sports and so on, but this particular project raises some serious questions, Mr. Speaker, and I need to get those on the record because we're today voting over \$3 million for this.

I will start by just noting that my understanding from documents and comments I have seen is that the GO Centre was originally envisioned to go into the Mill Woods area of Edmonton – the Deputy Speaker may well be aware of that – and that there were particular challenges around the GO Centre meeting some of the zoning and design requirements under municipal government. Somebody got the bright idea that we could put it on the south campus of the university. The south campus is exempt from any of those limits, so there is no requirement around parking or design or other issues. [interjections] I hope the ministers or government members who are objecting feel free to speak up later.

In any case, I do have documentation that this was originally intended for Mill Woods, and then it was suddenly plopped down into the south campus. Whatever the reasons for that were, the fact of the matter is that under legislation the University of Alberta, unlike any other postsecondary institution in central or northern Alberta, is exempt from any zoning controls under the Municipal Government Act: parking, traffic, design, anything like that. That has created problems because the entire consultation process around the GO Centre development, which is a massive development – I think people need to understand that the GO Centre is, I think, about three times the size of the Butterdome on the U of A main campus. It was put into my constituency without any due respect or due consultation with my constituents.

So what's happened is that it opened this fall, September, to big fanfare, and suddenly the neighbours in one of my neighbourhoods, Lendrum, are waking up to significantly increased traffic, parking and congestion issues, and everything that's related to that. They had no reasonable opportunity for any input into that. That raises tough questions.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to draw particular attention to a document that, it may well be, very few members of this Assembly have seen. This is the memorandum of understanding and intent between GO Community Centre and the governors of the University of Alberta dated February 11, 2008. This was obtained through a FOIP request. I would like to draw attention to article 3, guiding principles, paragraph 3.01(c)(ii). I would hope the ministers are paying attention to this. This memorandum of agreement says

- (c) The business case for the [GO Community Centre] as well as the final design and site layout for the [GO Community Centre] shall . . .

And I quote exactly here, Mr. Speaker.

- (ii) have the broad support of the neighbouring community (with whom close collaboration must be established throughout the design and development phase).

This is the legally binding memorandum of understanding between the GO Community Centre and the governors of the University of Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you unequivocally and I tell the government members, particularly the Edmonton caucus, that the residents of the neighbourhoods living around south campus feel, and I think they are fully justified, that that requirement was utterly ignored, that in fact there was no meaningful effort put in by either the GO Community Centre or the University of Alberta to fulfill that requirement. And sadly for my constituents – they've sought legal advice on this – because they are not signatories to

this agreement, even though their interests are at stake, they have no say. So the university can sign a nice piece of paper with wonderful intentions, but if they don't enforce it, my constituents are on the hook, and they do feel on the hook.

4:00

The problem here in the bigger picture is that it has poisoned relations between the south campus neighbourhoods and the university. I also think it reflects very poorly on both parties that they would sign an agreement like this – this is a very extensive, multimillion-dollar agreement, which is the basis for the funding we're discussing today – and then ignore one of the fundamental principles in that agreement.

This agreement also goes on to raise other issues which I think are important to get on the record here. Section 2.02, actually, of the June 28, 2010, GO Centre venture agreement obligates the university to provide "sufficient parking and parking infrastructure in relative proximity to the GO Centre to accommodate the needs of users of the GO Centre."

Now, I want to refer you to another document here, Mr. Speaker, and I refer all members to this. This is a University of Alberta commentary, Friday, February 11, 2011, written by the vice-president of facilities and operations. Here's what he says: "While we [the university] do not currently control the decisions around the capital project, including final design and financial decisions, we continue to provide input and suggestions." What we have here – in fact, this same document refers to the GO Centre as a private initiative and so on – is the university agreeing to provide sufficient parking and parking infrastructure near the GO Centre to meet the needs of the GO Centre when the GO Centre isn't even a university project. The university doesn't own the GO Centre. I have concerns with that.

It goes on to say in section 2.03 of the GO Centre venture agreement, June 28, 2010: "In addition, the University shall on an ongoing basis during the Term [of eight years] . . . provide free parking in relative proximity to the GO Centre for users of the GO Centre."

Then it goes on, and this is where I think it goes even further astray. Why are we spending millions of dollars on beach volleyball? Well, you may wonder, Mr. Speaker. Section 10.01 of this same venture agreement – I hope the minister is listening here, Mr. Minister – is that "the University agrees that it will use commercially reasonable efforts respecting the setting aside of land in relative proximity to the GO Centre Building to accommodate sixteen (16) beach volleyball courts." Now, we have a multimillion-dollar agreement involving a university that's committing the university to use commercially reasonable efforts to establish 16 beach volleyball courts. Are we losing focus here, folks? Why is a university doing that? Why are we as a Legislature putting tens of millions of dollars into this kind of a facility?

Then it goes on. It addresses alcohol sales, revenue related to alcohol sales at events involving varsity sports, and it goes on and on for pages.

I have questions. I wish we'd had time to debate those questions. Sadly, this memorandum of understanding and the GO Centre venture agreement were not made public, to my knowledge, until they were uncovered through a FOIP request.

I also feel like we should set higher standards for the kinds of facilities we're financing. One of the things I have heard repeatedly from my constituents and from urban planners and from architects and engineers is that the GO Centre as a structure is a disappointment, to put it mildly. I've heard some rather over-the-top descriptions of it from my constituents, Mr. Speaker, but I

think anybody looking at it is going to understand that it's essentially a big-box steel warehouse building with massive blank walls. I mean, we're talking about blank walls that are two or three storeys high, stretching for 50, 60, 70 metres. That's not good design. We need to aim higher than that. Then this facility is surrounded by acres of asphalt paving.

I won't name names in here, but I will tell you that a very prominent member of the Edmonton community has expressed concern that the south campus, when it's going in this direction, is in danger of becoming the South Edmonton Common of recreation facilities because in addition to the GO Centre we have the university wanting twin arenas, a new field house, three parkades, and so on. Essentially, what we're going to get are thousands and thousands of cars a day descending on the south campus, parking there, using these faceless facilities, and then driving away, generating significant traffic and congestion and, I think, most sadly and most disturbingly, Mr. Speaker, falling short of what we could achieve.

This is maybe where I'd like to aim for this Assembly. We need to understand that the south campus lands, over 600 acres of greenfield lands, are a breathtaking opportunity for this city and this university and this province to do something extraordinary. I've worked very hard with my constituents so that they don't get into a NIMBY mentality of just leaving it as a farmer's field. This was the university farm. They understand that having 600 acres of greenfield land already served by an LRT, in the centre of a city, adjacent to mature neighbourhoods does provide an opportunity for extraordinary achievement here, and building huge steel warehouse structures surrounded by asphalt parking lots is not good enough.

If we want the U of A to be a top 20 university – I do – then let's have a top 20 south campus. Let's follow the lead of the city of Edmonton, Mr. Speaker, and invite a competition of the world's greatest urban planners to look at the south campus lands and come forward with their ideas and do something extraordinary because we could – we could – elevate this university and this city and this province to something extraordinary. Spending \$3.29 million further on this facility – I mean, we have no choice. But what I would challenge this government to do now is to draw the line. Don't do this again. Get the university administrators to think bigger, think better.

I'm concerned, frankly, from the information I've heard directly from the GO Centre builders, that it doesn't even meet LEED standards. So here we have the U of A partnering with the Helmholtz Institute in Germany, with various other international organizations who are leading the world in environmental sustainability, and we're putting up buildings that don't meet LEED standards.

I'm also concerned about the ongoing financial viability of this facility. The GO Centre hasn't been open three months, and they're already applying for CFEP funding. In fact, I received a copy of the application before it even opened. How is this thing going to sustain itself? And if it doesn't, where does it end up? It ends up in the control of the university. I'm not convinced that there's wise long-term planning here.

Mr. Speaker, I needed to get those comments on the record. I'm sure I'll hear static from the operators of the GO Centre and from university administrators, but my challenge to them and to all of us is to aim higher. Do something extraordinary here. Hold a global competition just like the city of Edmonton did. Bring in the world's best designers, and let's do something great.

Thank you.

The Acting Speaker: Thank you.

Hon. members, there was a request to revert to Introduction of Guests by a particular member. I realize that the guests have left, but I'd ask the hon. minister if he wants to just read them into the record with the permission of the Assembly.

[Unanimous consent granted]

Introduction of Guests (*reversion*)

Mr. Oberle: Well, thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. I'd be very honoured to do that. Present in the gallery just moments ago were some constituents of mine: Real Arsenault, who is general manager of Manning Diversified Forest Products, and his lovely wife, Kim. Kim, of course, is the brains behind the wildly successful cancer fundraiser that was held in Manning the other night. If their family is anything like mine, she's also the brains behind Real, I'm sure. Accompanying them was Bambi Morton – and the same, for sure, goes there – and Lauren Mendis, who is a constituent of the hon. Minister of Energy and currently works in his office, a recent graduate of Dalhousie University. I'd like the Assembly to give them the warm traditional welcome.

4:10 Government Bills and Orders **Third Reading** **Bill 27** **Appropriation (Supplementary Supply)** **Act, 2011 (No. 2)** (*continued*)

The Acting Speaker: Hon. members, we are in third reading on Bill 27. We have a few minutes left. Are there any other speakers to this important bill? The hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona.

Ms Notley: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had an opportunity to speak to this to some extent in Committee of Supply, but there were some additional points that occurred to me for further consideration after that time. I thought today might be an opportunity to raise some of those concerns or questions in the ever-so-naïve hope that someone might respond to the questions with some answers. Nonetheless, I'll just go through some of the issues that we had with respect to what was identified with respect to supplementary supply.

I note that one of the additions is this \$13 million to the ministry of environment, primarily for the Canada ecotrust for clean air and climate change initiative, \$3.2 million of which was for operating expenses, and \$9.7 million was in capital grants. No question that that little organization appears to have engaged in some useful work around doing some environmental renewable energy efforts closer to the ground, particularly some of the stuff that they've done in relation to Okotoks. I'm just wondering why it is that this federal funding initiative has triggered the need for supplementary estimates and why it is that we would not have

known that this money was coming to us. What exactly is going on there?

Certainly, we have a bit of a history with this government in terms of a lack of communication between the provincial government and the federal government around dollars, the most profound and public of which was the really quite disconcerting breakdown in communications around the Royal Alberta Museum. One sometimes does wonder who's doing what in our government and in the federal government that little items like an extra \$90 million were the subject of confusion. Always a concern when people are confused about those amounts of money.

One of the areas that is seeking additional money is, again, Municipal Affairs, an additional \$20.2 million for affordable housing development that, I understand, is offset by a transfer from CMHC. Again, I'm sort of unclear as to how this operates within the budget, if that's sort of an additional revenue piece, too, or what exactly is going on. I'm obviously not getting the whole piece here. It does raise an interesting question, of course, on the issue of affordable housing. [interjection] One minute left? Why only one minute left?

The Acting Speaker: Standing Order 64(5) requires us to call the question at 4:15 today.

Ms Notley: Well, then, I would just suggest that what we need to do is actually have this additional money going into Municipal Affairs assist the minister in finding the extra \$2 million to \$4 million that it would cost to ensure that the 1,300 Alberta families who are on the verge of losing their homes as a result of the end of a rent supplement program, that I believe is now the responsibility of the Minister of Municipal Affairs – rather than making misleading statements that they would be able to get in line behind a greater number of people and that somehow that answers their . . .

The Acting Speaker: I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member, but in accordance with Standing Order 64(5) the chair is required to put the question to the House on the appropriation bill as it sits on the Order Paper for third reading.

[Motion carried; Bill 27 read a third time]

The Acting Speaker: The hon. Government House Leader.

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In light of the fact that we have only 15 minutes left before the normal adjournment hour, it wouldn't be prudent to start another bill, and in light of the interests of all members to get in a little bit of extra reading time and rest, I would move that we adjourn until 1:30 p.m. on Monday, December 5, pursuant to a government motion which was passed earlier this week.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 4:16 p.m. to Monday at 1:30 p.m.]

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

Activity to December 01, 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)

Third Reading -- 1063-69 (May 10 aft., passed on division)

Royal Assent -- (May 13 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on May 13, 2011; SA 2011 cA-44.5]

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)

Royal Assent -- (Apr. 29 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on April 29, with exceptions; SA 2011 c7]

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)

Royal Assent -- (Apr. 29 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2011 cN-6.5]

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)

Third Reading -- 1035 (May 9 eve., passed)

Royal Assent -- (May 13 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2011 c14]

- 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)
Third Reading -- 1035 (May 9 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- (May 13 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2011 c10]
- 8* Missing Persons Act (VanderBurg)**
First Reading -- 73 (Feb. 28 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 137 (Mar. 1 aft.), 618 (Apr. 12 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1024-35 (May 9 eve., passed with amendments)
Third Reading -- 1058-61 (May 10 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (May 13 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2011 cM-18.5]
- 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)
Third Reading -- 1071-89 (May 10 eve., passed on division)
Royal Assent -- (May 13 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on May 13, 2011; SA 2011 c9]
- 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)
Third Reading -- 1035-36 (May 9 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- (May 13 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2011 c12]
- 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)
Third Reading -- 1036-38 (May 9 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- (May 13 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on May 13, 2011; SA 2011 c8]
- 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 -- 328 (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)
Third Reading -- 1038 (May 9 eve., passed)
Royal Assent -- (May 13 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on May 13, 2011; SA 2011 c16]
- 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.), 853-58 (Apr. 26 aft.), 1013-24 (May 9 eve., passed with amendments)
Third Reading -- 1061-63 (May 10 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (May 13 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2011 c15]

- 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.), 1009-12 (May 9 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1069-70 (May 10 aft.), 1071 (May 10 eve., passed)
Third Reading -- 1112-17 (May 11 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (May 13 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on May 13, 2011; SA 2011 c11]
- 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)
Royal Assent -- (Apr. 29 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on April 29; SA 2011 c5]
- 18 Education Act (Hancock)**
First Reading -- 898 (Apr. 27 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 965-67 (Apr. 28 aft., adjourned)
- 19 Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2011 (Olson)**
First Reading -- 989 (May 9 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1053 (May 10 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1057 (May 10 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 1117 (May 11 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (May 13 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on May 13, 2011; SA 2011 c13]
- 20 Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 2011 (Lukaszuk)**
First Reading -- 1052 (May 10 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1053-56 (May 10 aft., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1107-11 (May 11 aft., passed)
Third Reading -- 1117 (May 11 aft., passed)
Royal Assent -- (May 13 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on May 13, 2011; SA 2011 c17]
- 21 Election Amendment Act, 2011 (Olson)**
First Reading -- 1203 (Nov. 21 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1240-41 (Nov. 22 aft.), 1337-49 (Nov. 23 eve., passed on division)
Committee of the Whole -- 1473-78 (Nov. 29 aft.), 1479,1501-09 (Nov. 29 eve.), 1532-43 (Nov. 30 aft.), 1545 (Nov. 30 eve., adjourned, amendments introduced)
- 22 Justice and Court Statutes Amendment Act, 2011 (Woo-Paw)**
First Reading -- 1203-04 (Nov. 21 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1236-38 (Nov. 22 aft.), 1349-53 (Nov. 23 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1496-1501 (Nov. 29 eve., passed)
- 23 Land Assembly Project Area Amendment Act, 2011 (Johnson)**
First Reading -- 1204 (Nov. 21 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1238 (Nov. 22 aft.), 1368-78 (Nov. 24 aft.), 1411-26 (Nov. 28 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1465-73 (Nov. 29 aft.), (Nov. 29 eve., passed)
- 24 Health Quality Council of Alberta Act (Horne)**
First Reading -- 1203 (Nov. 21 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1235-36 (Nov. 22 aft.), 1241-54 (Nov. 22 aft.), 1278-83 (Nov. 22 eve., passed on division)
Committee of the Whole -- 1479-91 (Nov. 29 eve.), 1561-70 (Nov. 30 eve., adjourned, amendments introduced)
- 25* Child and Youth Advocate Act (Hancock)**
First Reading -- 1203 (Nov. 21 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1238-40 (Nov. 22 aft.), 1283-85 (Nov. 22 eve.), 1300-06 (Nov. 23 aft.), 1319-23 (Nov. 23 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1426-37 (Nov. 28 eve., passed with amendments)
- 26* Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2011 (Danyluk)**
First Reading -- 1204 (Nov. 21 aft., passed)
Second Reading -- 1238 (Nov. 22 aft.), 1306-17 (Nov. 23 aft.), 1323-37 (Nov. 23 eve., passed)
Committee of the Whole -- 1437-46 (Nov. 28 eve.), 1545-61 (Nov. 30 eve., adjourned, amendments agreed to)

- 27 Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 2011 (No. 2) (\$) (Horner)**
 First Reading -- 1366 (Nov. 24 aft., passed)
 Second Reading -- 1461-65 (Nov. 29 aft.), 1491-96 (Nov. 29 eve., passed on division)
 Committee of the Whole -- 1528-32 (Nov. 30 aft.), 1561 (Nov. 30 eve., passed)
 Third Reading -- 1590-93 (Dec. 1 aft., passed)
 Royal Assent -- (Dec. 1 outside of House sitting)
- 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)
 Royal Assent -- (Apr. 29 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on proclamation; SA 2011 c6]
- 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)
 Committee of the Whole -- 1210-15 (Nov. 21 aft., passed)
 Third Reading -- 1392-99 (Nov. 28 aft., passed)
- 204 Justice System Monitoring Act (Forsyth)**
 First Reading -- 304 (Mar. 10 aft., passed)
 Second Reading -- 992-1001 (May 9 aft.), 1215 (Nov. 21 aft.), 1399-1404 (Nov. 28 aft., defeated on division)
- 205 Municipal Government (Delayed Construction) Amendment Act, 2011 (Taylor)**
 First Reading -- 362 (Mar. 15 aft., passed)
 Second Reading -- 1404 (Nov. 28 aft., adjourned)
- 207 Seniors' Property Tax Deferral Act (Jablonski)**
 First Reading -- 989 (May 9 aft., passed)
- 208 Health Statutes (Canada Health Act Reaffirmation) Amendment Act, 2011 (Mason)**
 First Reading -- 1105 (May 11 aft., passed)
- 209 Tailings Ponds Reclamation Statutes Amendment Act, 2011 (Blakeman)**
 First Reading -- 1105-06 (May 11 aft., passed)
- Pr1 Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties Amendment Act, 2011 (Rogers)**
 First Reading -- 550 (Mar. 24 aft., passed)
 Second Reading -- 1012-13 (May 9 eve., passed)
 Committee of the Whole -- 1057 (May 10 aft., passed)
 Third Reading -- 1117 (May 11 aft., passed)
 Royal Assent -- (May 13 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on May 13, 2011]
- Pr2 Galt Scholarship Fund Transfer Act (Pastoor)**
 First Reading -- 507 (Mar. 23 aft., passed)
 Second Reading -- 1013 (May 9 eve., passed)
 Committee of the Whole -- 1057 (May 10 aft., passed)
 Third Reading -- 1117 (May 11 aft., passed)
 Royal Assent -- (May 13 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on May 13, 2011]
- 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 Tuscany 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)

Second Reading -- 1013 (May 9 eve., passed)

Committee of the Whole -- 1057-58 (May 10 aft., passed)

Third Reading -- 1117 (May 11 aft., passed)

Royal Assent -- (May 13 outside of House sitting) [Comes into force on May 13, 2011]

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