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The 28th Legislature
First Session

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Issue 42

The Honourable Gene Zwozdesky, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of Alberta The 28th Legislature

First Session

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Woo-Paw, Hon. Teresa, Calgary-Northern Hills (PC)
Xiao, David H., Edmonton-McClung (PC)
Young, Steve, Edmonton-Riverview (PC),
 Government Whip

Party standings:

Progressive Conservative: 61

Wildrose: 17

Alberta Liberal: 5

New Democrat: 4

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Calahasen	Sandhu
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Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 9, 2013

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

Prayers

The Deputy Speaker: Let us pray. As we pray, let us commemorate the 96th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge on April 9, 1917. We give thanks for the lives of the faithful men and women in our military who have defended and continue to defend the freedoms and values we cherish. Life is precious. When it is lost, we are all impacted. On this day I would ask that all Members of Alberta's Legislative Assembly, all others present here, and those observing these proceedings in their homes join together as we reflect upon the lives of Canadian military personnel lost in service to their countrymen. May their souls rest in eternal peace, and may a nation be eternally grateful. God bless. Amen.

Please be seated.

Introduction of Visitors

Mr. Khan: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce to you and through you and to all members of the Assembly Mr. Brent Rathgeber, Member of Parliament for Edmonton-St. Albert. Although Mr. Rathgeber now serves the public from the federal stage, he is no stranger to provincial politics, serving as the MLA for Edmonton-Calder from 2001 till 2004. Mr. Rathgeber was a dedicated advocate for his constituents and worked with many of the MLAs who are sitting in this House today. It was during this time that Mr. Rathgeber met his very first political boss, Premier Ralph Klein, who Brent has very, very fond memories of working for and with.

After being elected as an MP for the first time in 2008, Mr. Rathgeber was appointed to the House of Commons' standing committees on Justice and Human Rights and Public Safety and National Security. After nearly 20 years of practising law, Mr. Rathgeber's knowledge and experience that he brought to these committees was invaluable. He now sits on the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development.

Outside of his parliamentary duties Mr. Rathgeber can be found golfing, reading, and cheering on the Edmonton Eskimos. However, because of the Saskatchewan blood that runs through him – Melville, I believe, sir – Mr. Rathgeber's loyalties shift when the Roughriders are in town. But we won't hold that against him. Well, some may.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask that Mr. Rathgeber, seated in the Speaker's gallery today, please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

Introduction of Guests

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

Mr. Young: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure to rise today and introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly 24 intelligent individuals from McKernan elementary school. Accompanying them today are their teacher, Ms Jasmine Kinjo, and Stephen Dobson. They're seated in the public gallery. I'd ask that all guests rise and receive the traditional welcome of this Assembly.

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

Mr. Hale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour today to rise and introduce to you and through you to all members of the Legislature a group of students from the Rosemary school in my constituency. They haven't arrived yet. They will be arriving at 2, but they're only staying till 2:30, so I would like to continue with their introduction now. With them are their parent chaperones, Mr. Alan Dyck, Mr. Cornelius Krahn, Mr. Travis Simo, Mrs. Jennifer Wiebe, Ms Cretia Morishita, and Mr. Dwight Zacharias. Also with them is the principal of Rosemary school, Mr. David Blumell. I would ask now that you give them the warm traditional greeting of this Assembly.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member. You might like to know that I had the privilege of meeting them in the hallway, so they're not that far away.

The Member for Edmonton-McClung.

Mr. Xiao: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great pleasure for me to rise to introduce a group of most-talented students from Talmud Torah school in my riding. Before we started the session, I had the opportunity to talk to them, and they asked me how important homework is. We had a very meaningful conversation on that one. Also, before that, I attended the Telus World communication with Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield, so I tried to explain that it's very important to study well and someday you can be anybody. They are accompanied by their teacher, Sherry Helland. I'd ask them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this House.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Member for St. Albert, did you have a second introduction?

Mr. Khan: I do, sir. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a group of students and their teachers from Vital Grandin elementary school located in St. Albert, this constituency I am so honoured to serve. Accompanying these ambitious and inquisitive students are their teachers, Miss Courtney Hooper, Mrs. Adriana Bryenton, and Ms Karen Cabot. These individuals are seated in the members' gallery today. I would ask that the students and guests from Vital Grandin school – and there are a whole bunch of parent volunteers with them today – rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

Mrs. Jablonski: Mr. Speaker, today it is my great honour to introduce on your behalf to all members of the Assembly a very special and important person, your mother, Hazel Rogers. Hazel and her late husband, Hal, came to Canada from Jamaica in 1966 to teach in Worsley, a community north of Fairview. In 1969 Hazel and Hal moved to Leduc, where they saw their dream come true when all five of their children successfully completed postsecondary education. Hazel was a reading specialist who taught grade 1 her entire career. She retired in 1990 and now spends her time keeping fit and quilting. Her most precious moments are spent with her children and her six grandchildren. She is seated in your gallery. I'd ask her to rise to receive the traditional warm welcome of the House.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. members.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Decore.

Mrs. Sarich: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour and pleasure to rise today to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Alberta Legislature a number of guests that will be in attendance during question period. These guests are from the

Millennium Pavilion Seniors' Lodge, which is part of the St. Michael's Health Group. It's always nice to have seniors active and interested in current affairs in our democracy here at the Alberta Legislature. It is my pleasure to have them visit the Alberta Legislature and have a very special tour of our historic sites. I would ask that we give them the traditional warm welcome at this time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today to introduce to you and through you my guests Doug Short and Anna Beukes. Anna teaches finance and economics at the business school at NAIT. Currently she chairs the finance program at the school and serves as vice-president external for the Alberta Colleges and Institutes Faculties Association. Doug Short is president of NASA, the faculty association at NAIT, as well as president of the Alberta Colleges and Institutes Faculties Association, which represents the faculty of the colleges, baccalaureate universities, and polytechnics of Alberta. I would now like to ask Doug and Anna to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

1:40

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

Dr. Sherman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly Muriel and Ronald Whyte, who are here on behalf of their son, Shayne Ronald Whyte. But first about the Whytes. Ronald is from Saskatchewan. Muriel is from the Kootenays. They met on a blind date in 1965 in Jasper. They settled in Hinton. Ronald has worked in the forestry industry, and Muriel has been a specialized educator, assisting kids with severe needs.

They've been blessed with three kids. One is in heaven, a son. Their daughter, Shauna, is in Norway. She's a four-time Paralympic athlete. Their son, Shayne, was born with a skull fracture and brain injury and a complex seizure disorder and autism, and they cared for him. He unfortunately suffered some trauma and abuse when he was in the care system. But for 10 years, since he's been in the Michener Centre, he's been studying math at Red Deer College. He loves to play piano by ear, he's working on getting a girlfriend, he works on the computer, and he's an Oilers fan. They're here to support Shayne, and I would ask them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

Thank you.

Members' Statements

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

Edmonton-McClung Constituency

Mr. Xiao: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm extremely pleased to rise and speak about the amazing constituency of Edmonton-McClung. Edmonton-McClung's namesake is the iconic Nellie McClung, a distinguished author, feminist, and member of the Famous Five, a group of courageous and determined women who fought for equality. As an elected representative I try to remember the historic, trail-blazing beginnings of my constituency's namesake and try to work as hard as I can to represent the voice and the interest of my constituents in order to make a meaningful and tangible difference in their everyday lives.

Edmonton-McClung is home to over 45,000 residents. It is blessed with a diverse population that includes Jewish, Muslim, Russian, Filipino, Ukrainian, Chinese, and German communities, to just name a few. This diversity has allowed me to attend some of the most wonderful festivities, and I have had opportunities to taste the most unique and delicious food in the world.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, Edmonton-McClung is home to one of the most modern libraries in the province, the Lois Hole public library, named after the former Lieutenant Governor. The families in my constituency have the opportunity to enjoy various recreational facilities such as the skateboard park and water spray park, Callingwood sports arena, and the Jamie Platz YMCA. These facilities are the magnet of my community. Regardless of your age or interest, everybody can find something to do or enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to work hard with all my colleagues in the Alberta government and in this Legislature to serve all Albertans to the best of our capacity so that all Albertans can have a very vibrant and family-oriented life.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake.

Alberta Health Services Performance Targets

Mrs. Towle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government's out-of-touch priorities are no more evident than in our public health care system. For two and a half years straight Alberta Health Services has failed to meet their own performance measure targets. On wait times for procedures the lack of progress would be laughable if it was not so serious. Knee replacements: average wait, 41 weeks. In northern Alberta: average wait time, 56 weeks. Yet the AHS target is half of that at 21 weeks. For hips it's no better. The target is 22 weeks, but on average we wait 37, longer if you are outside of Calgary and Edmonton.

Let's look at access. Most provinces have a benchmark goal of moving 90 per cent of patients through ER and into hospital within eight hours. In Alberta our goal is only 75 per cent, yet we can't manage to reach that goal. In that goal of admitting patients into ER within eight hours, we only reached it 46 per cent of the time. We don't reward our children for failure. Why are we rewarding Alberta Health Services executives?

Knowing all of this, it should be easy for members to understand why Albertans get upset when they hear of Alberta Health Services bonuses, pay raises, and massive increases in spending on administration. Long-term care takes a \$52 million cut, but the bureaucratic monster of Alberta Health Services gets a 21 per cent increase.

But that's not bad enough. Alberta Health Services then goes even further to tell veterans of the Canadian Forces that their discounted hospital parking passes have been discontinued, all of this to make room for an extra \$84 million in bloated administrative spending. And this government has the gall to say that they are reining in bureaucracy.

AHS centralization was supposed to cut down administration costs and save us money, yet the bloated bureaucracy continues to grow at the expense of actual health services. Albertans want to know when their priorities will become this government's priorities.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member for St. Albert.

Hon. Lois E. Hole, CM, AOE

Mr. Khan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's turning into St. Albert

day here. As we all know, Lois Hole was the 15th Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, serving from 2000 till her passing in 2005. To many in the province she was known as the Queen of Hugs. To a St. Albert kid like myself she was so much more.

My first recollection of Mrs. Hole was as an elementary-aged student like those sitting in the gallery, accompanying my parents to the Holes' farm to buy vegetables. I remember with great fondness an incredibly friendly woman who was incredibly gracious and warm and who always made sure that I got an extra carrot to eat on my way home. I have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I'm not certain I've ever tasted more delicious carrots than were grown by the Holes on their farm, that was then on the outskirts of St. Albert, out in the country.

Fast-forward 30 years or so and that farm, which grew to be Hole's greenhouses, was recognized as one of the largest and best greenhouse facilities in western Canada. Under the visionary stewardship of Lois and Ted's sons, Bill and Jim Hole, the original greenhouses were closed, and just in the past few weeks the original site was demolished. A new location in the southwest corridor of St. Albert was established a couple of years ago to be the home of the Enjoy Centre, which has been developed as a truly world-class greenhouse facility that all Albertans can be proud of.

The Enjoy Centre sits adjacent to another of Lois Hole's remarkable legacies, the Lois Hole centennial provincial park. Encompassing Big Lake, at eight kilometres long and three kilometres wide, the park is a haven for birdwatching and is listed as one of the 20 most important bird habitats in all of Alberta.

I will leave you with a short excerpt from a poem.

As they soar on wind above Big Lake
So too do our spirits soar.

I invite all members and all Albertans to visit these treasures of the capital region, and I assure them that their spirits, too, shall soar.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Carbon Tax

Ms Notley: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Conservative government's cozy relationship with the oil and gas industry and their reliance on political donations from their friends in big corporate boardrooms is putting Alberta's environment at risk and has seriously damaged our international reputation, making it difficult to sell our oil to overseas markets. Rather than spending hard-earned public dollars to mislead and greenwash, our government should take a hard look at its environmental record and fix it.

Mr. Speaker, the job of protecting Alberta's environment has been this government's poor distant cousin for decades. Just since 2009 the PCs have cut funding for the ministry of environment by \$21 million, and this past budget saw a \$17 million cut to climate change policies. Alberta's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions has increased more rapidly than Canada's overall emissions. Our so-called intensity-based carbon levy has a negligible impact, and even that program has been criticized by our Auditor General for its lack of accountability and standards. As a result, our government will not even meet its own unambitious greenhouse gas reduction targets.

Now, on the eve of a trip to the U.S., the minister has set up a trial balloon on a new regime that the most optimistic of environmentalists characterize as merely a baby step towards possible change. Even that, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, is only a discussion, and I'm personally convinced that it will disappear

into a wisp of toxic smoke once the Keystone deal is finalized. Then our Conservative government will go back to its tried-and-true method of firmly implanting its environmental head in the sand.

1:50

At the same time dangerous growth of tailings ponds is also an international black eye for this province. While three years ago the government brought in regulations to very modestly and very apologetically start the process of managing tailings ponds growth, today all but one of the affected industries is ignoring that law with complete impunity, and there is no enforcement on the horizon from our government. At least half of our greenhouse gas emissions . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Oral Question Period

The Deputy Speaker: The Leader of the Official Opposition.

Alberta Health Services Administration Costs

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, in addition to all of the other messes this Minister of Health has created, he now has to explain the Alberta Health Services budget. Let's start with administration costs. We were told the superboard would save money through streamlined administration, but over the past three budgets administration costs are up nearly 60 per cent. In the current budget the increase is \$84 million, or 21 per cent, while front-line services are being cut. Why?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, it is true that Alberta Health Services has made great strides in reducing administration costs and, as acknowledged by recent statistics, has the lowest cost in the country, at 3.3 per cent of total budget. What the hon. member seems not to be aware of is that in their proposed budget, which, of course, is pending approval of Budget 2013, AHS has proposed to include additional items on the administrative line in the budget so as to allow us all to compare their administrative costs on the basis of the Canadian Institute for Health Information data. That's responsible, it's transparent, and this member should applaud Alberta Health Services for it.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Ms Smith: I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that Albertans aren't applauding.

The administration cost increases over the last three years are disgraceful: \$304 million in 2011, \$397 million in 2012, and an outrageous \$481 million this year. Albertans were told administrative cuts were coming. Instead, we see an \$84 million increase. What is going on here?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member well knows, Alberta Health Services led agencies, boards, and commissions in this province when they announced immediately after the provincial announcement that they would reduce management positions by 10 per cent over the next three years. They were the first to eliminate bonuses and pay at risk, something that this member has constantly complained about. They have frozen management salaries. This is the kind of leadership that Albertans are looking for. Alberta Health Services is the fifth-largest employer in the country. We have the privilege of being MLAs in a province that saw 100,000 people come to this province last year and for good reason.

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, we have been saying for months that there are billions of dollars to be saved by the government through trimming middle management, yet no one in the government seems to get it. At AHS between 2011 and 2012 they added 350 more middle managers, bringing the total to more than 3,800. How does adding 350 middle managers improve health care for Albertans and taxpayers?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's ignorance of how the health system actually works is astounding. [interjections] I realize I've just used a word that I should not have used. So her lack of knowledge on the subject is astounding, and I withdraw the term.

That notwithstanding, Mr. Speaker, middle managers in the health system do not perform the same functions as senior executives. They manage direct patient care programs. They supervise staff. They oversee the deployment of resources across the system in hospitals and community-based care and other areas. These people contribute to the high quality of patient care that we all enjoy.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
Hon. leader, your second set of questions.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. More managers managing managers managing managers.

Alberta Health Services Executive Bonuses

Ms Smith: This government's commitment to Soviet-style central planning is costing taxpayers more money and is delivering worse service. Alberta Health Services is a stark example. Now, the Minister of Health talks about tough choices and says that improvements are being made. Out here in the real world, where the rest of us live, it's a mess. Wait times don't meet targets. Long-term care is being cut. Doctors still have no contract. With this record of poor performance why is AHS still giving executives hefty salaries and bonuses?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, the commitment that we're seeing, despite all facts that are presented to the contrary in this House, is that the hon. member is committed to undermining public confidence in the health care system, the confidence of the 100,000 people that work for Alberta Health Services, and any attempts that we make consistently in partnership with them to improve care. AHS has not cut funding for long-term care. They are increasing funding next year in home care, in facility-based care, in community-based care. I thought that party stood for better value for taxpayers' dollars. Apparently, they don't. Apparently, they stand for undermining confidence in this system.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Ms Smith: A \$52 million cut, Minister. You should read your own books.

AHS says that bonuses are being cancelled because they are not understood by the public. Mr. Speaker, it is not the bonuses the public doesn't understand. It's bonuses for not meeting targets. It's bonuses for not delivering services. It's bonuses for not holding the line on spending. It's bonuses for failure. Why doesn't the minister explain that to the AHS Board?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, what this hon. member should be doing is recognizing the fact that AHS is moving from a 4.5 per cent planned increase for next year to a 3 per cent increase. While

they are doing that – and I would defy the hon. members to suggest that we should not be investing more dollars in health care unless, of course, they want to present us with privatization options, which they've done in the past. This is an organization that takes taxpayer value seriously. They demonstrate it by continuing to serve an increasing population in this province by meeting needs in hospitals, in the community, and in areas like mental health.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Ms Smith: We're talking about undeserved bonuses, Health minister.

Mr. Speaker, the chair of AHS has even suggested that because he's cancelling bonuses, he might just make an upward adjustment to executive salaries to make up the difference. Now, I thought that there was a three-year government salary freeze in place. Will the minister agree today that he will spike any AHS proposal to increase executive salaries?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is obviously behind the times. I thought she read the media at least, but apparently she doesn't. The Alberta Health Services Board chair announced when presenting preliminary details of the budget, which is pending approval of Budget 2013, a freeze in management salaries, a reduction of management positions by 10 per cent over the next three years, and the elimination of pay at risk on a permanent basis. That's the leadership Albertans are looking for. The hon. member should congratulate the board for taking that leadership.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. leader, your third set of questions.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Health minister should read his news clippings, *Metro* news today.

Prescription Drug Coverage

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, yesterday in question period I asked some specific questions about the availability and pricing of two drugs delisted by Alberta Health as a result of the minister's generic drug plan, ketolorac, a commonly prescribed painkiller; and triamcinolone, used to treat arthritis, asthma, and lupus. Now, the minister declared there'd be no problem getting these drugs, that there were multiple suppliers. Will the minister take the opportunity to correct his answers from yesterday and provide Albertans with updated factual information regarding these medicines?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, what I will take the opportunity to do, as apparently it wasn't sufficient yesterday, is to inform or attempt to inform the hon. member about the process for drug listing in this province. Like most jurisdictions across the country, drug companies present pricing on a monthly basis to government. On that basis government determines whether it will buy the previously listed drug or whether it will delist that drug and buy the same drug with the same active ingredient, most often from another generic manufacturer or often from a brand name source. We make a broad range of drugs available to Albertans on a consistent basis. The adding and subtracting . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Ms Smith: Mr. Speaker, after question period yesterday Alberta Health was scrambling to fill some of the gaps in their new list of approved drugs. They tweeted they'd made a mistake on penicillin and had to relist a drug called Apo-Pen. Now, on April 1 the price

of Apo-Pen, penicillin, jumped from about \$7 to just under \$19. That is two and a half times more expensive. Why does the minister claim that his plan will reduce the price of generic drugs when this is quite clearly a massive increase?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, there are over 4,000 drugs that are listed in Alberta under our drug benefit plan. The drug ketolorac, for example, which was in fact delisted in the last listing, has been replaced by a drug with the same active ingredient called Toradol. The listing and delisting of drugs each month is in response to prices that are set responsibly by this government in our attempt to get the best value for taxpayer dollars possible. The hon. member should support that process. The hon. member has an obligation to understand it if she intends to criticize it in this House. This is just another example of fearmongering about health care that . . .

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. leader.

2:00

Ms Smith: Toradol is the more expensive brand name drug, isn't it, Mr. Minister?

Mr. Speaker, the same drug company that I mentioned, its price list shows new prices for about 15 generic drugs, all with significant price increases: double, triple, and in one case 340 per cent higher than last year. When will the minister admit that his poorly conceived plan for lower drug prices is actually resulting in Albertans paying higher drug prices out of their own pockets?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, this isn't actually a complex issue, but if the hon. member wants to make it complex, she's certainly free to do so. The fact of the matter is that there are over 4,000 drugs listed in Alberta. Prices change monthly. They change in Alberta. They change in other provinces. Manufacturers and distributors respond to activity in the marketplace. We ensure through a system that we have in place that we get the best value for taxpayer dollars, and we make sure that we have all drugs in the same cluster, with the same active ingredients, available to Albertans. The hon. member should know that the way these savings are achieved is by balancing the delisting and listing over time.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. leader of the Liberal opposition.

Support for Postsecondary Education

Dr. Sherman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government's policies have led to the lowest postsecondary participation rates in the country and not enough room for the students who do go to postsecondary. Now, while making the biggest cut in decades, after two years of frozen funding, at a time the province is growing, the Minister of Enterprise and Advanced Education is demanding that space for more domestic students be created. Minister, could you please tell us what alternate universe you live in where postsecondary spaces can be created while funding is being decimated for these postsecondary institutions?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Enterprise and Advanced Education.

Mr. Lukaszuk: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the member is correct. Postsecondary education has been receiving consistent increases in funding, as a matter of fact, to the tune of nearly 50 per cent over the last 10 years. This year, as shown in all ministries, has been the exception to that trend of supporting postsecondary education. Now we have, as I was corrected

yesterday, the second-highest funded postsecondary education system in Canada, with the exception of Quebec, but we're also funding that one, as everybody knows. However, we are committed to growing postsecondary education in this province, and we will continue our commitment to postsecondary education.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. leader.

Dr. Sherman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When education was funded appropriately, the University of Alberta was ranked 38th in the world. With the freezes in the last couple of years, they have dropped to 108th in the world, and now there's this draconian cut. Professor Donna Wilson at the U of A is letting it be known that this government's brutal cuts to postsecondary funding are hurting that institution as the best and brightest from Alberta and around the world are reconsidering their decision to study, teach, or do research at the U of A. To the minister: how can you even pretend to claim you're building a knowledge-based economy when you're driving away the best and brightest students?

Mr. Lukaszuk: Mr. Speaker, this member would now have us believe that even though the budget hasn't been passed yet, the University of Alberta dropped 70 spots in the world ranking already. Humbug.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is that we are working in collaboration with all chairs and all presidents of all postsecondary institutions. We are making a commitment to make sure that the impact on students is minimal. I have been very clear that we will not be increasing tuition for students, and at the end of the day we will continue investing in postsecondary education. Yes, difficult decisions will have to be made, and much like in other sectors of the Alberta government we will be focusing on administration, not on students.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Dr. Sherman: Mr. Speaker, we already have amongst the highest tuition and fees in the country for postsecondary education. It's no wonder that over 6,000 high school students in this province drop out of school every year, giving Alberta the highest high school dropout rate. This is actually hurting our economy. To the same minister: why would you cut postsecondary education when all that will do is further reduce opportunities at postsecondary levels, actually encouraging more students to drop out of high school, unless that's what you really want, Minister?

Mr. Lukaszuk: Mr. Speaker, as you know, as a matter of fact, relevant to participation in postsecondary institutions, the Minister of Education should be congratulated. We've just passed a piece of legislation that allows for dual credit earning, which will further increase participation in postsecondary education. We have increased funding in this budget for students from low-income families who need financial assistance so they can participate in postsecondary education. We have frozen tuition so they can participate in postsecondary education, and we will be working with chairs and presidents of all 26 schools to try to increase the number of seats that they will generate within our postsecondary institutions.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. leader of the New Democrat opposition.

Funding for Long-term Care

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This PC government can't be trusted to look after Alberta's seniors. Several years ago an Auditor General's report concluded that Alberta's long-term care facilities were so short-staffed that in

some cases seniors had to be awakened as early 3 a.m. in order for the staff to feed them. In the last election this Premier promised that there would be no service cuts. This budget cuts long-term care by \$52 million. My question is to the Health minister. Why has this government broken its promise to our vulnerable seniors yet again?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, I don't know where the hon. member is getting this information. I can tell you that a media report in the *Calgary Herald* was incorrect. In fact, my understanding from Alberta Health Services today is that they will be increasing funding in home care, in long-term care, and in community-based care.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
The hon. leader.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This government has a long record of cutting publicly funded long-term care spaces for seniors and replacing them with so-called continuing care that charges seniors extra for nursing care. Many seniors need the medical care provided in a long-term care facility and not available in assisted living. Thousands of seniors are suffering at home without the care they need or occupying acute-care beds needed by other patients. Will the minister commit today to reversing the mean-spirited cut to long-term care?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, obviously, the hon. member wants to talk about the difference between long-term care and designated supportive living. Of all Albertans waiting for placement in continuing care today, 15 per cent – only 15 per cent – are estimated as requiring long-term care, based on assessment. What's more, we have the ability to meet those needs over time. All of the continuing care spaces we have opened are built to a B2 standard. It's what allows us to provide an enhanced level of care to citizens as they age in their own community, very often with their spouse. That's what progressive continuing care is about.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mr. Mason: Mr. Speaker, 15 per cent of seniors is a huge number, and this government is cutting long-term care. They promised in the election to increase the number of long-term care spaces by 1,000 per year over the next five years to meet the needs of Alberta's aging population and changing demographic profile. Breaking this promise is a betrayal of the seniors who need those spaces. Will the minister admit that the Alberta Health Services budget is just another broken promise from this government?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, 15 per cent is a considerable number, and a hundred per cent of people waiting for continuing care is also a considerable number. That's why we are meeting our commitment to open 5,000 additional continuing care spaces over five years. We are building those spaces to the B2 building standard, which is the standard required for a nursing home environment. That, of course, is what allows us to meet the promise that we made, which was to allow Albertans to age in place in their own communities wherever possible, close to family and friends.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Carbon Tax

Mr. Anderson: Mr. Speaker, we all remember the job losses this government contributed to in 2008 when they dramatically

increased taxes on our oil and gas sector. The PCs thought it was a great idea to raise taxes on energy producers just as the price of energy tanked. Now this same brain trust has decided to increase carbon taxes by 167 per cent on our large oil sands employers in the middle of a market access crisis, with projects like the Voyageur upgrader already being cancelled. To the Deputy Premier: why is your government making the same mistake it made in 2008 and risking the jobs of thousands of Alberta families?

Mr. Lukaszuk: I'm going to have to tell you that it's really unfortunate that while our Prime Minister is working really hard to open up access to tidewaters for our product throughout the world, while our Premier right now in Washington is trying to find access for our product abroad, they are making this kind of noise, that is totally unsubstantiated, trying to indicate that what we are doing is not only environmentally unfriendly but also indicating that we are about to increase taxes. The fact is that we're working very closely with the Prime Minister and the federal government. We're working very closely with industry. There will never be any surprises, and there is no anticipation of any increases.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you hon. Deputy Premier.

2:10

Mr. Anderson: Your carbon tax is going to kill jobs and do little to reduce CO₂.

Given that your government made a promise during the last election that you would not raise taxes and given that most Albertans would say that a 167 per cent increase to carbon taxes would probably break that promise, why would your government pursue a job-killing carbon tax instead of adopting, say, the Wildrose natural gas strategy, which would transition us from coal-generated power to natural gas generated power, thereby reducing CO₂ emissions by 30 per cent and creating . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Mr. Lukaszuk: Mr. Speaker, through leadership that actually is the envy of other jurisdictions, we have developed a technology fund that is committed to reducing our carbon footprint and buying us the social licence that we need to be able to sell our product abroad. This is what you do as a leader. This is how you get your product to the markets, not through being a climate change denier and now fearmongering about new taxes.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills, you rose on a point of order at 2:02 p.m. It's noted.

Mr. Anderson: Albertans sure embraced Stéphane Dion's carbon tax, Deputy Premier. You have a real winner there. Keep it up.

Given that the Wildrose plan to decrease emissions, including CO₂, would include a job-creating natural gas strategy rather than a job-killing PC carbon tax increase and given that our oil sands industry is facing a market access crisis and cannot afford yet more uncertainty and higher costs, will the Deputy Premier commit his government to scrapping their carbon tax dreams in favour of the Wildrose natural gas strategy, which will actually help Alberta businesses create jobs for Alberta families?

Mr. Hughes: Mr. Speaker, a lot of gas. A lot of gas over there.

Actually, what this province needs is access to markets for oil because that is the largest challenge that we face in this province, getting our products to market. To help ensure that we get our products to market, we have to earn the social licence and the respect of other Canadians and other people around the world. This government, working closely with industry and with the

government of Canada, is working hard to ensure that we build that social licence.

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

Research Development and Commercialization

Mr. Webber: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Deputy Premier signed a memorandum of understanding with Siemens, which is a huge German-based, multinational engineering conglomerate company founded by Wilhelm von Siemens back in 1844 in Berlin. My question is to the Deputy Premier. Is the signing of this MOU just an empty gesture with a giant foreign company?

Mr. Lukaszuk: Well, Mr. Speaker, I have been clear, and I believe our colleagues in Ottawa – and I know we have a member sitting with us – would agree that Canada could do much better in the area of research development and commercialization of research. In this province we are on the cusp of greatness. We have the possibility of research because we have the academia and we have the resources to do that, but often that requires private-sector participation. Siemens is a company that is a world leader in research and development, filing some 25 patents a day. It's a win for Alberta to have it . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mr. Webber: Back to the Deputy Premier, then: what exactly are we going to get from Siemens? Are we signing over our innovations system to them?

Mr. Lukaszuk: Mr. Speaker, no. We are going to leverage our expertise against theirs and vice versa. They have the expertise in commercializing research. They have the expertise in environmental studies. That's one of their areas of expertise. They have the expertise in attracting venture capital for us to engage in further research. But what is most important – and many jurisdictions can only dream of this – is that we now have them here, located in Alberta, so they can become part of any and all research that will be taking place in the future.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. Deputy Premier.

Mr. Webber: Okay. Located in Calgary, I understand. That's wonderful.

How will Albertans, though, the Marthas and the Henrys out there, benefit from this, Deputy Premier?

Mr. Lukaszuk: Well, Mr. Speaker, not only those who actually participate in research will benefit – Siemens is a massive employer throughout the world – but Martha and Henry will benefit from the research that they actually commercialize that they will find on either store shelves or will enjoy through breathing even cleaner air, through enjoying the social licence that we have to export our products, and through other research in health care, in agriculture, or whatever type of research Siemens may choose to get involved in.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake, followed by Strathcona-Sherwood Park.

Funding for Long-term Care (continued)

Mrs. Towle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again Albertans have

a reason not to trust this PC government. Alberta Health Services delivers another budget that doesn't meet with the priorities of Albertans. In the 2013-2014 budget document submitted to the Health minister for his approval, Alberta Health Services cuts long-term care funding to vulnerable seniors by \$52 million, yet somehow superboard executives were able to find \$84 million more for administration and possible pay hikes. Albertans are not applauding AHS; they're disgusted. To the Health minister: how can you possibly explain how cutting funding by \$52 million will improve the quality of care seniors receive?

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I explained in answer to a previous question, Alberta Health Services is increasing funding in all areas of continuing care. That's long-term care, that's home care, and that's other care in the community.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to administration costs, as I explained earlier, AHS has changed how they categorize those costs. Additional programs which previously had not been included in that line like strategic clinical networks have now been added, and that will make our administrative expenses directly comparable to those in other provinces and territories.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mrs. Towle: Maybe there's a second set of books that we're not aware of.

Given that this Health minister has already devastated communities and families with the closures of the Little Bow continuing care centre and Michener Centre in Red Deer, can the Health minister assure Albertans in this House that the \$52 million cut to long-term care in this year's Alberta Health Services budget won't mean additional facility closures this year, next year, or ever?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member and her colleagues always seem to be very interested in attributing motive. When it comes to motive, this government has one aim in mind when it comes to seniors, and that is allowing our seniors to live independently and with dignity and for as long as possible in their home community. A commitment to add 5,000 beds over five years and to be on track to deliver that is not a small commitment. We've done that. We're continuing to open new spaces. As I said earlier, about 15 per cent of Albertans who require continuing care are awaiting a long-term care bed, and they will be provided for.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mrs. Towle: There's definitely motive here. Absolutely.

Given that the families of vulnerable residents in Little Bow and Michener Centre were completely blindsided by the government's closure of these two very important care facilities, will the minister be honest with Albertans and tell them which other facilities are on the chopping block so that families can at least prepare?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, when you're standing up in this House claiming to demand better value for taxpayers' dollars and you see initiatives placed in front of you which deliver exactly that in an area as important as health care, what would be honest is to admit that. Resource allocation decisions in health care are often complicated, and they do often affect communities in the name of delivering a higher quality of service to a broader number of Albertans.

Mr. Speaker, they can't have their cake and eat it, too. They can't claim to be on the side of taxpayers and on the basis of no evidence whatsoever continue to undermine public confidence in this system.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. Member for Strathcona-Sherwood Park, followed by Calgary-Buffalo.

Electricity Pricing

Mr. Quest: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Energy. Strathcona-Sherwood Park constituents have produced their electricity bills, and they have questions. There are many questions on the ancillary charges, especially now that the cost freeze has been lifted on the administrative charge for energy consumed, distribution billing demand and distribution charge, transmission billing demand and transmission, local access fees, all charges that most don't understand and that can now increase. My question is: can my constituents expect their electricity bills to go through the roof?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Minister of Energy.

Mr. Hughes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, you know, I'm very empathetic to the fact that Albertans keep a close eye on their electricity bill, and they want to ensure that it is a fair invoice for the services they receive. At one point there was a great concern about the rise in these costs. The province put a freeze on those costs, and to minimize the impact of the lifting of that freeze, this government gave the Alberta Utilities Commission more teeth to scrutinize those costs. The providers will have to justify every single penny.

2:20

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. member.

Mr. Quest: All right. Well, thank you. My first supplemental is to the same minister. The energy-generating and transmission and distribution companies, all of them: whom do they have to justify these charges to? Is it a government department?

Mr. Hughes: Mr. Speaker, no. The energy providers and the ancillary cost providers will have to justify their costs to the Alberta Utilities Commission. Of course, any Albertan could participate in that. We wanted to manage volatility in prices for electricity and for ancillary costs, and we've taken strong steps on behalf of the people of Alberta to accomplish exactly that.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. member, your final supplemental.

Mr. Quest: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister. The Retail Market Review Committee report recommended that the government eliminate the regulated rate option to ensure price volatility is no longer built into the system. Why did the government reject these recommendations?

Mr. Hughes: Mr. Speaker, you know, some 65 per cent of Albertans actually rely upon the regulated rate option.

Mr. Anglin: How about you?

Mr. Hughes: And that would include the Minister of Energy, Mr. Speaker.

I would say that what we have done, Mr. Speaker, is that we've ensured that we've reduced the volatility in the system by the way

in which providers of electricity can purchase electricity on behalf of consumers. I'm particularly concerned about this for seniors, for people on fixed income. We care about the concerns of Albertans, and we're looking after their interests.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Alberta Distance Learning Centre

Mr. Hehr: This government made bushels of promises to bundles of people during the last election. Many of these promises were made to students in our K through 12 education system. Instead of following through with these promises, gone is the AISI program, gone is the promise of full-day kindergarten, and gone are 600 teachers from the system. To the Minister of Education. The Alberta Distance Learning Centre supports 60,000 students. Your 56 per cent cut to their school partners means that only 30,000 of these students will get the assistance they need. How is this going to improve our high school graduation rates?

Mr. J. Johnson: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is right. We did make lots of promises, and we are keeping them. The ADLC has done a great job, but I want to say that our goal with Budget 2013 was to make sure that every child, every student that walks through the door is getting the instructional funding that they need. We're continuing that instructional funding even though we're going to have 11,000 more students next year.

Unlike the members opposite, who would just like to jack up taxes to cover these costs, what we're doing and what Albertans expect government to do is to live within our means and to look everywhere we can in making difficult choices to make sure that we're taking those taxpayer dollars and spending them wisely. That's why we had to make some changes to the way . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mr. Hehr: Well, given that the Alberta Distance Learning Centre supports a variety of students who are having challenges in taking part in the education system either because they are working or have challenges in the classroom or even do not have a public education opportunity in their community, how are these Albertans going to get the education they need with these cuts?

Mr. J. Johnson: Mr. Speaker, those distance learning opportunities are still there in Alberta, and they're there through fantastic organizations like the ADLC, like Athabasca University. But up until now we haven't been paying the same for a distance learning credit as we do for a traditional credit. We've been paying 156 per cent for the distance learning credit as compared to the traditional learning credit. That doesn't make sense because it actually costs less money to deliver distance learning education than it does in the traditional classroom. Why would this member want Alberta taxpayers to pay more dollars for a service that costs us less to deliver?

Mr. Hehr: What the minister said just doesn't ring true, Mr. Speaker. I got off the phone with the ADLC this morning. They said that they're going to go from being able to support 60,000 to 30,000 students. How is this going to help those 30,000 students who will not be able to access this programming with these cuts?

Mr. J. Johnson: Mr. Speaker, to clarify, the ADLC funding was not cut. What happens when we have a distance learning course is that it's delivered from the ADLC, but it's delivered through a resident school division. The resident school division for that student gets 100 per cent of the funding for that credit, and the

ADLC gets 56 per cent of the funding for that credit. We fund that credit to 156 per cent of what we do for the traditional learning, but it costs us less to deliver. So what we did was that we said: "We'll keep the 56 per cent at the ADLC. We're not going to touch their funding." It's an important delivery method, but we're not going to fund a local resident school at 100 per cent because they don't have to deliver a teacher in the classroom; they only need to deliver those services. We're going to give them 44 per cent . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Funding for Emergency Cancer Care

Mr. Bilous: Mr. Speaker, yet another cut to the front-line health care services that Albertans depend on. The Cross Cancer Institute, Alberta's premier cancer treatment facility, has told their staff they won't have a triage nurse in the evenings. This is an absolutely outrageous broken promise to sick Albertans, who will now have reduced access to the specialized care they need to recover from cancer. My question is to the Health minister. Why is your government allowing cuts like this to happen?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is obviously referring to an operational decision. I don't know exactly where he's getting his information. I'd be happy to look into his particular question if he'd care to share it with me. I have no doubt that any decisions that are being made regarding cancer care in this province are being made in the best interests of the patients that we serve.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
The hon. member.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Not good enough.

Given that this government broke their promise to deliver stable, long-term funding to public health care and given that one Cross Cancer nurse said that the idea of having potential immunocompromised patients sitting in packed ERs is awful, to the Health minister: how many more cancer patients and their families have to suffer because of this PC government's broken promises?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, again, if the hon. member wants to send me the details of what he heard or what he thinks he knows, I'd be happy to look into it.

Mr. Speaker, the people of this province enjoy a cancer care system that is the envy of this country. The Premier of this province as recently as a few weeks ago announced an entirely new cancer centre, a \$1.1 billion to \$1.3 billion project to serve Calgary and southern Alberta. We continue to invest in the best of equipment, we continue to attract the best researchers in cancer from across the world, and to suggest anything less is simply not true.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
The hon. member.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You should know, hon. minister, what's going on in your ministry.

Given that this government promised to improve primary health care by introducing more centres with user-friendly hours and given that our emergency rooms were already bursting at the seams even before this PC government effectively cut the health care budget, will the minister tell Albertans why this government is breaking yet another promise, this time to Albertans who need cancer treatment?

Mr. Horne: Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to stand by and watch cancer patients used as political pawns in this House during question period. If this member wants to question operational decisions made by Alberta Health Services, as I said – and I would do the same for any member of this House – send me the information, and I'll be happy to look into it.

Mr. Speaker, the generalizations that the hon. member makes, the statements with respect to primary health care, are not true. We continue to expand primary health care in this province through family care clinics, through primary care networks. Why? Because Albertans told us that they want us to open . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Deportation of Allyson McConnell

Mr. Saskiw: Late last night Allyson McConnell, a mother convicted of drowning her two children, flew back to Australia. Federal Minister Toews, a real tough-on-crime Conservative, said that this Justice minister took too long to ask Ottawa to intervene or restrict McConnell's movements. This is deeply disturbing, and the Justice minister needs to explain why he didn't even try to see that the victims, these children and their father, received real justice. What excuse is the minister going to give for, in effect, the complete and utter incompetence on this file?

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. member, I'd hope that the Justice minister might be able to offer something on this, but I'd just caution you. This matter is before the courts by way of an appeal.

Mr. Denis: Mr. Speaker, we're dealing with two dead children here and their grieving family. I have no idea why this member continues to try to politicize this issue. I stand behind the actions of our prosecutors, and we've outlined exactly what we will do. There is nothing new to report today other than that we will not stop until justice is served in this province.

Mr. Saskiw: You're right: two kids died. That's why we're asking these questions.

Given that the minister has refused to say if or when he has ever talked to the federal government on this case, why is this minister, a fan of liberal justice policy, continuing to put the blame on his federal counterpart, an actual tough-on-crime Conservative, instead of taking responsibility for his own failings, knowing that it was his fault that innocent victims just watched a criminal fly right out of this province?

2:30

Mr. Denis: Again, Mr. Speaker, our department filed the appeal immediately and has left no stone unturned whatsoever, despite the conjecture and hearsay we see over there. Again, the focus is on getting justice for the two dead children, not politicizing this issue like this member continues to do.

Mr. Saskiw: Given that there was a five-month delay in filing the appeal under your watch and given that this minister has already dropped the ball on the sexual assault case in Airdrie and now the McConnell case, is he simply unaware that his incompetent policies are reflecting on this Premier and his liberal soft-on-crime justice policies are failing victims?

Mr. Denis: What this member says is patently untrue. The judgment came down in April; we filed the appeal immediately. I know he practised law for a year or two, so he might want to pull the curtain on that as well.

Mr. Saskiw: It was a five-month delay.

Mr. Denis: There was no delay in filing the appeal, Mr. Speaker. This government continues to support victims. In fact, in 2010-2011 we helped more than 66,700 victims. One of the cornerstones of our justice system is to help these victims, not politicize and further punish people like the Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills continues to do.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Varsity, followed by Lacombe-Ponoka.

Long-term and Continuing Care for Seniors

Ms Kennedy-Glans: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my constituency of Calgary-Varsity we have a lot of seniors, and they're paying a lot of attention to how our government supports long-term care choices. They're also watching to make sure that the right amount of funding reaches seniors who need it. My question is to the Minister of Health. You've received many questions today, and I will ask one that drills a little deeper. How are recent changes to the patient care funding model in Alberta impacting residents of long-term care facilities?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for an insightful question. As hon. members may know, patient care based funding has been around in Alberta since 2009. It is based on the principle of matching funding for a particular patient to that patient's needs. This principle has seen a funding increase to a number of long-term care facilities across the province over the last year. Adjustments are also made in the case where funding exceeds patient needs. This is one of the ways that we attempt to deliver a patient-focused continuing care system.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Ms Kennedy-Glans: To the same minister: given that long-term care partners like Bethany Care Society have indicated that funding allotted through the recently revised AHS funding model is not adequate to provide care for seniors with dementia, will you look again at the funding model with our partners and iron out those difficulties?

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.
The hon. minister.

Mr. Horne: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Another very insightful question, unlike a number of others that have been asked earlier today. The answer, of course, is yes. We are working with individual providers. As I said earlier, according to this model as patient needs increase, funding increases, and as patient needs decrease, funding is adjusted accordingly. That can have an impact on staffing levels at various times during the year. We'll continue to work with our partners to make sure that we mitigate the effects.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.
The hon. member.

Ms Kennedy-Glans: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the Minister of Health: given that providing compassionate end-of-life care is becoming more prominent in the mission of long-term care providers, has AHS considered allocating more funding towards these services?

Mr. Horne: Well, Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes. Unlike other

questions that we heard earlier today that focused on particular types of beds or types of institutions, the question of how we support Albertans in end-of-life care is very important. That's why Alberta Health Services is making investments in that area. It is why we will have a very important policy discussion in this province next year about the continuing care system and how we care for those needs as well as those of Albertans living independently.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Xplornet Communications Inc.

Mr. Fox: Mr. Speaker, this government is once again choosing winners and losers in the private sector. The latest example of this is the government choosing to directly subsidize a single Internet provider called Xplornet to provide high-speed Internet to Albertans in remote areas. Now, the Wildrose agrees with helping our constituents in remote areas gain high-speed Internet access. This will boost rural economies and productivity. But the way the government is doing this is all wrong. Can the minister please explain how financially backing one Internet provider over another is fair?

Mr. Bhullar: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the member for the question. He's only – what? – six, seven, eight, nine months late. Regardless, the fact is that in low-density, remote areas of the province there's only one type of technology that can provide accessible high-speed Internet to the homes of rural Albertans, and that is satellite technology. There was an open procurement process. One company was the only one to have access to the new, high-speed, 4G satellite technology, and they have the contract. We're connecting rural Albertans . . .

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mr. Fox: Unlike this minister, I actually live in rural Alberta, and we want market choice.

Given that this minister easily could have applied this program to all rural Internet companies and given his decision to throw the entire wad of cash at one Internet company to the detriment of others, how can this minister justify giving one company such a massive advantage over its competitors in this way? Friend of the family, perhaps?

Mr. Bhullar: I'll tell you what, Mr. Speaker. These people are not friends to Albertans living in low-density, remote areas. That's what they are not. Albertans living in low-density, remote areas deserve high-speed Internet access just like everybody else living in areas like Ponoka, Red Deer, Calgary, and Edmonton. That's what we've done. It's always funny that these folks on the other side can suck and blow at the same time. My question is: do they want more spending, or do they want cuts? Do they want services for rural Albertans, or do they not?

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Mr. Fox: Stop playing favourites with members of the government family, Minister.

Given that on the Service Alberta website it states, "Service Alberta works to ensure a fair marketplace" – fair marketplace – "for both buyers and sellers," will the minister apply this program to rural residents who choose other rural Internet providers, or will he continue to prolong this government-imposed monopoly on rural Alberta?

Mr. Bhullar: Mr. Speaker, it's so evident that they really have

absolutely no idea what they're talking about. It has taken this member nearly a year to ask a question in the House about this program, and the question he's asking doesn't make any sense.

The fact is that our program is targeted only to those living in low-density, remote areas, areas where it doesn't make sense to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars putting up towers. Instead, it makes sense to help people access high-speed Internet via satellite. Get your act together, hon. member.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Cross.

Bare-land Condominiums

Mrs. Fritz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bare-land condominiums are condos where a person owns their building and the land that's underneath it, and it's managed by a condominium corporation. A recent court decision by the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench caused serious concern in the community when it determined that bare-land condominium corporations can no longer use the condo fees they collect, especially in their reserve funds, to maintain and repair buildings. My questions today are for the Minister of Service Alberta. What is the significance of this court ruling for bare-land condominium owners?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's an example of a well-thought-out, well-researched question. I bet she has high-speed Internet access and she did her research online.

There was a court ruling, Mr. Speaker, that called into question, essentially, the way bare-land condominiums have been operating since 1985. Our position has been clear since the ruling. We've tried to see if we can make regulatory changes to adapt to the court ruling. Unfortunately, we can't. It has to be through legislation.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. member.

Mrs. Fritz: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just for your information, I did write this question, and I did do the online research. I think the opposition should be doing the same.

Given that this court decision has caused a very severe problem, it really should be acted on, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister: how will your ministry respond on behalf of bare-land condominium owners to this court ruling?

2:40

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned, our preference would have been to deal with this matter through a regulatory change because it could be dealt with in a shorter period of time. Unfortunately, that is not possible because of various legal opinions. I'm sure the legal opinions are not from the members opposite because, quite frankly, I don't think they quite know how to research. We'll be bringing forth legislative changes in due course, and we hope that all members on all sides of the House will allow us to move this amendment forward in a very short period of time.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

The hon. member. Final supplemental.

Mrs. Fritz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister: in

light of all this uncertainty is there anything that concerned condominium owners should be doing right now to deal with this serious situation?

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I heard some rumblings from members opposite. You know, we are committed to making change in a very quick process for condominium owners. Unfortunately, some members opposite would rather sit in this Assembly. They love to hear the sound of their own voices, so they want to delay changes. The fact of the matter is that we'll be bringing forward changes very soon, and we hope members from all three of those other parties will actually do the right thing for Albertans for once and support real-life, practical changes.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Hon. members, in 30 seconds I'll call for the next two members' statements.

Ms Blakeman: Yo. Point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: At 2:41. Noted, hon. member.

Members' Statements

(continued)

Family Violence Prevention

Ms Jansen: Mr. Speaker, everyone has a responsibility to help prevent family violence, which brings devastating and long-lasting effects. Family violence touches families from every background in every community in Alberta. One of the Premier's priorities and a vital mandate of our government is to invest in our province's families and communities, and that includes a strong commitment to preventing family violence and supporting those who are affected by it.

On April 12 the call for nominations for the 2013 inspiration awards will be announced. The inspiration awards program was created last year to celebrate leadership in family violence prevention and recognize the many truly exceptional individuals and organizations across the province who work with us on this critical issue. Many of those people work tirelessly for these kinds of efforts and get little or no acknowledgement for work that changes so many people's lives. Mr. Speaker, the inspiration awards are one way that we can celebrate the exceptional work that is being done by these people right across the province.

Nomination packages are available online at humanservices.alberta.ca/inspirationawards or by calling 780.422.5916, and you can call toll-free right across Alberta by first dialing 310.0000. Recipients are going to be honoured in November during Family Violence Prevention Month, a time when we highlight the ongoing work to raise awareness about the importance of preventing family violence and helping those people who need support. I know that there are dedicated individuals and groups doing this work in our communities, and I hope to see them nominated for this recognition.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Livingstone-Macleod.

Landowner Property Rights

Mr. Stier: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday some members of this Assembly failed to understand the really serious problems

when statutory consent would be rescinded with the implementation of regional plans.

For this moment let us just imagine if any MLA here in the House lived in an area like mine or owned land where a regional plan would impact them directly. As an example, the Member for Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock claimed yesterday that it wouldn't impact anyone's rights. What if the member owned land and cabinet decided in a regional plan that a dairy operation on the land would no longer be allowed? As written, the act allows cabinet to rescind permits, licences, and leases without cause. Does she think her land value might drop? Would she want compensation for that government taking?

As another example, what if the Member for Calgary-Acadia bought land as an investment in the south and was suddenly faced with a cabinet-imposed land freeze on his property due to the land falling under a long-term urban sprawl concept for 50 years in the future and the land suddenly depreciated by over 25 per cent? It would be devastating, and his investment would be harshly impacted.

Now consider a member's third-generation grazing lease operation where the cabinet decides to pull the right to graze because they've imposed a conservation area. His business model would be severely impacted, and his livelihood would be destroyed.

In all of these cases where changes are imposed, the results are devastating, and they can affect anyone.

So then these affected parties go to the Property Rights Advocate, someone to whom the landowners are supposed to take their complaints, but the advocate has been denied any meaningful role by legislation. He won't be able to reverse a cabinet decision, nor can he change a regional plan.

This situation has to change. Land values, net worth, and livelihoods must be saved.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Hon. members, might we revert briefly to Introduction of Guests?

[Unanimous consent granted]

Introduction of Guests

(continued)

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

Mr. Bhullar: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's indeed a tremendous pleasure for me to rise and introduce through you to all members of this Assembly a very distinguished Albertan and a friend of many in this Assembly. After placing first in the Alberta Senate election as a Progressive Conservative last year, the Hon. Douglas Black was appointed to the upper Chamber by the Prime Minister on January 25 of this year. Continuing Alberta's proud tradition of electing representatives to the Canadian Senate, we're very proud to have Mr. Black with us here today. He's the founding president of the Energy Policy Institute of Canada, former chair of the board of the Michaëlle Jean Foundation, and former governor of the Banff Centre. He is a recipient of the Alberta centennial medal and was appointed a Queen's Counsel. I would ask all members of this Assembly to give the Hon. Doug Black a warm welcome to our Assembly.

Tabling Returns and Reports

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Cardston-Taber-Warner.

Mr. Bikman: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have five tablings today. The first is from Joe and Teresa Boone of Picture Butte. They're concerned about the elimination of operation and maintenance grants to independent schools.

The second, third, and fourth are from doctors. Dr. Michael Galbraith is concerned and disappointed that physicians have largely been shut out of the decision-making process for these key providers of health care. Dr. Duncan Nickerson is expressing concerns about the obvious ethical problem of not negotiating in good faith and that the legacy of this Health minister may be a destroyed health care system. From Dr. Lloyd Clarke: "What the government is doing to physicians is intolerable and were this another profession there would be wide scale walk outs."

Finally, from George Lee, a concerned constituent of mine near Coutts, Alberta, currently on the oxygen-at-home program and very concerned about the changes that are going to be made and what impact that's going to have on his health.

I have the requisite copies here, which I submit now.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

2:50

Ms Blakeman: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I have two tablings of my own and one on behalf of one of my colleagues. My first tabling is an e-mail that was sent to me by Nadine Riopel. She is one of the very few midwives that practise in the province, and she is bringing the point to the government's attention that there are only 18 midwives currently practising in the city of Edmonton and that the Lucina Birth Centre is only available to parents that are under the care of a midwife, so she is looking for additional support in the form of funding and education for midwifery care. That's the first e-mail.

The second one is from another constituent, Olivia Martins, who sent an e-mail outlining her concern that she would like to see a three-month warning put in place before a lease is up to ensure that people are not caught off guard by the ending of the lease.

I'm sorry. I did have one more, a second concern being brought up around rents. One individual, Kory Orban, a constituent, is facing a 9.13 per cent increase in his rent, well above the price of inflation.

Finally, on behalf of my colleague the Member for Calgary-Buffalo I'd like to table an e-mail from Faron Smordin, who is carefully explaining the cuts that happened to ADLC and the anticipated effects that will have on students trying to complete high school and postsecondary distance learning.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

Mr. Bilous: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've got two tablings today. I'd like to table the appropriate number of copies of an open letter sent to the Minister of Human Services by David Dodge, who is the president of the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. In his letter Mr. Dodge expresses the disappointment felt by his organization regarding the cancellation of the STEP program. He writes, "We want to be on record as saying that this program was working very well and we would like to see it or a substitute reinstated."

For my second tabling, Mr. Speaker, I'll table the appropriate number of copies of e-mail submissions that Albertans made to our prebudget tour, which visited seven cities in February. Wayne Madden and Martin Bryson Brown are some of the Albertans who

have provided valuable input. For example, Wayne, from Edmonton, would like to see a renewed investment in public education rather than increased funding for private schools. Submissions like this clearly show the priorities of Albertans and how out of touch this PC government is with its broken-promises budget.

Mr. Lukaszuk: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to share credit where credit is due with Campus Alberta. First of all, I'd like to table a document produced by the University of Alberta requesting of the government to set up an institute that will focus solely on research, innovation, and commercialization of research.

I would also like to table a document dated April 2002, when some of the initial work started. It's entitled Campus Alberta: A Policy Framework, a collaborative work of all the colleges, universities, and other schools within Alberta advanced education.

Further, Mr. Speaker, a November 2007 document on Campus Alberta. It's entitled the Roles and Mandates – imagine that – Policy Framework for Alberta's Publicly Funded Advanced Education System, asking the department to identify what their roles and mandates should be within Campus Alberta.

And one as recent as January 15, 2013. I should note that it's prebudget, Mr. Speaker, so budget had nothing to do with it yet. This document talks about the Campus Alberta Strategic Directions Committee asking for mandate letters, asking for the roles and responsibilities of schools within Campus Alberta.

The prerequisite number of documents is here.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

The Member for Strathmore-Brooks.

Mr. Hale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table the recommended number of copies of the XL Foods Community Response Committee final report. We all know the XL Foods situation, the E coli crisis last fall. I'd like to give a special mention to Lynn Pye-Matheson. She's the executive director for the Grasslands Regional FCSS. Her organization provided community response planning, facilitation, and co-ordination services between a number of community associations, the Alberta government, myself as the MLA for Strathmore-Brooks. They did amazing work. The communities all pulled together: the surrounding communities, all the groups within the communities, the workers that were temporarily laid off. You know, we have to give them special mention for staying around and helping work with us to get through this very serious situation. We know that the plant is recently back up and running, and I would like to table this final report so all the members can have a look at it. I do have two personal copies for the Minister of Human Services and the minister of agriculture also.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View, followed by Innisfail-Sylvan Lake and the Leader for the Official Opposition.

Dr. Swann: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have a number of tablings from physicians who are deeply concerned by the lack of integrity in the process relating to negotiations. The most recent is from Dr. Paul Parks from Medicine Hat, expressing concern about the future of health care and how it must be tied to respectful involvement with physicians in decision-making.

From Dr. Garry Borsato of Calgary: a clearly unfair process that is going to alienate physicians.

From Dr. Jeff Pivnick of Calgary: concerned about the current negotiations, which has been a huge disappointment, characterized by erroneous rhetoric and a willingness to vilify physicians.

From Dr. Neil Cooper of Calgary: concerned, again, about the breakdown of respectful negotiations and serious engagement of physicians in planning.

From Dr. Desiree Teoh of Calgary: "The lack of negotiations, the unapproachability of the government, the loss of my trust in fair treatment is affecting how I care for my patients and how well I am able to teach."

Finally, from Dr. Joel Fox, calling on the government to take the high road and enter into respectful negotiations with AMA and stand behind their promises.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake, followed by the Leader of the Official Opposition.

Mrs. Towle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table two documents today. The first one is the Alberta Health Services 2012-2013 budgeted expenses by service. Luckily for everybody, they put a nice pretty little graph here and did it in a narrative as well where they clearly state that facility-based continuing care services in the 2012-2013 budget were \$971 million. That's the first tabling.

I would also like to table the 2013-2014 Alberta Health Services budget document, where once again they put it in a narrative and with a nice little graph here that clearly states that facility-based continuing care services for 2013-2014 are \$919 million, for a net loss of \$52 million to continuing care.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

Ms Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do also have two tablings, both related to pharmaceutical drug price increases, one from Pfizer, indicating that their price increases fall within the regulated rates from the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board.

The other is from Apotex, which is one of the major generic drug companies. These are the 15 different generic drugs that are seeing dramatic increases, from two to three times what they were last year.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

The hon. Minister of Justice and Solicitor General.

Mr. Denis: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm just rising to table a document that I referred to yesterday. The document is a letter from the *Edmonton Journal*, Sunday, August 14, 2011, wherein the Leader of the Opposition indicates that her party contributed \$15,000 to support Keith Wilson and Landowners Against Bills. I have five copies that I'll table to the Clerk.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

I have a tabling. Pursuant to section 39(3) of the Legislative Assembly Act I would like to table with the Assembly five copies of the following orders passed at the March 15, 2013, meeting of the Special Standing Committee on Members' Services: one, Members' Services Committee Order 04/13, members' allowances amendment order (No. 26); two, Members' Services Committee Order 05/13, members' committee allowances amendment order (No. 11); finally, Members' Services Committee Order 06/13, administrative services amendment order (No. 02). These orders come into force on September 1, 2013, and I have the requisite number of copies.

3:00

Points of order. I believe we had two points of order raised. At 2:12 the Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills rose on a

point of order, then we had a second point of order at 2:46, the Member for Edmonton-Centre.

The Member for Airdrie.

Point of Order Language Creating Disorder

Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul-Two Hills I'll rise on this point of order. It's referring to the phrase "climate change denier." This should be fresh in our minds. According to section 23(h), (i), and (j), which I cited on a very similar point of order yesterday, this member cast aspersions against the Leader of the Opposition as well as myself and all members on this side. The Speaker yesterday made a very clear ruling. He was completely unambiguous, very black and white. He said very clearly that in this House we are no longer to use the words "climate change denier" and call another member of this House that. He could not have been any more clear or unambiguous.

Now, I'm assuming that this member or the House leader will withdraw that statement because if he doesn't withdraw the statement, then what that does is that it opens up a whole can of worms. The Speaker has made a clear decision on this matter and has made clear decisions on a whole bunch of matters. For example, we're not allowed to call the Premier or other ministers, et cetera, liars. We're not allowed to use that term to refer to another individual. That's been made very clear in this House. It's been very clearly ruled on, so we abide by that rule. If we don't abide by that rule, then really what we're doing is that we're being contemptuous, I would say, of the Legislature, of the rules of the Legislature and of the Speaker.

The ruling was made just yesterday for the third time, but yesterday it was made very categorical. Specifically, the Speaker said that use of that term in reference to another member is not permitted in this Legislature, Mr. Speaker. That's what he said. So I would ask that that comment be withdrawn.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

Hon. Government House Leader, would you care to respond?

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was just actually trying to look at *Hansard* to see if that's exactly what was said yesterday. I will undertake to review *Hansard* and determine whether or not that was definitive, or you might be able to tell us today whether that was definitive, and if it is, I'll certainly talk to my colleague and certainly be prepared to withdraw the comment.

But what I thought I heard yesterday was what I thought I heard before, and that is that we have differences of viewpoint in this House. We are expected to respect the word of individuals in this House as they give it. We have heard on a number of occasions now the House leader for the Official Opposition indicate that the Official Opposition has apparently changed their position on climate change, on whether man-made climate change exists and whether the science is settled. I, for one, am prepared to accept the fact that the hon. member has said that and that the hon. member is expressing perhaps a new position on behalf of their party. I think it's good when people are thoughtful and progressive and update their ideas from time to time. I think that's a wonderful thing.

I only asked yesterday and perhaps would ask again today: is that opinion, that expression of the current policy of the Wildrose Party – Wildrose Alliance Party, I guess, is its official name – the official expression of the party, or is that the representation following along the advice of an esteemed political philosopher

and commentator that people should contain their true views and put more political views forward lest they embarrass their colleagues?

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. Government House Leader.

Hon. members, this point of order was raised in response to the Deputy Premier's use of the term "climate change denier." As noted yesterday – and it's been noted in earlier speeches – the Speaker ruled on the matter that this had been dealt with numerous times. I have to say – and I'm glad we didn't have any others indicating to speak on this – that I'm reluctant to take up the House's time with a lengthy discussion on this point of order. This matter has been clarified on the record time and time again. Yesterday the Speaker did indicate that we should "move on and get on with some choice of new words." This is in *Hansard* at page 1719. I would submit that the repeated use of this term does cause some consternation, and it should be avoided.

Hon. Government House Leader, you have indicated that you're willing to withdraw that term on behalf of your colleague, and I would think that that would be good enough to allow us to move on.

Mr. Hancock: Mr. Speaker, I respectfully withdraw the term "climate change denier." Apparently, my listening wasn't as clear as your comments. I will talk to my colleague and indicate that your ruling has been such and that we need to find better ways to clarify for the public where we actually stand on these important issues.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. Government House Leader.

Hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre, you rose on a point of order at 2:46. If you would speak to that point of order.

Point of Order Rights of Members

Ms Blakeman: I did. Thank you very much for recognizing me, Mr. Speaker, and sorry for calling your attention by saying yo. [interjection] Yes. Happily, I didn't go that far, but I do apologize to you. That was a little off the cuff.

The Deputy Speaker: Apology accepted, hon. member.

Ms Blakeman: I had wanted to bring the attention of the Speaker but most particularly the Minister of Service Alberta to the sections of the *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, particularly on page 108, and there is also some information that appears on page 111. The minister is incredibly charming and also very passionate. I am trying to figure out whether he was being very passionately charming in trying to tell members of the opposition that they should give swift passage to something he was particularly interested in or whether perhaps that was crossing the line over to something that was a bit more aggressive in tone and direction. I note that we have to be careful about that in this House.

This is under a section called Freedom from Obstruction, Interference, Intimidation and Molestation. It does note that members are entitled to go about their parliamentary business undisturbed. The assaulting, menacing, or insulting of any Member . . . coming or going.

I'm paraphrasing quickly here. Any form of intimidation should not happen. Later there's an additional quote.

An Hon. Member [who] is impeded or obstructed in the performance of [their] duties through threats, intimidation, bribery attempts or . . . improper behaviour.

Again, that would be considered a breach of parliamentary privilege. I do not believe that we are dealing with something in that realm, but the parliamentary practice is not giving me shades of grey on this one.

I also notice that on page 111 under Other Examples of Obstruction, Interference and Intimidation it includes

damaging of a Member's reputation, the usurpation of the title of [the] Member . . . the intimidation of Members and their staff and of witnesses before committees, and the provision of misleading information.

As I say, it was difficult for me to tell, and I hesitated in actually calling a point of order. I know there's been some discussion from this minister with members of opposition staff and members of opposition in his desire, a wish and some more passionate words, to get us to agree with him for swift passage of a particular item based on the bare-land condo ruling from the courts.

I think we need to be careful and be very, very clear here that we all come here to do our work, and we all respect each other's ability to do that work once we're in the House. Nobody should be telling anyone or giving forth in any way that any part of our privilege or our work in this House should be hastened for any reason.

I will leave that with you, Mr. Speaker. I hope you might be able to recommend the reading of the pages that I've noted to the Minister of Service Alberta.

Thank you very much.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, hon. member.

The hon. Government House Leader.

3:10

Mr. Hancock: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, obviously there's no point of order. There's actually even no point. Well, there was a point. The minister is charming.

The fact of the matter is that we exhort each other in this House every day to do things, to achieve things, to do the right thing for Albertans. We sometimes have different views of what that might be, but strenuous debate and vigorously admonishing people to do the right thing have never been out of order in this House and shouldn't be called out of order in this House now.

The Deputy Speaker: Well, thank you, hon. Government House Leader.

Hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre, I certainly appreciate the reference that you gave. I, too, struggle to find, I guess, an issue, a point of order that you raised. I think your suggestion that the minister and others may want to avail themselves of pages 108 and 111 of the *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* may very well help to maybe temper some of this type of exuberance in the future. I would suggest that based on that, there is no point of order. Thank you.

Hon. members, pursuant to Standing Order 7(7) the daily Routine is now concluded. Pursuant to Standing Order 59.01(5)(b) the legislative policy committees will convene this afternoon and this evening for consideration of the main estimates. This afternoon Resource Stewardship will consider the estimates for Energy in committee room A, and this evening Families and Communities will consider the estimates for Justice and Solicitor General in committee room A.

[The Assembly adjourned at 3:12 p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 59.01(5)(b) to Wednesday at 1:30 p.m.]

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